AN EXAMINATION OF NIGERIA'S SECURITY ISSUES

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Abstract

This article examines the security challenges threatening Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives of the study were: to examines the security challenges confronting Nigeria; to examine the dimensions of internal security; to identify the security challenges confronting Nigeria. The study used secondary data. It also adopted the frustration-aggression theory to provide a direction for the article. The study found that Nigeria is faced with the burden of security challenges which resulted loss of live and property. The evil activities of Boko Haram terrorists, farmers-herders crashes armed banditry, and kidnapping, are among the security challenges threatening the peace and stability of Nigeria. The Federal Government aims to curtail these activities, using various efforts but the security challenges persist, such as killing of innocent people, damage critical national infrastructure and displacement of hundreds of thousands of people across the country. The article recommends that the government should address poverty and other causes of social exclusion which push young ones into crime and criminality in Nigeria; adopt both kinetic and non-kinetic strategies in the fight against insurgency and other criminal activities as well as ensure robust interagency cooperation among the security agencies involved in fighting insecurity in the country, especially in the area of information sharing and dissemination.

Keywords: Boko-Haram; Internal security; IPOB; Security challenges; Social exclusion.

Introduction

Security is a state of relatively predictable environmental conditions which an individual or group of individuals may pursue without deception of harm and without fear of disturbances or injuries (Okpata and Nwali, 2013). For Terriff (1991), security is the condition of feeling safe from harm or danger, the defense, protection and preservation of values, and the absence of threats to acquire values. Security is an umbrella term under which there are multiple dimensions (Valverde, 2010; Jones, 2012). It can be deployed to describe a subjective feeling of safety or as an objective state of being protected from the possibility of danger, as well as the means of pursuing either of these streams (Zedner, 2003). The safety aspect of security involves protection from physical threats and safeguards for emotional, psychological and financial well-being. This, in turn, suggests that security is much broader in scope and therefore, involves a wide range of governing processes to make it a reality (Valverde, 2010).

Nigeria has of late, witnessed new forms of security threats which have affected the peace and stability of the country. Such threats are linked to crimes perpetrated by groups such as Boko Haram insurgents, kidnappers, bandits, farmers-herders' clashes, among others. These challenges have not only posed threats to the corporate existence of Nigeria but also undermined the unity of the nation (Nwagboso, 2018). The security challenges are more endemic and widespread in the seven Northwest states, namely, Kano, Jigawa, Katsina, Kaduna, Zamfara, Sokoto and Kebbi. Of the seven States, Katsina, Kaduna, Zamfara, Sokoto and Kebbi states, have been most affected by the scourge of banditry.

It is however, pertinent to note that, the security challenges are not limited to northwestern Nigeria. Such hiccups are also prevalent in some parts of the north-central region like Niger, Nasarawa, Benue, and Plateau States. The South-East region is also in the grip of for the scourge of the IPOB (Kuna & Jibrin 2016). Other dimensions of the security problems in Nigeria include issues of religious intolerance, subversion, cross border crimes, sabotage, terrorism and insurgency. This article examines the security challenges confronting Nigeria.

Conceptual Clarification

This section clarifies the key concepts used in the article. These are security, internal security and security challenges.

Security

Security is the state of safety, absence of fear, threat or risk to individual members of the society, communities or the entire social fabric, country, sub-region, or the entire globe. It is also the measures taken by a community to enhance the safety of its members. Thus, security is a cherished value of every human society, without which no society can

function effectively. Purpura (2011) also argues that security cans the strategies for overcoming any threat to society or the institutions that promotes the security, such as the police. In Nigerian context, the institutions that promote security include the Nigeria Police Force, National Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), Nigeria Custom Service, Nigeria Immigration Service, Department of State Security, and the Nigerian Armed Forces.

Internal Security:
The concept of internal security has been conceived from various perspectives. Internal security means the capability of a state to defend its territorial integrity from all forms of threat, real or imagined as well as acts of aggression from its actual and imagined enemies (Okwori, 1995). According to Walter Lippmann (1943), a nation is said to be secure when it does not have to sacrifice its legitimate interests to avoid war, and is able, if challenged, to maintain them by war". For (Harold Lasswell, 1950), internal security is freedom from foreign dictation.

Internal security is the protection, safety and survival of both the state and its citizens from Harm, destruction or some other threats dangerous for human survival (Adebakin and Raimi, 2012). Internal security also means the combined efforts aimed at avoiding, preventing, reducing or resolving violent conflicts at various levels or dimensions of its manifestation (Stan, 2004).

Security Challenges
Having noted that security is the safety and absence of fear and anxiety, security challenge or insecurity is the opposite of security. In other words, security challenges are those threats to the safety and peace of the society. They are the presence of fear, anxiety, and threats to the society. Security challenges, like the security, can affect individual members of the society or community, or nation or the world at large. The security challenges can also emanate from different aspects or structures of the social system, such as threats to health, to the economy, to the political and social sub-systems or to the environment.

Methodology
The method used in the course of this study is secondary source or desk review. The researchers made use of secondary data sourced from text-books, journal articles, internet/online materials, magazines, conference proceedings. The researchers also made use of some search engines like Google-scholar, academia.edu, Research Gate, etc. Primarily, the data collected were related to those for evaluating and identifying the security challenges confronting Nigeria. Analysis of the secondary data was done qualitative method.

Literature Review
Challenges of Internal Security in Nigeria

The internal security situation in Nigeria has seemingly negatively affected the image and status of Nigeria on the African continent and the world at large. Nigeria, which used to be touted as the giant of Africa, and fabled for assisting other smaller countries like Niger, Chad, Liberia and Sierra-Leone, to manage their security challenge, now depends on the support of those countries to fight *Boko Haram* insurgency and other security challenges facing the country. The following are some of the security challenges in Nigeria.

Boko Haram:

Boko-Haram is a group of radical Islamist youth based initially in Borno State of Northeastern Nigeria, which alleged to have links to other international terrorist organizations, such as the ISIS (Islamic State in Iraq and Syria), Al-Qaeda and Taliban. The group's objective is to replace the dominance of western education with its own version of Islamic knowledge and to establish *Khilafah* (a Shariah-based government which is rooted in their own perspective of Islam) in place of the democratic government in Nigeria (Mukhtar, 2023). In Nigeria, *Boko Haram* started as a small radical Islamist organization, which then enjoyed limited support from among the *Sufi* Islamic communities in the North eastern part of Nigeria. The agenda of *Boko Haram* is to ensure that Western education has no place in Nigeria, which explains why they have relations with other similar terrorist groups elsewhere. Aside being anti-western in posture, this group carried out attacks on shopping malls, air ports, educational institutions, market places, Police barracks, army camps, immigration offices, Prisons, and worship centers among others. *Boko Haram* started its attacks domestically in Borno State of North-eastern Nigeria, but later spread its tentacles to other States such Kano, Yobe, Adamawa, Bauchi and Abuja among others (Mukhtar, 2023).

The Famer-Herders Phenomenon

Recently, there appears to be a new paradigm shift in threat perception and of internal security challenge in the Northern part of Nigeria. That paradigm shift is the famer-herders phenomenon. This is because, what used to be a common internal security challenge in the region, has metamorphosed into a more perturbing internal security challenge in the country. Consequently, available documented evidence has shown that in 2012, herdsmen started to move around for grazing of their flock with guns and ammunition and frequently launched attacks on civilian populations (Igbuzor, 2011, as cited in (Audu 2022)). Indeed, such attacks especially against farmers resulted in the destruction of lives and property of most communities in Benue, Kaduna, Adamawa and Taraba States, etc.

Armed Banditry

The current security challenge facing Nigeria which seems to have defied all odds is that of armed banditry. Armed banditry involves the use of force, or threat to intimidate a person with the intent to rob; rape or kill. Banditry manifests in four major dimensions, namely, kidnapping, armed robbery, village raids and cattle rustling. of these four dimensions, kidnapping and mass abduction of people, especially innocent and unguarded school students/pupils for ransom is gradually taking the lead as no day passes by without hearing on the radio or reading in the national dailies, news of kidnap of innocent citizens in one part of the country or the other (Audu, 2022). By the end of 2009, police records revealed that a total of 2,148 people had been kidnapped in Nigeria based on reported incidences (Alemika, 2012:48). These figures have more than tripled as recent studies tend to suggest (Okoli & Agada, 2014). Between July and October, 2021 alone, armed bandits killed 213 persons while about 676 others were kidnapped across Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Katsina State. On the 28th of March, 2022, a Kaduna bound train from Abuja was attacked by 'unknown gunmen' leaving at least eight persons dead and several others sustaining different degrees of injuries while over a hundred others were kidnapped to 'unknown destinations'. In the same vein, 2 Catholic Priests attached to St. Patrick's Catholic Church and two of their aides were kidnapped at gunpoint in Gidan Maikambo in Kafur LGA of Katsina State on 25th May, 2022 (Ankeli, 2022).

Kidnapping

Kidnapping is a criminal activity that has continued to pose serious threat to the Nigerian state and security. Chukwurah (2011), contended that kidnapping is perceived as the act of illegally taking someone away and keeping him as a prisoner for the purpose of receiving ransom. Kidnapping in Nigeria could be as a result of hostilities, conflicts, crises and violence. Inyang and Abraham (2013:532) defined it as "the forcible seizure, taking away and unlawful detention of a person against his/her will. It is a common law offence and the key part is that it is an unwarranted act on the part of the victim". Another definition offered by Fage and Alabi (2017:289) conceived kidnapping as "forceful or fraudulent abduction of an individual or a group of individuals for reasons ranging from economic, political, and religious to self-determination". Uzorma and Nwanegbo-Ben (2014:132), also defined kidnapping as the "act of seizing and detaining or carrying away a person by unlawful force or by fraud, and often with a demand for ransom. It involves taking a person from their family forcefully with the motive of holding the person hostage and earning a profit from their family

Kidnapping in Nigeria is on the increase day by day. Statistically, Nigeria records more than 1,000 kidnapping incidents a year, and there are certainly many that are unreported. The victims include migrants and indigenous people from different locations. International footballer, Christian Obodo was in 2012 kidnapped during church service in broad day light. In the same year, kidnappers abducted a United States citizen in the Niger delta region and killed his driver. In Nigeria, many factors are

responsible for kidnapping, among which are, unemployment, underemployment, poverty, political violence and lack of severe punishment for offenders (Catlin Group, 2012).

Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB)

One of the greatest threats confronting the unity of Nigeria now is the issue of Biafra separatism. This issue has become a national security concern. The movement has been reinforced particularly with the separatist agitation of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), in such a way that Nigeria's security environment appears to have become more unstable than ever before (Onuoha, 2021). However, the agitation which was initially non-violent, gained public attention when a body known as the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) formed by Ralph Uwazuruike, a lawyer who was trained in India, gained traction. Although the activities of MASSOB led to confrontations with the law enforcement at different times and the arrest of its leader, it received little attention from the international media and community. Worried that the dream for the independence of Biafra will not be realized through MASSOB, Nnamdi Kanu, a Nigerian-British based in London, decided to use the emerging mode of communication, social media, and online radio to drive millions of pro-Biafra independence activists, supporters and sympathizers to his cause (Basil, 2017).

The incitement and violent acts against the Nigerian state by the clandestine *Radio Biafra* on 31 August 2015, the day after the military killed two and injured 30 IPOB members in Onitsha, saw the pro-Biafra agitators threaten violent retaliation against the military. Radio Biafra has also accused the Nigerian security forces of committing "genocide. These incitements were seen as threats to security condition in Nigeria that needs urgent concern. A combination of the foregoing security challenges has led to needless loss of lives and property, destruction of critical national infrastructure and disrupted foreign direct investment, FDI, with dire socio-economic consequences for Nigeria and Nigerians.

Theoretical Framework

This study made use of the frustration-aggression theory to provide a theoretical direction for the article. The theory is identified with Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer and Sears in 1939 to explain why people behave violently especially when the goals they had hoped for failed, as is th case with criminals like as Boko Haram insurgents, armed bandits and kidnappers who threaten the peace and security of Nigeria. The theory notes that aggressive behavior time and again, leads to anger while anger can transform to perpetration of criminal activities. Moreover, anger caused by frustration, in one way or another, is stored within a person or a group of people and may lead to unbearable frustration that could lead to aggressive behavior. (Samuel, 2011 as cited in Dollard et al., 1939).

The theory is relevant in explaining internal security in Nigeria, because addressing the

various dimensions of internal security connotes an effort for preventing frustration amongst the diverse populations in the country. Most of the security challenges in the country are as a result of frustration and if the potential security challenges are prevented, there is the probability of optimum security in the country.

Findings

The study was designed to identify and examine the security challenges confronting Nigeria. The study found that there are numerous security challenges confronting Nigeria, among which are resistance movements and insurgencies by criminal elements such as Boko Haram and IPOB; farmers-herders conflict, kidnapping, and armed banditry. The findings of the study also indicated that the country (Nigeria) has both formal and informal and informal security apparatus whose efforts have not yielded the desired results. The bottom line form the study is that the security challenges have resulted in enormous loss of lives and properties in Nigeria.

Conclusion

This study examined the various security challenges bedeviling Nigeria, among them, Boko Haram, banditry, kidnapping for ransom, the farmer-herder crisis and separatist agitations by the IPOB. The study notes that the security challenges have led to loss of lives and property as well as dented the national and international image of the country, including discouraging direct foreign investment (FDI) in the resource-studded nation.

Recommendations

(a) The government should put in place measures to address poverty and other causes of social exclusion which push young ones into crime and criminality in Nigeria.

(b) Government should also adopt both kinetic and non-kinetic strategies in the fight against insurgency and other criminal activities in Nigeria.

(c) There should be interagency cooperation among the security agencies involved in fighting insecurity in the country, especially in the area of information sharing and dissemination.

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