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PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OF THE IMPACT OF ANNUAL BUDGETS BY FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA ON HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEXES 1999-2021

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Abstract

Nigeria returned to democratic system of governance which is characterized by voice, accountability, economic growth, and development and improvement of living standards of citizens in 1999. Annual budgets by the federal government of are a significant tool in achieving economic growth and development and improved standard of living of citizens. Therefore, the main aim of this study is to longitudinally evaluate the impact of annual budgets by the federal government of Nigeria on its citizens based on Human Development Index (HDI) of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) 1999-2021. To achieve the aim of the study, secondary data on Nigeria's HDI score which is composed of three human development indices of life expectancy, education, and Gross National Income (GNI) were collected from the annual UNDP human development reports. Similarly, data on Nigeria's budgets were collected from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and annual reports of Budget Office of the Federation (BOF) 1999-2021. Collected data are descriptively analyzed using statistical tools of charts, and tables while Rostow-Musgrave's theory of public expenditure and public policy analytical framework underpins the study. On the overall, obtained result indicated increasing budgets, low and fluctuating trends of HDI 1999-2021. The policy implications of obtained results are that government budgets are not translating into improving HDI of Nigerians and are an indication of weak budgetary performance. Democratically elected governments in Nigeria should strive to improve the living standard of Nigerians through adequate and proper budget implementation as democratic governments are synonymous with growth and development.

Key Words: Budget, Human Development Index, Public Policy Analysis, Longitudinal, Democratic Governance

1. Introduction

Some of the basic functions of governments are self-preservation, provision of goods and services, protection of political and social rights, conflicts resolution, and regulation of the economy (Heslop, 2022; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2021, 2011). For governments to discharge these functions, they need to raise public finances (Birungi & Colbourn, 2019). Collected public funds by governments can only expend through the instrument of budget serving as means of financial control (Pattanayak, 2016; Walker, 1926). Budget is a financial statement prepared on annual basis in the public sector to forecast the expenditures and revenues of governments to guide policy makers in decision-making and accountability processes (Farazmand, 2018). Consequently, budget is a central policy document of governments that aims to turn plans and aspirations into reality; thus, it is a social contract between citizens and states and an instrument that influences economic development (OECD, 2014). Economic development is identified as the driver that enhances the quality of food, health, education, and housing, transportation among others of citizens which are measured in three indices of life expectancy, education and Gross National Income (GNI). These three indices are aggregated and termed as Human Development Index (United Nations Development Program, 2022b).

There is literature on the relationship between budgetary spending and health (Adebisi, Umah, Olaoye, Alaran, Sina-Odunsi, & Lucero-Prisno, 2020; McIntyre, Meheus, & Rottingen, 2017); budgetary spending and educational development (Onoja, Okafor, & Jane, 2020; Ogungbenle & Edogiawerie, 2016) and budgetary spending and economic development (Ahuja & Pandit, 2020; Onifade, Çevik, Erdoğan, Asongu & Bekun, 2020). Literature on governments public spending and health could be contended as representing life expectancy indices; literature on public spending and educational development are arguably on education indices while literature on public spending and economic development are on GNI indices. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has been issuing annual Human Development Index Report (HDIR) which is correlating public expenditure on the three dimensions of life expectancy denoted by long and healthy life, education represented by knowledge and GNI standing for decent standard living (UNDP, 2022). Therefore, recorded improvements on these three dimensions could be contended as measures of budget performance.

Coming from this perspective that budgetary performance improves HDI, the aim of this study is to evaluate the impact of Nigerian federal government budgets on HDI 1999-2021. Achieving this aim may clearly assist policy makers with trends of budget performance in the last 23 years of democratic governance and in this way, governments could improve on budget performance. The citizens could through this trend analysis of budget performance demand more accountability from governments for nation development. This is section one of the study, section two is literature review composed of conceptual and empirical reviews, section three is methodology, section four is result while section five is discussions of results and section six is conclusion and recommendation of the study.

2. Literature review

2.1 Conceptual Review

Nigeria: Nigeria is a West African country that covers a total area of 923,768 square kilometres and is practicing democratic rule uninterruptedly 1999 to date (2022). The country is structured as a federal republic composing of federal government, 36 states, 774 local councils and a federal capital in Abuja (Falola & Heaton 2008). The estimated population of the country as at 2021 is 211.40million and it is projected that to grow to 450million by 2050 (United Nations Population Fund 2021a, 2021b). The growing population of the country is perhaps signifying the need for more public infrastructures and services which could only be possible if annual budgets are well implemented. Well implemented budgets are suggesting good performance and serving as means of accountability to citizens. The budget of Nigerian federal government is the biggest single budget cutting across all states and local governments; thus, the focus of this study is Nigerian federal government budget implementation based on HDI scores 1999-2021.

Public Budget: Budget refers to the financial documents carried to and read to members of the parliament by the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Schick, 2009). The Chartered Institute of Management Accountant (CIMA), defined budget as a financial statement most often in quantitative terms prepared and approved prior to a defined period of time showing planned income to be generated and/ or expenditure to be incurred in order to achieve set of government objectives (Institute of Chattered Accountants of Nigeria, 2018). However, public budgets are not only serving informative purposes, but are legal tools entailing that only approved expenditures can be incurred and no expenditures can exceed authorized amounts (Cliche, 2012). Similarly, budget is a central policy document of governments indicating priorities and how objectives could be achieved. Budget is also serving as a contract between citizens and state showing how revenues are raised and allocated for the delivery of public services. Thus, budget must be clear, transparent and credible to command trust, serve as basis of accountability, leads to proper allocation of resources, enhance economic growth and have positive impact on citizens (OECD, 2014).

Human Development Index (HDI)

An index simply means a sign or measure of something; thus, Human Development Index (HDI) emphasize that the ultimate criteria for assessing the development of a country should be people and their capabilities, not economic growth alone (United Nations Development Programme, 2022). There are three dimensions of HDI, one; healthy life having an indicator of life expectancy at birth and life expectancy as its index. Two, knowledge dimension with expected years of schooling and mean years of schooling as its indicators and education index as its index. Three, the dimension of decent standard of living having the indicator of GNI per capita measured in US dollar Purchasing Power Parities (PPP) and GNI index as its index. The overall measure of the HDI is the geometric mean of normalized indices for each of the three dimensions which are then aggregated into a composite index with a score of 1. The HDI index can be used to question choice of national policies such as formulation and implementation of annual budgets (UNDP, 2022) as employed by this study. There are empirical studies that evaluated the performance of national budgets on health, education and economy as the main components of HDI.

2.2 Empirical Review

Balakrishnan and Namboodhiry (2021) analysed the health budgets of 30 states in India 2018-2019 to examine the impacts of health expenditure on mortality rate from Covid-19. The study collected secondary data on health budgets and mortality rates from Covid-19 of the 30 states. For the health budgets, the study employed medical infrastructure in the public sector and public expenditure on health in explaining the variation in mortality from COVID-19 across the states while the Case Fatality Rate (CFR) is used to measure mortality from Covid-19. Collected data is analysed first by computed rank correlation between state-wise CFR, public expenditure on health, per capita income and some items of health infrastructure. Secondly, regression analysis is conducted by regressing mortality measures of health expenditure, the two items of health infrastructure (hospitals and beds) and the number of doctors on per head of the population of individual states. Findings from the analyses revealed statistically significant relationships between mortality and public health expenditure and mortality and health infrastructures of number of hospitals and beds.

Adebisi, Umah, Olaoye, Alaran, Sina-Odunsi and Lucero-Prisno (2020) examined government budgetary allocation and expenditure as key health development indicators towards achieving the Universal Health Coverage (UHC) in Nigeria. To achieve the aim of the study, data was collected from journal articles, reports and other secondary sources such as PubMed, Google Scholar, and the library of the World Health Organization (WHO) based on pre-determined search terms. Collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistical tools of charts and tables and results from the study revealed that annual national health budgetary allocation in Nigeria has been below the 2001 Abuja declaration of allocating 15% of the national budget to health 2014-2020. This is indicating low budget allocation for capital expenditure and low budget implementation in the health sector which is negatively affecting the sector's ability to achieve UHC.

Ogungbenle and Edogiawerie (2016) empirically examined the effect of Nigerian federal government budgetary allocation on the development of tertiary institutions in Nigeria 2000-2014. To conduct the study, secondary data on federal government recurrent expenditure on education was used which was collected from the Central Bank of Nigeria statistical bulletin and reports of National Bureau of sSatistics (NBS) over the period of the study. Collected data was descriptively analyzed and presented using descriptive statistical tools of tables and charts. Result from the study indicated that budgetary allocation to the Nigerian education sector over the period of the study is not in any way encouraging. Indeed, allocations to the education sector in Nigeria are far below the UNESCO recommended allocation of 26% of annual budget to the sector.

Okafor, Etim and Efanga (2021) empirically evaluated budget implementation which is denoting performance on the economic development of Nigeria 2000-2019. The research is designed as an ex-post facto research and to achieve the aim of the study, secondary data from Central Bank of Nigeria Statistical Bulletin and documents from the Federal Ministry of Finance, the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) were obtained. To quantify human development, researchers utilize the Human Development Index (HID) while econometric analysis is conducted on collected data using the Auto Regressive Distributed Lag (ARDL) model. The HDI is the dependent variable in the model while Public Recurrent Expenditure (PREX), Public Capital Spending (PCEX) and Budget Implementation Rate (PBIR) are the independent variables. Findings from the ARDL analysis revealed that implementation of capital budget had considerable beneficial influence on Nigeria's economic growth.

Lee, Won, and Jei (2019) conducted a cross country study of china and North Korea to analyze the effect of a Functional Classification of Government Expenditure (FCOGE) on the economic growth of the two countries. Data for the study was collected from secondary sources while the Quantile Regression (QR) model that is increasingly been used as a very important empirical tool of analysis in applied econometrics was used to analyzed collected data. Result from the study revealed that budgetary spending in China and North Korea has positive and significant relationship with economic growth.

3. Methodology

The main aim of this study is to longitudinally evaluate the impact of budgets by the federal government of Nigeria benchmarked on UNDP human development index 1999-2021. To achieve the aim of the study, secondary data on Nigeria's budgets was obtained from Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) 1999-2010 and Budget Office of the Federation 2011-2021. Similarly, Nigeria's HDI scores were obtained from annual HDI reports of the UNDP. Collected data are descriptively analyzed and presented using statistical tools of charts and tables.

3.1 Theoretical Framework

Theoretical framework is the blueprint or guide for the conduct of research (Fulton, & Krainovich-Miller, 2010). Rostow-Musgrave theory of public expenditure state that at the early stages of economic development, government must provide the basic critical development infrastructures which are capital intensive. Thus, to launch the economy to industrialization and development the rate of growth of public expenditure on providing needed infrastructures will be very high and steadily increasing (Adeniyi, 2013). Consequently, increasing patterns of Nigerian federal government budget if properly implemented in financing the development of infrastructures should translate to improved HDI, otherwise it is indicating improper implementation of increasing federal government budgets. Policy analysis analytical framework is about undertaking analyses of public policies implemented by governments and institutions to determine whether such are good or bad (Torjman, 2005). Analysis of public policy is undertaken by means of critical evaluation of the policies or programs (Patton, 1987) and although evaluation could be undertaken from identified four perspectives, this study is focusing on impact evaluation (Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, 2017). From the perspective of public policy analytical framework, budgets as policy documents when properly implemented by Nigerian federal government, should results in improved HDI; otherwise, it is indicating lack of proper budget implementation. The lenses of the two theories are employed to explain patterns of increasing Nigerian federal government budgets in improving the HDI score of Nigeria 1999-2021.

4. Results and Discussion

This section is devoted to presenting obtained results based on utilized descriptive statistical tools. Figure 1 present Nigeria's federal government budgets 1999-2021 in trillions of Naira obtained from CBN and the Budget office.

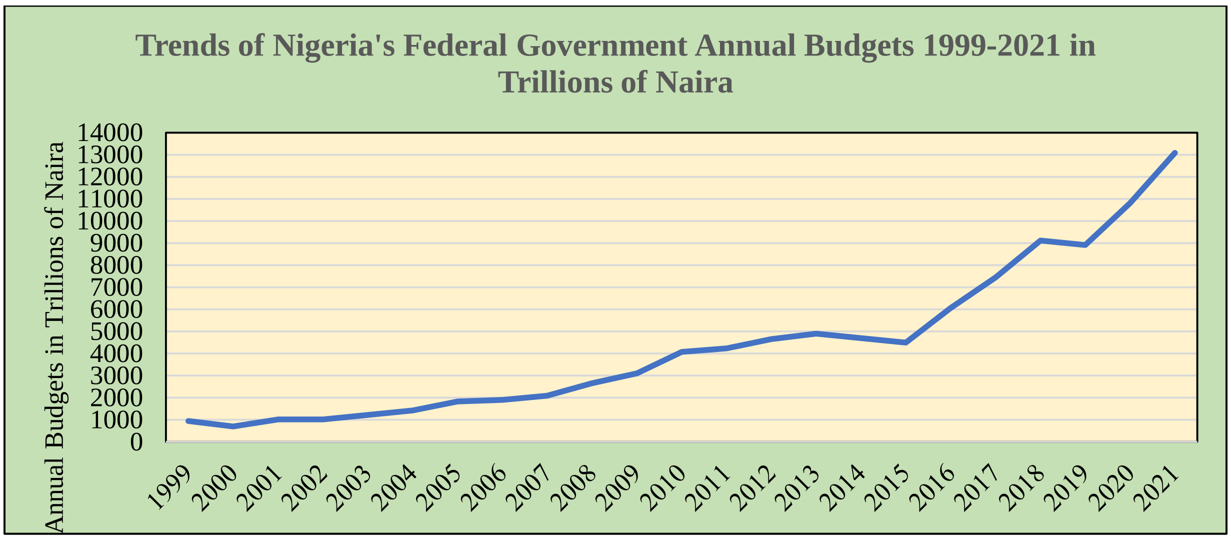

Figure I: Trends of Nigeria's Annual Budget 1999-2021 (Source: This Study)

From Figure I, Nigeria's federal government budget was N949.19billion in 1999 which decreased to N701.10billion in 2000 increasing to N1,018.00 trillion in 2001 and slightly increased to N1,018.20 trillion in 2002. The budget increased to N1,226.00 in 2003 which further increased to N1,426.20 trillion in 2004 and to N1,822.10 trillion in 2005 which further increased to N1,900.00 trillion in 2006 and to N2,088.00 trillion in 2007. Nigeria's federal government increased to N2,647.00 trillion in 2008 further increased to N3,102.00 trillion in 2009 and to N4,079.65 in 2010. In 2011, the budget increased to N4,226.19 trillion further increasing to N4,648.85 trillion in 2012 which increased to N4,900.00 trillion in 2013 but decreased to N4,695.19 trillion in 2014. The budget further decreased to N4,493.36 trillion in 2015 and significantly increased to N6,061.68 trillion in 2016 further increased to N7,441.17 trillion in 2017 and further increased to N9,120.33 trillion in 2018. Nigeria's federal government budget decreased in 2019 to N8,916.96 trillion which increased to N10,810.80 trillion in 2020 and further increased to N13,082.42 trillion in 2021. Overall, Nigeria's federal government budget showed increasing trends which should translate to enhanced HDI scores if the budgets are properly implemented. Figure 2 is on HDI scores obtained from UNDP HDI annual reports.

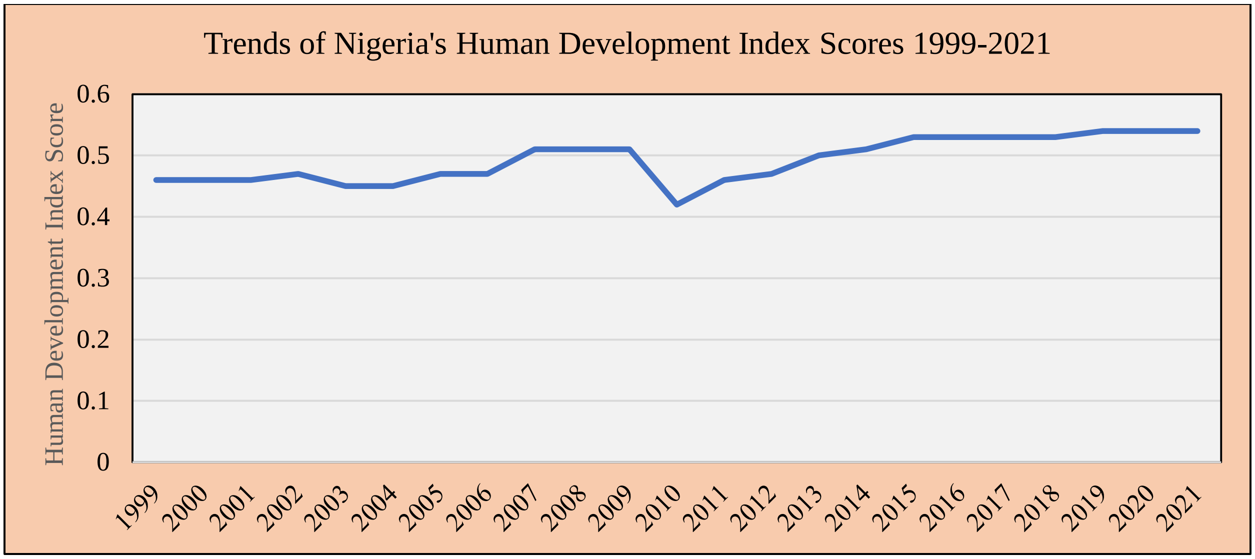

Figure 2: Trends of Nigeria's HDI Scores 1999-2021 (Source: This Study)

The trends of HDI scores 1999-2021 as indicated in Figure 2 showed that the score was 0.46 out of 1 in 1999, 2000 and 2001. The score increased to 0.47 in 2002 which decreased to 0.45 in 2003 and 2005. The score increased to 0.47 in 2005 and 2006 then increased to 0.51 in 2007, 2008 and 2009 then decreased to 0.42 in 2010 slightly increased to 0.46 in 2011 to 0.47 in 2012 and to 0.50 in 2013. The HDI score slightly increased to 0.51 in 2014 and to 0.53 in 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018 further increased to 0.54 in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Thus, over the period of the study, HDI score showed increasing trends in 7 years, decreasing trends in 2 years and constant trends in 14 years; therefore, the trends of HDI score depicted constant low score implying low budget performance. Table I is on Nigeria's annual budgets and HDI scores 1999-2021 for comparison.

Table I: Nigeria's Federal Government Budgets and HDI Scores 1999-2021

S/N	Years	Budgets in trillions of Naira (N)	% increase or decrease	HDI Scores	% increase or decrease
1	1999	949.19		0.46	
2	2000	701.10	-35.39	0.46	0.00
3	2001	1,018.00	31.13	0.46	0.00
4	2002	1,018.20	0.02	0.47	2.13
5	2003	1,226.00	16.95	0.45	-4.44
6	2004	1,426.20	14.04	0.45	0.00
7	2005	1,822.10	21.73	0.47	4.26
8	2006	1,900.00	4.10	0.47	0.00
9	2007	2,088.00	9.00	0.51	7.84
10	2008	2,647.00	21.12	0.51	0.00
11	2009	3,102.00	14.67	0.51	0.00
12	2010	4,079.65	23.96	0.42	-21.43
13	2011	4,226.19	3.47	0.46	8.70
14	2012	4,648.85	9.09	0.47	2.13
15	2013	4,900.00	5.13	0.50	6.00
16	2014	4,695.19	-4.36	0.51	1.96
17	2015	4,493.36	-4.49	0.53	3.77

18	2016	6,061.68	25.87	0.53	0.00
19	2017	7,441.17	18.54	0.53	0.00
20	2018	9,120.33	18.41	0.53	0.00
21	2019	8,916.96	-2.28	0.54	1.85
22	2020	10,810.80	17.52	0.54	0.00
23	2021	13,082.42	17.36	0.54	0.00

(Source: This Study)

From Table 1, Nigeria's federal government budget has been increasing 1999-2021; however, HDI has been fluctuating over the same period. Total annual budget by Nigerian federal government in 1999 was N949.19billion while the corresponding HDI is 0.46. Federal government budget in 2000 is N701.10billion indicating a decrease of 35.39% compared to 1999; however, the HDI index for the year remained 0.46. In 2001, total budget is N1,018.00 trillion thereby signifying 31.13% increase over 2000 budget while the HDI score for the year still remained constant at 0.46. In 2002, the budget was N1,018.20 trillion giving 0.02% increase in the budget, the HDI score also slightly increased to 0.47 indicating 2.13% in the HDI scores. In 2003, Nigeria's federal government budget increased to N1,226.00 trillion indicating 16.95% increase over 2002 budget; however, the HDI score for the year decreased to 0.45 indicating 4.44% decrease compared to 2002.

Nigeria's federal government budget in 2004 is N1,426.20 trillion giving an increase of 14.04% over 2003 budget while HDI for the year 2004 remained 0.46. The budget in 2005 increased to N1,822.10 trillion giving an increase of 21.73% over 2004 budget while the HDI index slightly increased to 0.47 indicating a 4.26% increase over 2004. In 2006, the federal government budget further increased to N1,900.00 trillion giving a 4.10% increase compared to 2005; however, the HDI index for 2006 remained 0.47. Federal government budget in 2007 was N2,088.00 trillion indicating 9% increase compared to 2006 budget while the HDI score is 0.51 giving an increase of 7.84% over 2006. In 2008, the budget slightly increased to N2,647.00 giving 21.12% increase over 2007 and the corresponding HDI score for 2008 remained 0.51. The budget in 2009 was N3,102.00 trillion giving an increase of 14.67% over 2008 budget; however, the HDI score remained 0.51. In 2010, the budget increased to N4,079.65 trillion giving a 23.96% increase over 2009 budget while the HDI score decreased to 0.42 translating to 21.43% decreased compared to 2009.

In 2011, Nigeria's federal government budget increased to N4,226.19 trillion resulting into 3.49% increase over 2010 while HDI slightly increased to 0.46 giving 8.70% increase over 2010. The budget in 2012 increased to N4,648.85 trillion representing 9.09% increase over 2011 budget while the HDI for 2012 was 0.47 resulting into 2.13% increase over 2011. In 2013, the budget increased to N4,900.00 trillion indicating 5.13% increase over 2012 and the HDI score was 0.50 giving an increase of 6% over the HDI score in 2012. The budget in 2014 slightly decreased to N4,695.19 trillion which showed a decrease of 4.36% compared to 2013; however, the HDI was 0.51 thereby indicating a slight increase of 1.96% compared to 2013. Nigeria's federal government budget in 2015 slightly decreased to N4,493.36 trillion which indicated 4.49% decrease compared to 2014 and the corresponding HDI score was 0.53 showing a slight increase of 3.77% compared to 2014. In 2016, the budget was N6,061.68 trillion which indicated 25.87% increase over 2015 budget while the HDI remained 0.53. In 2017, the budget was N7,441.17 trillion which indicated 18.54% increase over 2016 budget while HDI score remained 0.53. The budget in 2018 was N9,120.33 trillion which showed an increase of 18.41% over 2017 budget while the HDI score for the same 2018 remained 0.53. In 2019, the budget slightly decreased to N8,916.96 trillion resulting into 2.28% decrease in the budget compared to 2018 while the HDI score was 0.54 which indicated 1.85% increase compared to 2018. The budget in 2020 was N10,810.80 trillion thereby indicating 17.52% increase over 2019 budget; however, the HDI score remained 0.54. In 2021, the budget was N13,082.42 trillion indicating 17.36% increase over 2020 budget while the HDI score remained 0.54. Table II present how Nigeria performed among assessed nations on HDI score.

Table 2: Nigeria's Global Performance on HDI Scores 1999-2021

S/N	Years	Number of Countries Assessed	Quartiles				Nigeria's Ranking	Nigeria's quartile position based on its ranking
			1st	2nd	3rd	4th Greater than:		
1	1999	162	40.50	81.00	121.50	123	136	4th
2	2000	173	43.25	86.50	129.75	130	148	4th
3	2001	175	43.75	87.50	131.25	132	152	4th
4	2002	177	44.25	88.50	132.75	132	151	4th
5	2003	177	44.25	88.50	132.75	132	158	4th
6	2004	177	44.25	88.50	132.75	132	159	4th
7	2005	177	44.25	88.50	132.75	132	158	4th
8	2006	177	44.25	88.50	132.75	132	158	4th
9	2007	182	45.50	91.00	136.50	137	158	4th
10	2008	182	45.50	91.00	136.50	137	158	4th
11	2009	182	45.50	91.00	136.50	137	158	4th
12	2010	169	42.25	84.50	126.75	127	142	4th
13	2011	187	46.75	93.50	140.25	141	156	4th
14	2012	186	46.50	93.00	139.50	140	153	4th
15	2013	187	46.75	93.50	140.25	141	152	4th
16	2014	188	47.00	94.00	141.00	142	152	4th
17	2015	188	47.00	94.00	141.00	142	152	4th
18	2016	189	47.25	94.50	141.75	142	157	4th
19	2017	189	47.25	94.50	141.75	142	158	4th
20	2018	189	47.25	94.50	141.75	142	158	4th
21	2019	189	47.25	94.50	141.75	142	161	4th
22	2020	189	47.25	94.50	141.75	142	161	4th
23	2021	191	47.75	95.50	143.25	144	163	4th

(Source: This Study)

From Table 2, Nigeria's performance on global HDI scores among assessed nations 1999-2021 has been in the fourth quartile signifying that Nigeria is constantly among the lowest 25% which is indicating a very weak performance (Orbay, Miranda & Orbay, 2020).

4.1 Discussion of Findings

This section discusses obtained results by the study by linking the results with literature, theory and practice. The main aim of this study is to longitudinally evaluate the impact of annual budgets by the federal government of Nigeria on its citizens based on Human Development Index (HDI) of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) 1999-2021. In 2000, 2014, 2015 and 2019, Nigeria's budgets decreases compared to preceding years in each case; however, HDI increases in these years thereby signifying better budget performance. Thus, on the overall, Nigeria's federal government budgets 1999-2021 showed increasing trends although HDI scores are low and showed fluctuating trends. This finding is consistent with Okafor, Etim and Efanga (2021) that found implementation of capital budget had considerable beneficial influence on Nigeria's economic growth; thus, the more the government spending the better the economy and vice versa. It is also consistent with Balakrishnan and Namboodhiry (2021) that statistically found significant relationships between public health expenditure and mortality, and health infrastructures. Thus, low budgetary expenditure translates to high mortality and few health infrastructures and vice versa.

The finding is also consistent with Adebisi, Umah, Olaoye, Alaran, Sina-Odunsi and Lucero-Prisno (2020) that reported low budget implementation in the Nigerian health sector.

Nigeria's increasing annual budgets kept increasing which is consistent with Rostow-Musgrave's theory of public expenditure which argued that in the early part of economic development government must provide infrastructural facilities which are capital intensive; thus, budgets keep increasing. However, investments in infrastructures should translate to improved living standard of citizens as measured by the UNDP HDI scores if the budgets are properly implemented; thus, with low and fluctuating HDI scores, it is implying low budgetary performance. Low performance of Nigeria's federal annual budgets means that the budgets as policies that should translate to achieving the aspirations of government are ineffective and are not positively impacting on the living standards of Nigerian citizens and this is better explained by public policy analytical framework. Likewise, Nigeria's HDI score among nations 1999-2021 revealed that the HDI scores are in the lowest 25% over the period of the study. This is further confirming the low performance of Nigeria's federal government budgets 1999-2021 as the increasing budgets are not translating to improved HDI scores. In practice, increasing budgets should translate to improved government capabilities of providing needed critical infrastructures in education, health and the economy among others which should in the overall enhance HDI scores; however, obtained result in this study revealed otherwise.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This section dwells on drawing conclusions and recommendations by the study grounded on obtained results. Based on the result obtained by the study, it could be concluded that the performances of Nigeria's federal government increasing budgets 1999-2021 as in Figure I are low as evidenced by the low and fluctuating HDI scores in Figure II and Table I which are further confirmed by the position of Nigeria's HDI scores in the lowest 25% globally 1999-2021 as in Table II. This study recommends that current and future democratically elected federal governments in Nigeria should place emphasis on proper implementation of annual budgets to achieve their objectives, satisfy the electorates and upheld the integrity of budgets as a public policy documents and means of discharging accountability. In turn, proper implementation of budgets may enhance HDI scores in consistence with democratic governance identified with economic growth and improvement of living standard of citizens.

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