An Overview of Family and Community National Security

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Abstract

Nothing is more important than the safety and security of families and communities. Security is a universal entitlement and core part of human well-being, where people cannot enjoy security, poverty and injustice are prevalent. Insecurity is a negative experience characterized by absence of protection, path to redress grievance, fair access to resources and of human right. Heightened levels of violence in urban and rural communities are matched by increased domestic violence in many societies of the world. Many major reports and policy initiatives in recent years have affirmed the need to foster a concept of security which put people at its centre. The focus of this paper is therefore to operationalize family and community security, safety and freedom of family and community members from fear, identify causes of insecurity and suggest coordinated responses to them; thereby providing an enabling environment and consequently bringing solution to global and national development.

Keywords: Family, Community, National Security

Introduction

Global community is under severe threat by increasing insecurity and violence around the world. People around the world are confronted by high crime rate and high rates of violence, crime has become a threat to continued economic development. These threats range from emerging new sophisticated terrorist groups and generally failing states in Africa. Furthermore, Waller, Gauthier, Hicks, Salusfaconsa and Ale (1999) submitted that globally, safety of citizens is being threatened by increased crime and violence and the presence of several gangs with apparent violent tendencies (For example, possession of fully automatic assault,

rifles, sawed-off shot guns, and bullet-proof jackets) who were involved in various criminal activities, crime, antisocial behaviour and the concentration of the disadvantaged around the world are factors eroding the social and economic vitality and development of many nations around the world

Recently in Nigeria, insecurity has become the order of the day as there have been a high incidence of insecurity that have resulted in deaths and psychological trauma for individuals and families in the country. It should be noted that insecurity which used to be one of the lowest concerns in the hierarchy of Nigeria's social economic problems has now assumed an alarming proportion (Udoh, 2015). According to him, insecurity in Nigeria is going from bad to worse and this has affected the socio-economic development of the nation. There are crisis everywhere as people die and loose properties all the time. There is hardly a month or sadly enough a week without reports of bomb blast, suicide bombing, kidnapping and assassination, armed robbery, arson, economic and political insecurity. Udoh (2015) submitted that the pattern of insecurity in Nigeria has been regionalized. For instance, there is Militia group insurgency in the North, kidnapping in the East and Southern part of the country, ritual killing in the West, political and non-political assassinations across the nation. Other security indices include the persistent tension between the North and the South of Nigeria, the Jos crises, growing unrest in the Niger Delta area and in other parts of the country resulting in rise in violent incidents and kidnappings, ethnic tensions, religious differences, unemployment and numerous social and political grievances are all fuelling the unrest and contributing to violence and insecurity in Nigeria.

According to Udoh (2015), insecurity is the state of being subject to danger or injury. It is the anxiety that is experienced when one feels vulnerable and insecure. It was further added that insecurity is a state of not being secure or lack of confidence. It is a state of not being confident about oneself or one's relationship with other people, not safe or protected. Supporting the above, Onifade, Imhonopi and Urim (2013) submitted that insecurity challenges in Nigeria have ranged from loss of lives, properties and investments. They lamented that kidnapping, ritual killings, carjacking, suicide bombing, religious killings, politically motivated

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killings and ethnic clashes have characterized the lives of Nigerians since 2009. To them, the corporate existence of the country as one geographical entity has been threatened by the rising wave of insecurity which has in turn resulted in unpalatable consequences for the development of national economy.

Amidst the deteriorating security situation in Nigeria, the nation is faced with difficult situations, posing serious challenges and threat to socio-economic development. This include among others: rural and urban poverty, youth unemployment, low and unstable industrial output, unstable and deteriorating exchange rate, very high inflation rate, large domestic death, rising stock of external debt leading to high rate of suicide bid (Ewetan, 2013). In addition, Onifade, Imhonopi and Urim (2013) quoting Beland (2005) sees insecurity as a state of fear or anxiety stemming from a concrete or alleged lack of protection. As commented earlier, insecurity refers to lack or inadequate freedom from danger. This definition according to him reflects physical insecurity and all other forms of insecurity such as economic and social insecurity. In the view of Udoh (2015) insecurity is the state of being subject to danger or injury. It is the anxiety that is experienced when one feels vulnerable and insecure. He added that insecurity is a state of not being secure, and lack of confidence.

On the other hand, security is a condition in which people are protected and safe from fear, anxiety, crime or danger. Tella (2015) sees security as the relative freedom which individuals, groups and nations enjoy from danger, risk or threat of arm, injury or loss to personnel and or property. National Security could be regarded as the measures, facilities and systems put in place by a nation to secure its citizens and resources from danger and the risk of infiltration, sabotage or theft. It implies the absence of threat to life, property and socio-economic well being of the people (Tella, 2015). In the view of Omede (2012), security is a dynamic condition which involves the relative ability of a state to counter threats to its core values and interests. Nwolise (2006) in his own opinion sees security as an all encompassing condition which suggests that a territory must be secured by a network of armed forces, and that the sovereignty of the state must be guaranteed by a democratic and

patriotic government which in turn must be protected by the military, police and the people themselves, that they (people) must not only be secured from external attacks but also from devastating consequences of internal upheavals, such as unemployment, hunger, starvation, diseases, ignorance, homelessness, environmental degradation and pollution cum socio-economic injuries. From the definition given by Omede (2012), it could be observed that it is the responsibility of the government to provide adequate security for its people. Omoyibo and Akpomera (2013) supported Omede (2012) that security is a concept that is prior to the state, and the state exists in order to provide that concept. They refer to the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria which states specifically that the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of the government. Tella (2015) also corroborated this that in spite of the constitutional provision which calls for respect to the well being of the people, it is also a point of duty for the state to guarantee welfare, freedom and happiness of every citizen on the bases of social justice and equity of status and opportunity. However, it is rather unfortunate that reverse is the case in Nigeria today, as the government of the day has totally failed in its responsibility to provide a secure and safe environment for lives, properties and the conduct of business and economic activities. Tella (2015) also affirmed that despite the constitutional provision of the state to direct its policies towards achieving the security of its people in every phase of life, it is rather unfortunate that the material resources of the nation are not harnessed and distributed as best as possible to serve the common good. Ewetan (2013) lamented that Nigeria is sliding into a state of lawlessness. Institutions that should respond promptly to the needs of the citizens are non-challant and inactive. He reported further that the inert state of our health institutions is the deepening socio-economic insecurity that poses a threat to individual well being and making living miserable for many Nigerians. Countless Nigerians have met their untimely death because they never got prompt attention.

As such, the level of crime and terrorist activities in different parts of the country is alarming as a result of high rate of insecurity. Consequently upon this, the world now sees Nigeria as a very violent and corrupt

nation and this has destroyed the reputation of Nigeria across the globe. Ewetan (2013) corroborated this assertion in his documentation that Nigeria is ranked low in the Global Peace Index (GPI, 2013).

Origin and Manifestations of Security Challenges in Nigeria

According to Ewetan and Urhie (2014) violent crime has a root and history in Nigeria and could be traced back to the period from 1960 to 1997. They stressed that the agitation and demand for true federalism, fiscal and political restructuring by different ethnic nationalities in Nigeria has given rise to violent rebellious reactions by aggrieved ethnic groups in Nigeria and this has in turn endanger the security and unity of Nigeria as one country. Corroborating this submission of Ewetan and Urhie (2014), Ali (2013) and Adamu (2005) affirmed that Federalism undermining the independence and autonomy of its federating units will bring nothing but conflict and threat to national cohesion, and peace which will ultimately result into disintegration.

Ewetan and Urhie (2014) posited further that insecurity challenges in Nigeria can be traced to the early years of military rule when large quantities of arms were imported to the country during and after the civil war. Unfortunately, some of the arms got into the hands of civilians who later used them for mischievous purposes such as armed robbery. They also reported that the army of unemployed youths who lost their jobs during the civil war also joined in the use of arms and light weapons who used them for deviant purposes. According to them, the prolonged years of military rule in Nigeria beginning from 1970 also contributed to the dangerous level and dimension of insecurity in Nigeria as people during these periods procured arms and light weapons for personal defense. Factors that triggered youth violence apart from peer group influence include ethnic agitation, political agitation, unemployment and structural adjustment programme (SAP) (Ewetan and Urhiel, 2014). These have immeasurably contributed to security challenges faced by Nigerians today.

Elaborate case studies of insecurity in Nigeria exist and documented by different scholars like Adesoji (2010), Ibrahim and Igbuzor (2002), Igbuzor (2011), Nwagboso, (2012), Nwolise (2006), Ogundiya (2009) and Omotola (2010) to mention a few. Specifically Onifade, Imhonopi

and Urhie (2013) itemized and discussed some areas of insecurity challenges confronting Nigeria as follows. The Niger Delta crises, kidnapping in the South East Zone of Nigeria, the Jos crisis and the Boko Haram Terror Machine.

The Niger Delta Crisis

According to Nwagboso (2012) the failure of the government during the military era to address the root causes of the agitation in the Niger Delta region such as environmental problems, poverty, unemployment, lack of basic amenities etc., gave rise to the spawning of ethnic militias of Niger Delta origin which led to militarization of almost the whole region. This as a result laid the foundation for the wave of insecurity that spread throughout the entire region and tentacles of power (Nwagboso 2012). Tensions between the International Oil Companies and some representatives of Niger Delta Minority ethnic groups who felt exploited and cheated without compensation from the international oil companies gave rise to conflict between the former and the latter in the early 1990s. Nwagboso (2012) , Osungade (2008) as well as Onifade, Umhonopi and Urhie (2013) reported that this ethnic and political unrest continued in the region throughout the 1990 and persisted despite the evolvement of democracy. Nwagboso (2012) reported further that the region continue to witness persistent security threats and even the emergence of other agitating groups affiliated to the movement.

However, in a bid to ameliorate environmental degradation and absolute poverty and consequently eradicating tension in the area, the Federal government put in place some Amnesty Programmes such as the Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC), Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) and Ministry of Niger Delta (MND). Despite the intervention strategies by the federal government, the conflicts and the insecurity in the Niger Delta had persisted. Incessant kidnapping activities and other threats to security have eventually spilled over to some states in the country such as Lagos State (Onifade, Umhonopi and Urhie 2013). To worsen the state of insecurity in the Niger Delta area, other militant groups sprang up during the present era of President Muhammed Buhari and continued their evil activities of kidnapping and vandalization of pipelines.

Kidnapping

The Niger Delta crisis is the root cause of kidnapping in Nigeria, prominent indigenes of the area became easy prey (Nwagboso 2012). He traced the history of kidnapping in Nigeria to the 2007 general elections where youths that were used as political thugs later diverted their guns which were not retrieved from them into the evil business of kidnapping as a means of economic survival in Abia, Imo and Ebony states after the elections. Sadly enough, kidnappers are now going as far as abducting school children, traditional rulers, innocent people while attending church services and other prominent individuals in their streets/ houses.

The Jos Crisis

This was one of the greatest internal security threats to the corporate existence of Nigeria and its economic development. Onifade, Umhonopi and Urhie (2013) reported that the Jos crisis could be traced to the unfriendly relationship between the Christian and Muslim communities in the area as well as cultural and landscape disputes. Oladoyinbo (2010) in his own view, observed that the Jos crisis had ethnic, religious, socio-political and economic undertone and that numerous lives and properties with millions of naira have been claimed. He submitted further that within 2007-2010, over 10,000 Christians were slaughtered and specifically the 2010 crisis claimed about 500 lives.

The Boko Haram

Ali (2015) identified Boko Haram as a famous Nigeria's insurgent group that emerged in the first decade of the 21st century. Onifade, Irnhonopi and Urhie (2013) described the Boko Haram as a controversial Nigerian Militant Islamic group that has sought to impose the Sharia law or its radical interpretation of Islam on the Northern states of Nigeria and then to other parts of the country. This group opposes the Western Education, Western culture and modern Science. They also promote a radical form of Islam which forbids Muslims to take part in any political or social activities in the society. Imhonopi and Urhie (2012), Onifade and Imhonopi (2012) as well as Nwasodo (2012) asserted that the Boko

Haram has constituted a serious security challenge which has eventually paralyzed economic and social activities in Maiduguri, Abuja, Suleja, Damaturu, and Minna. The evil agenda of the Boko Haram group has also made Nigeria unsafe for investors and tourism activities. Two hundred and thirty four (234) Secondary School female students were abducted in April 2014 by the Boko Haram. Fifty-seven of these girls escaped immediately after being abducted, twenty-one were released as a result of the negotiation between the Federal Government and the Boko Haram group while one of the girls was found with a baby of six months old roaming the Sambisa forest which is believed to be the seat of the Boko Haram Sect. Reportedly, about one hundred and ninety girls are still in the captivity of the Boko Haram sect (Burke and Akinwotu 2016). Ali (2015) also submitted that the group's deadly attacks affect the general public including the civilians and the security force which has caused a great distress in the northern part of the country. Quoting Obasanjo (2012), Ali (2015) submitted that bombing of targets in occupied public buildings or in the open areas where people congregate has become the greatest anxiety of personal security for almost all Nigerians and Non-Nigerians living In Nigeria.

Causes of Insecurity in Nigeria

Using the content analysis of the available literature, Tella (2015) as well as Ewetan and Urhie (2014) observed that many scholars like Ali (2012), Okorie (2011), Salami (2010), Jega (2002) and Ezeoba (2011) have identified many causes of conflict and insecurity in Nigeria. Specifically, Nweze (2004) identified some factors enhancing insecurity to include poor leadership, ethno- religious crises, socio-economic inequalities, small arms and ammunitions trafficking, rural-urban migration and external influence. To these scholars, the crises of insecurity in Nigeria could be traced back to the economic crisis in the early 1980s during the falling commodity prices, economic liberation, deregulation, currency devaluation, Privatization cold war era politics and structure adjustment Programme (SAP). As a result the stage for terrorist violence in Nigeria was set, especially the militants in the Niger Delta. Below are the various causes of insecurity in Nigeria.

1. **Corruption:** Tella (2015) claimed that corruption is one of the major causes of insecurity in the country as a result of diversion of public resources to private individuals. He also stressed that corruption has become institutionalized in Nigeria, and has thereby translated into wider economic, political and social inequality.

2. **Unemployment:** Many Nigerian youths are not engaged in meaningful work and are lacking the basic necessities of life. Tella (2015) and Udoh (2015) observed that many Nigerian Youths have become prey to terrorists and are easily recruited into militant groups and trained to rob, kill, kidnap, smuggle and how to perpetrate various kinds of atrocities since the idle man's mind is the devils workshop.

3. **Poverty:** Tella (2015) referring to a United Nations Statement submitted that widespread and severe poverty is a reality in Nigeria. Poverty according to the World Bank (2001) means lack of opportunity, lack of empowerment and lack of security, which makes people vulnerable to diseases, lack of opportunity to attend better schools, hospitals and other basic social amenities. Poverty is characterized by lack of enough food and clothing for a family, it means insecurity, powerlessness and exclusion of individuals, households and community. This disadvantaged position makes poor people to be ill informed politically, socially, religiously and economically. As a result they may join any violent group. Ford (2007) corroborating the above, reported that most of the armed robbers, terrorist groups, Boko-Haram members are from the poor masses, they established that poverty has been linked to high crime rates.

4. **Ethno-religious Conflicts:** Onifade, Imhonopi and Urhie (2013) identified ethno-religious conflicts as a major source of insecurity in Nigeria. Ewetan (2014) described this conflict as a situation in which the relationship between members of one ethnic or religious and another of such group in a multi ethnic and multi-religious society is characterized by lack of cordiality, mutual suspicion and fear and a tendency towards violent confrontation. They reported that ethno-religious conflicts emerged in Nigeria as a result of inability of Nigerian leaders to tackle development challenges and distribute state

resources equitably. Places ... in Ogun State, Lagos, Abia, Kano, Bauchi, Nasarawa ... Ebonyi and Enugu states all witnessed and suffered this ...

5. **Weak Judiciary**: Weak judi... ... corruption which in turn leads to insecurity in Nigeria. Tella, 2015 observed that the judicial systems are often ... as a result of greed and lack of patriotism and respect to th... ... He submitted further that the increasing rate of ... and sundry criminals such as terrorist activities and thefts ... are encouraged and aided by the weakness of our legal system. Many criminals find their way home even after being arrested and prosecuted. As such, the poor people suffer the consequences of ... while the rich gets justice over the poor.

6. **Illegal Armed group**: Poss... ... individuals and groups has aided corruption. Arms ... Ammuni... are imported illegally by different groups like th... ... Militants, Odua People's Congress, Bakasi Boys. ... ... 2013, highlighted other causes of insecurity in Nigeria th... ... porous borders, proliferation of arms and ammunitions, ... labour activities, poor leadership, religious fanaticism, fear and distrust on government, weak and poorly funded m... ... establishments. Non-prosecution of criminals, loss of socio-cultural and communal value system to mention a few.

Effects of Insecurity in Nigeria

According to Douglas (2012) matters of national security are of utmost importance to the progress and development of the polity, he asserted that if anything goes wrong with the security situation of any nation, every aspect of the nation will be adversely affected directly or indirectly. However, it is unfortunate that insecurity has become the order of the day, insecurity in Nigeria is going from bad to worse and this has affected the socio-economic development of the nation. There are crisis everywhere in Nigeria today as people die and loss properties all the time. Tella (2015) submitted that insecurity in Nigeria has affected the

economic, social, religious and political activities negatively in numerous ways. Effects of insecurity in Nigeria as discussed expressly by Tella (2015) include the following:

Insecurity in the North-East had led to the people migrating from the affected area to other states that are safer and as such creating economic depression in such areas, and consequently rendering economic activities paralysed. This has in turn affected revenue generation of such states because most economic areas generating revenue are either remained closed or partially operated; thereby putting economic growth on hold.

As a result of unemployment, many vibrant youths have been recruited to engage in different illicit activities. For example, many young people have been forcefully lured into the Boko-Haram terrorist organization. Unemployment according to Douglas (2012) has killed the initiative and potentials of many Nigerian youths. Tella (2015) documented that about 30% of youths in Yobe State have been killed or missing. Women and young girls have been kidnapped and raped. Many families and parents of the 234 school girls that were kidnapped in a school in Chibok have been subjected to psychological trauma while many have met their untimely death due to untold stressful conditions they experienced as a result of their missing children. People nowadays attend worship places with large crowd in fear as many churches and mosques have been bombed and many losing their lives. Many innocent individuals were wrongly arrested and even killed on faulty suspicion by the Military. Nigeria has been listed as one of the terrorist countries in Africa as a result of the menance created by the Boko Haram.

Another serious effect of insecurity in Nigeria according to Tella (2015) is its negative impact on education. Both private and public schools in some parts of Adamawa, Borno, Yobe and Gombe States were shut down for quite a long period of time Both Primary, Secondary and even tertiary institutions were not left out in this problem, consequent upon which even professors in University of Maiduguri had to leave and ran for their dear lives.

Douglas (2015) further highlighted consequences of insecurity as follows:

1. Loss of faith in the government
2. Absence of popular sovereignty as the government in power is not the people's choice.
3. Low level of understanding and intolerance among the different ethnic groups.
4. Lack of trust, fear and suspicion
5. Weak and strained national unity.

Summary

As earlier stated by Udoh (2015), insecurity basically entails lack of confidence as well as lack of a sense of protection. Insecurity is not only narrowed down to violence but extends to other issues such as finances, shelter, feeding clothing. Insecurity is a global phenomenon. however, Nigeria as a country experiences quite a number of insecurity issues ranging from Ethno-religious conflicts, insurgent groups, kidnapping, high level of unemployment. These activities have posed a threat to the all round development of the country and make the average Nigerian man very insecure in his environment. Various factors contributed to the rise of insecurity in the nation and despite efforts from the government and international bodies to curb insecurity, insecurity still seems to be lurking around every corner of the Nigerian society. Conscious and continuous efforts like gainful employment, effective judicial system, should be implemented by both the Nigerian government and its citizens to ensure that insecurity is reduced to its barest minimum.

Conclusion

Available evidences from scholars and other security experts established the fact that lots of damages have been done to the nation's economic development. From all the issues raised as the causes and origin of insecurity, it is clear that the state of insecurity in Nigeria is attributable to the failure of the government to fulfill its social responsibilities and promises with the populace. As a result, there is a total collapse of social security. The government should therefore make it a priority to put an end to insecurity issues raised in this paper as a matter of urgency.

However, the problem of insecurity is not a battle for the government alone but calls for collaborative and conscious effort of the Nigeria Citizen.

Recommendations Suggestions

There is an urgent need for the government to put in place measures and strategies to eliminate all the security indices and threats that have been discussed in this paper. All possible efforts to stop corruption must be devised. There should be a collaborative effort by the government and the people to work co-operatively to fight and put an end to insecurity in Nigeria without which the country cannot make progress. Our political ideologies should be changed. A reduction in the salaries and remuneration of people who hold political and public offices has been advocated and suggested by many Nigerians. (For example Douglas documented that the recent findings identified Nigerian law makers as the highest paid workers in the world, despite abject poverty facing the common people in the nation). This will make such positions less lucrative and only those who have passion to serve the nation will occupy them. The fight against corruption exercise that is going on in the country should be intensified with more objectivity. Corruption should be fought objectively and not as a means of retaliation, against people who have in one way or the other offend the government of the day as many people have observed. There should be strict legislation against corruption and penalties for people who are guilty. The recent effort of the present government to check the judiciary arm is highly commendable and such exercise should be carried out at regular intervals. This will help to strengthen the judiciary as laws will be applied to all in a fair manner. There should be transparency and accountability by the government to the people. Medium through which people can express their opinions should be set up. Efforts of media houses as of late by giving viewers/listeners opportunity to express their opinion in different aspects of the nation's development is highly commendable and should be encouraged by the government. This will go a very long way to reduce political unrest. Modern methods of intelligence gathering/network to decode security challenges should be encouraged by the government. Security issues

and threats would be easily conquered through the use of modern methods, intelligence gathering, training logistics and motivation. Advanced technology should be deployed to manage insecurity challenges. More jobs should be created to tackle the problem of Youth deviant behavior. This will go a long way in eradicating poverty and also eradicate the evil activities of the Militia groups. As discussed earlier on, most of these groups are made up by the jobless youth.

Generally, the government should improve and accelerate the pace of development. An economy with relevant social, economic and physical infrastructure for business operations and industrial growth will provide gainful employment, high level of educational facilities and medical care for the people. Provision of infrastructures like good roads, water, electricity and housing will go a long way in eradicating the problem of insecurity. Religious leaders, labour unions, civil society groups and traditional rulers should put up a collaborative effort in solving insecurity problems. Peace and conflict studies should be included in school curriculum right from secondary school and higher institutions.

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