LOCAL OPEN GOVERNMENT ISSUES IN KADUNA STATE, NIGERIA

MASALAH PEMERINTAHAN TERBUKA LOKAL DI NEGARA BAGIAN KADUNA, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze key issues of open government in Kaduna State. Kaduna State plays a major role in Nigeria as the only local government pilot program of the Open Government Partnership. A qualitative approach and bibliometric analysis method were used in this study. The research data were obtained from the official website of the Kaduna State Government and sourced from the Google Scholar database. The findings of this study indicate that the study of open government in Kaduna State is not popular. The topics that dominate the study of open government in Kaduna State are farming, education, transparency, health, conflict, information resources, and information and communication technology. Meanwhile, the current and potential topics in the study of open government in Kaduna State include cybersecurity, e-government systems, health insurance, food security, electoral systems, democratic governance, and independent electoral commissions. Kaduna State is currently focusing on five main commitments, namely strengthening the participatory budget process, the Open Contracting Data Standard and Open Contracting 4 Infrastructure Data Standard, access to information for citizen engagement, strengthening social protection systems, and improving service delivery in education and health sectors. These commitments have the potential to create a more open government in Kaduna State.

Keywords: Kaduna State, Key Issues, Local Open Government, Nigeria

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis isu-isu utama pemerintahan terbuka di Negara Bagian Kaduna. Negara Bagian Kaduna memainkan peran utama di Nigeria sebagai satu-satunya program percontohan pemerintah daerah dari Kemitraan Pemerintahan Terbuka. Pendekatan kualitatif dan metode analisis bibliometrik digunakan dalam penelitian ini. Data penelitian diperoleh dari situs web resmi Pemerintah Negara Bagian Kaduna dan bersumber dari basis data Google Scholar. Temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa studi tentang pemerintahan terbuka di Negara Bagian Kaduna tidak populer. Topik yang mendominasi studi tentang pemerintahan terbuka di Negara Bagian Kaduna adalah pertanian, pendidikan, transparansi, kesehatan, konflik, sumber daya informasi, dan teknologi informasi dan komunikasi. Sementara itu, topik terkini dan potensial dalam studi tentang pemerintahan terbuka di Negara Bagian Kaduna meliputi keamanan siber, sistem e-government, asuransi kesehatan, ketahanan pangan, sistem pemilu, tata kelola pemerintahan yang demokratis, dan komisi pemilihan umum yang independen. Negara Bagian Kaduna saat ini berfokus pada lima komitmen utama, yaitu memperkuat proses penganggaran partisipatif, Standar Data Pengadaan Terbuka dan Standar Data Infrastruktur Pengadaan Terbuka, akses informasi untuk keterlibatan warga negara, memperkuat sistem perlindungan sosial, dan meningkatkan pemberian layanan di sektor pendidikan dan kesehatan. Komitmen ini berpotensi menciptakan pemerintahan yang lebih terbuka di Negara Bagian Kaduna.

Kata Kunci: *Negara Bagian Kaduna, Isu Utama, Pemerintahan Terbuka Lokal, Nigeria*

INTRODUCTION

The term open government is not new, but various social contexts and advances in information technology have contributed to the way open government is conceptualized (Wirtz et al., 2019)and their participation represents a fundamental principle of the latter. Despite their essential role and the great potential benefits open government holds for the public, challenges of use among citizens persist. Previous empirical research has scarcely addressed these issues from a citizen perspective. This study investigates the determinants of open government data use by citizens in Germany. Our results indicate that ease of use, usefulness, as well as transparency, participation and collaboration expectancies significantly determine citizens' intention to use open government data, which in turn positively affects their word-of-mouth intention. Overall, the findings not only contribute to our understanding of citizen behavior in the context of open government research, especially shedding light on the key aspects of citizens' usage intention, but also provide implications for both researchers and practitioners. Points for practitioners: Citizen-based use of open government data (OGD. The origins of open government can be traced back to the Greek Athenian codification of law, but the Visigothic Code of the Kingdom of Sweden is considered the beginning of modern open government initiatives that take into account citizens right to information (Afandi, 2024; Moon, 2020). Open government is an interesting agenda promoted by many governments since the 2000s. Open government initiatives have been widely introduced not only in Western democracies but also in Asian and African countries (Gil-Garcia et al., 2020; Prastya et al., 2021)with the most significant contributor being the United States. Government Information Quarterly is a popular journal with the most discussion on e-democracy. This study's limitation is that the articles reviewed were only obtained from the Scopus database, so they did not have comparable data. Consequently, future studies need to use a comparative analytical approach involving the Scopus database and the Web of Sciences (WoS.

Open government has become an important strategy for administrative reform, prompting many countries around the world to design and implement initiatives related to access to information, transparency, participation, and collaboration (Afandi et al., 2024b; De Blasio & Selva, 2019). Many governments have expanded the concept of open government; for example, the Obama administration announced the Open Government Directive in 2009 and, together with South Africa, Brazil, the Philippines, Indonesia, the United Kingdom, Mexico, and Norway, took a leading role in founding the Open Government Partnership (OGP) in 2011, a multinational effort to promote open government worldwide (Moon, 2020; Schmidthuber & Hilgers, 2021).

OGP is an organization of countries, local governments, and civil society organizations that support each other in designing and implementing projects that promote transparency in governance, public engagement, and accountability. Transparency describes the public's ability to not only see but also understand how their government works. Public engagement refers to the public's ability to influence government by engaging in government processes and programs. Accountability reflects the public's ability to hold government accountable for its policies and performance.

The Open Government Partnership is based on the idea that open government is more accessible, more responsive, and more accountable to citizens, and that improving the relationship between citizens and government has long-term and exponential benefits for all (Afandi et al., 2024a; Ruijer & Meijer, 2020).

The partnership focuses on the policy areas of anti-corruption and integrity, beneficial ownership, open contracting, civic space, freedom of assembly, freedom of association, freedom of expression, digital governance, environment and climate, extractive industries, fiscal openness, inclusion, people with disabilities, youth, justice, land and spatial planning, open parliaments, public service delivery, education, health, water and sanitation, and the right to information (Gao et al., 2021; Ingrams, 2020; Ruijer et al., 2020).

Seventy-five countries and one hundred sixty-three local governments are currently members of OGP. Being part of a local OGP provides benefits to encourage open reforms that have become part of the vision and mission of every local government to achieve levels of accountability, responsiveness, inclusiveness, and transparency (Ingrams et al., 2020). Through membership in this global community, every local government can obtain new information on the implementation of open government, as well as being able to share views, experiences, and resources to achieve the principles of open government.

The Open Government Partnership has launched the local government pilot program, recognizing that much open government innovation and reform is happening at the local level, where governments can engage more directly with citizens and deliver many important public services. The local governments involved in the program are Basque Country, Buenos Aires, Elgeyo Marakwet, Jalisco, La Libertad, Sekondi-Takoradi, Seoul, South Cotabato, Paris, Madrid, Scotland, Tbilisi, Sao Paulo, Austin, and Kaduna State.

Kaduna State is the only local government in Nigeria designated as a local government pilot program by OGP. In this country, four local governments have joined OGP, namely Abuja, Anambra East, Plateau, and Kaduna State. This makes Kaduna State a static

player in campaigning for open government in Nigeria. Since joining OGP, they have had fifteen open government commitments and are currently focusing on five commitments, which include strengthening the participatory budget process; Open Contracting Data Standard (OCDS) and Open Contracting 4 Infrastructure Data Standard (OC4IDS); access to information for citizen engagement; strengthening social protection systems; and improving service delivery in education and health sectors. This research aims to analyze the main issues of local open government in Kaduna State.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a bibliometric analysis method. Bibliometric analysis is a method for analyzing scientific literature in a particular field of knowledge or topic (Donthu et al., 2021; Moral-Muñoz et al., 2020). This method is used to identify and highlight critical insights generated from scientific literature (Gaviria-Marin et al., 2019; Kulsum et al., 2022). The research data were obtained from Google Scholar using the Publish or Perish (PoP) application with the keywords Kaduna State information access, Kaduna State transparency, Kaduna State participation, and Kaduna State collaboration, based on the main principles of open government. The data used is within the time limit of 2011 to 2024 in accordance with the year the Open Government Partnership was formed. Data were stored in RIS format, selected using Mendeley (including completing article keywords), and analyzed using VOSviewer to obtain a bibliometric map.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Kaduna State open government articles are not popular despite being designated by the Open Government Partnership as a local

government pilot program. In the period 2011-2024, there were 75 relevant articles published in scientific journals (see Graph 1). Three articles were published in 2011, 2014, and 2017; two articles were published in 2012; seven articles were published in 2013 and 2022; ten articles were published in 2015 and 2021; one article was published in 2016; six articles were published in 2018 and 2020; eight articles were published in 2023; nine articles were published in 2024; while in 2019 no articles were published.
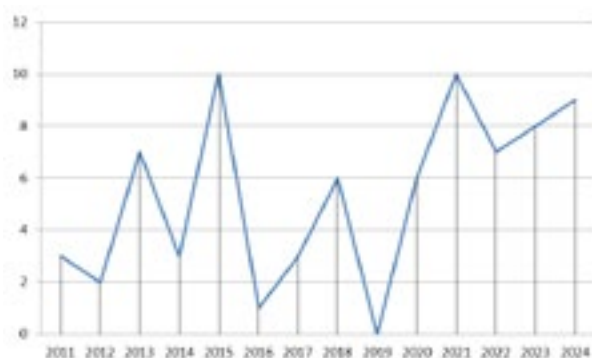
Graph 1. Publication Trends

Network visualization (see Figure 1) displays the relationships between topics (Irfan et al., 2023). This visualization represents topics with circles. The size of the circles is determined by their respective weights. The more frequently a topic appears, the larger the resulting circle size will be. The lines between topics represent links, while the location of each topic indicates the closeness of the relationship (Ham et al., 2019; Lnenicka & Saxena, 2021)One hundred and one topics and fifteen clusters were found in the Kaduna State open government study. Cluster one focuses on the topics of governance, challenge, democracy, consolidation, democratic governance, globalization, independent electoral commission, digitalizing land administration, and land registration. Cluster two focuses on the topics of assessment, election, electoral system, electronic voting, educational facility, ICT facility, participation level, and public participation. Cluster three focuses on the topics

of service, information resource, performance, management, evaluation, tax revenue, financial resource, and technology.

Cluster four focuses on the topics of women's participation, agricultural extension, access to information, agricultural development, agricultural programs, development projects, and agricultural digitization. Cluster five focuses on the topics of education, society, adaptive technology, capacity strengthening, financial performance, information service, and strategy. Cluster six focuses on the topics of access, information and communication technology, electronic information resources, health information, information availability, SMEs, and utilization. Cluster seven focuses on the topics of awareness, cybersecurity, e-government systems, public sector employees, health insurance, participation, and open access.

Cluster eight focuses on topics of accountability, role, community participation, fiscal transparency, open data, communicating development, and empowerment. Cluster nine focuses on topics of effect, security, information, empowerment program, non-state actors, rural, and unemployment. Cluster ten focuses on topics of transparency, compliance, financial accountability, freedom of information, public service, sustainability, and treasury policy. Cluster eleven focuses on topics of health, service delivery, capacity, financial management, communication program, and compliance assessment.

Cluster twelve focuses on the topics of conflict, sharia, pluralism, politics, political decentralization, and religion. Cluster thirteen focuses on the topics of rural community, adaptive capacity, climate change, food security, and contract farming. Cluster fourteen focuses on the topics of good governance, geo-ICT, land administration, and development. Cluster fifteen focuses on the topics of farming, agricultural technology, efficiency, and technical efficiency.

All of these clusters show the relationship between topics in the Kaduna State open government study. Meanwhile, the topics that dominate are assessment, service, farming, education, transparency, awareness, health, service delivery, access, accountability, governance, conflict, information resources, and information and communication technology. These topics are the main focus of the Kaduna State open government study, which shows the urgency and interest of researchers in certain topics.

Figure 2. Overlay Visualization

The overlay visualization (see Figure 2) is identical to the network visualization, except for the colors. In this visualization, the colors range from blue (lowest score) to yellow (highest score). Items in yellow indicate the most recent year. The latest and interesting topics in Kaduna State open government studies are cybersecurity, e-government systems, health insurance, public sector employees, financial resources, agricultural digitalization, contract farming, food security, electoral systems, electronic voting, financial management, financial performance, communicating development, financial accountability, good governance, non-state actors, democratic governance, and independent electoral commissions. These topics allow for potential future studies of Kaduna State open government.
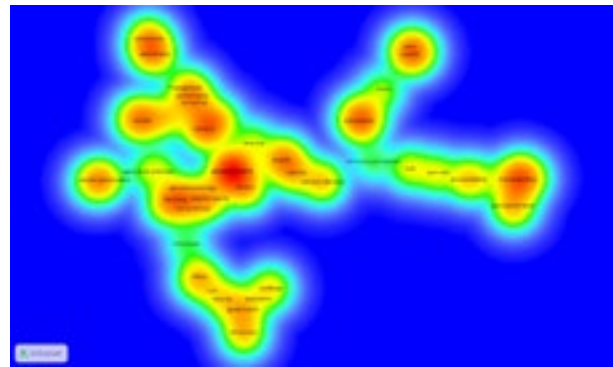

Figure 3. Density Visualization

Kaduna State open government focuses on two main groups of studies that are not integrated. Connecting topics on cybersecurity, information resources, women's participation, agricultural extension, agricultural technology, elections, service delivery, rural, security, globalization, democratic governance, and democracy with topics on politics, conflict, society, education, capacity strengthening, community participation, accountability, transparency, freedom of information, good governance, financial performance, fiscal transparency, and geo-ICT allows for the birth of potential strategic studies.

Kaduna State is currently focusing on their five main open government commitments, namely: *First,* strengthening the participatory budget process. Despite citizens' ability to nominate needs into the annual budget in a timely manner through the automated citizens demand portal, there has been a significant challenge in implementing these projects. This is because there is an absence of a dedicated ring-fenced amount or a dedicated percentage of capital expenditure to accommodate these needs. There is a need to strengthen citizens' participation around the budget by empowering citizens to implement the budget in terms of citizens' needs. Publication and implementation of audit recommendations are usually done but not in a timely manner.

This commitment will ensure that citizens participate in the budget process

and can clearly identify CDC needs in the budget. This will improve participatory budgeting through monitoring and reporting for advocacy for improved service delivery. It will also guarantee that budget planning, implementation, monitoring, and reporting meet the expectations of citizens and that citizens have access to budget information in a timely manner and in an acceptable format.

Participatory budgeting will sustain citizens' engagement around the budget circle and ensure full utilization of the Community Development Charter through the Citizens Demand Portal as an effective participatory budgeting tool. By making budget inputs and information available, citizens can clearly identify needs that were captured in the annual budget from their local communities, and they can track and provide feedback on implementation. This empowers citizens to determine the kind of development desired in their local communities and ultimately build trust between citizens and government in a transparent manner for ownership and sustainability of the process.

Second, Open Contracting Data Standard (OCDS) and Open Contracting 4 Infrastructure Data Standard (OC4IDS). Public procurement and infrastructure development processes suffer from a lack of transparency, leading to inefficiencies, corruption risks, and diminished public trust. Traditional methods of disclosing information, often paper-based and fragmented, hinder effective monitoring and analysis of government spending and project execution, which can lead to huge financial losses. These deficiencies underscore the need for standardized solutions.

The Open Contracting Data Standard (OCDS) and Open Contracting for Infrastructure Data Standard (OC4IDS) address these challenges by establishing common data formats and structures for disclosing information related to contracting and infrastructure projects, respectively. By standardizing and streamlining data disclosure, these standards aim to make government processes more transparent, accessible, and accountable. They empower stakeholders to scrutinize and analyze procurement and infrastructure projects systematically, fostering fair competition, preventing corruption, and ultimately enhancing the efficiency and integrity of public spending, but their adoption usually requires a significant investment in digital infrastructures and capacity building of such, and with a very tight fiscal space, governments find it very difficult to adopt.

This commitment is designed to enhance the existing OCDS portal, transforming it into an OC4IDS Portal. The primary objective is to augment the accessibility of procurement data, foster improved communication, and raise awareness of the portal across diverse community structures. Furthermore, the plan incorporates a robust feedback and grievance redress mechanism to ensure heightened awareness and optimal usage of the portal. The initiative places a significant emphasis on engaging civil society organizations (CSOs) as pivotal stakeholders. These organizations will play a crucial role in harnessing the published data to advocate for enhancements in public procurement procedures and overall service delivery. By leveraging the power of civil society, the action plan seeks to create a more transparent and accountable procurement landscape, thereby contributing to the broader goal of good governance.

In addressing governance concerns, the action plan goes beyond the technological upgrade of the portal. It takes a proactive stance by advocating for the reinstatement of the Public Procurement Board, which has been inactive since 2019. The revival of this institution is seen as essential for reinforcing checks and balances in the public procurement process, ensuring its integrity and adherence to ethical standards.

Third, access to information for citizen engagement. There is insufficient citizens' engagement, participation, and feedback in the budget implementation due to the absence of a legal framework through the Freedom of Information Law in the State. Despite having the Eyes and Ears citizen engagement feedback tools, the upgrade and integration with other systems have reduced citizens' access to updated information. This results in citizens not having adequate information and thus, not being able to relate to projects in the budgets, which ultimately weakens accountability.

This commitment seeks to strengthen citizen engagement systems in Kaduna State. The Commitment seeks to further improve government responsiveness and engagement of the citizens in public service delivery by ensuring that the Freedom of Information Law is domesticated in the State. In the first commitment, the state created feedback tools for receiving citizens' feedback and expanded the tools to include WhatsApp, the Gani Ya kori Ji Hausa Radio program, Facebook, and writing to the Commissioner Planning and Budget Commission directly. The desire is to strengthen available online platforms to provide citizens with access to relevant information about government activities and policies as well as improve the systems in general to address tech infrastructure gaps. This platform will also provide an avenue for citizens to provide feedback and make suggestions without restrictions.

Fourth, strengthening social protection systems. Despite investment in social protection, there is still a high rate of multidimensional poverty in Kaduna State, and significant gaps in the provision of social protection services still exist in the state. This committee intends to bridge identified gaps in rendering social protection services in the state. This commitment can contribute to solving public problems. A life of dignity for all residents of Kaduna State by reducing the level of poverty in the state, increasing the number of vulnerable residents able to access social protection services on the basis of rights, and increasing the number of beneficiaries who graduate from the social register on account of an improved standard of living.

Fifth, improving service delivery in education and health sectors. The policy implementation for effective and equitable service delivery in the education and health sectors through co-created processes that promote citizens' participation and ownership in education reforms continues to be low, leading to delays in response from state actors to citizens' demand for data information, which lowers the goal for effective citizens' participation in policy/program implementation. Narrowing citizens' access to information around the budgeting and procurement process, at various stages, still remains a challenge that hinders effective citizens' participation and accountability in project delivery. In addition, low levels of engagement around policy formulation, review, and implementation continue to reduce the space for non-state actors' contribution to achieving development outcomes.

This commitment seeks to build citizens' trust in governance through which quality education and health services are delivered in a transparent and accountable manner while ensuring citizens' engagement in the implementation of various policies and access to useful procurement information that can aid informed decision-making, provide reliable feedback, and improve accountability and transparency of the service delivery processes through public participation.

Table 1. Potential Policy

No	Commitments	Potentials
1	Strengthening the participatory budget process	The Community Development Charter process is automated to ensure the needs of citizens inform the budget in a timely manner. This demonstrates that technology is an enabler that leads to increased participation of citizens in the budget process. This also takes into account the different citizen groups around the budget process, including persons with special needs.
		The budget is that document that is used to determine how services will be delivered to the people annually. Citizens being empowered to make inputs into it for better service delivery is essential to hold public officials to account in terms of spending. The publishing of quarterly budget performance demonstrates the desire of the government to remain accountable to the people who elected them to power.
2	Open Contracting Data Standard (OCDS) and Open Contracting 4 Infrastructure Data Standard (OC4IDS)	This commitment is relevant to disclosing contract and project data in a timely and efficient manner for citizens to have access to the data, encourage effective civic participation, and guarantee value for money. This will create a platform and level playing field for citizens to leverage, engage, and hold government accountable.
		This commitment is relevant to using technology to drive innovation in managing disclosed data by procuring entities in the state. The CoST Infrastructure Transparency Initiative will support the use of technology by integrating the e-procurement system and OCDS to align with OC4IDS. Also, it will provide data visualization for all disclosed projects to provide insights into the disclosure journey. This will increase public oversight of government and help reduce corruption by enabling greater transparency in the state and local government areas.
3	Access to information for citizen engagement	Citizen engagement commitment provides platforms and opportunities for citizens to participate in shaping decisions that concern them. The citizen feedback tools that exist in the state align with civic participation. The goal is to ensure that citizens are carried along in decision-making based on the Nurturing Citizens Engagement pillar of the SUSTAIN Agenda.
		Technology has been identified as an enabler in driving open governance. The use of innovative technology is at the heart of the Citizens Engagement process in Kaduna State. Today, citizens can call the toll-free line, engage the Citizens feedback app, provide feedback via WhatsApp and Facebook, and engage on the live Hausa Gani Ya Kori Ji Radio programs with technology playing a vital role. The citizens' engagement platforms also create opportunities for information sharing for effective public participation.
4	Strengthening social protection systems	This commitment is relevant to civic participation as it enables identified poor and vulnerable citizens, people living with disabilities, to benefit from social services provided by the government as a matter of right.
		This commitment is relevant to public accountability because it provides mechanisms and systems to track social services provided by the government. This creates an open channel to report on services that are not efficiently provided and feedback to the government for action.

5	Improving service delivery in education and health sectors	The commitment is relevant to civic participation because it enables citizens to monitor budgetary provisions used to provide services that meet their needs from the Community Development Charter up to the budget and procurement processes. This will increase the level of confidence in government and stimulate wider engagement by citizens.
		This commitment is relevant to public accountability as it enables the participation of citizens in the oversight of the financial management of the services provided by educational and health institutions in terms of receiving and expanding public funding.

Source: Processed by the Author

CONCLUSION

Kaduna State's open government is not popular despite being a local government pilot program of OGP. In the period 2011-2024, the study of Kaduna State's open government was dominated by topics including farming, education, transparency, health, service delivery, accountability, governance, conflict, information resources, and information and communication technology. The current and potential topics include cybersecurity, e-government systems, health insurance, financial resources, food security, electoral systems, electronic voting, good governance, democratic governance, and independent electoral commissions.

Kaduna State is currently focused on five of its open government commitments: Strengthening the participatory budget process. Maintaining a platform created for citizen input to influence the budget can promote ownership and sustainability; Open Contracting Data Standard and Open Contracting 4 Infrastructure Data Standard. Disclosure of procurement information and current project information using technology in real-time can demonstrate higher levels of responsiveness from the Government; Access to information for citizen engagement. Institutionalizing access to information by domesticating the Freedom of Information Act; Strengthening social protection systems.

Achieving a dignified life for all by reducing poverty; Improving service delivery in education and health sectors. Enhancing partnerships between state and non-state actors to ensure the implementation of education and health policies. These findings serve as recommendations for stakeholders to continue strengthening their commitments, including all OGP local government members, especially those with characteristics that are not much different from Kaduna State.

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