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## **Rising Insecurity in Nigeria: Causes and Solution**

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### **Abstract**

Nigeria is currently inflated in security crisis which has turn into an unending challenge, not only by defying security procedures but making scorn of the efforts of the law enforcement agents and the millions of naira annually budgeted by the government as security votes. This study, therefore, examines the rising insecurity in Nigeria with causes and solutions to it. The finding revealed that the causes of insecurity are the menace of unemployment and poverty, elite exploitation of ethnicity and religious differences, corruption, weak security apparatus, porous border, marginalization and inequality in the country, and bad governance and poor leadership. The solution range from opposing the aforementioned causes of insecurity in this paper.

**Keywords:** security, insecurity, causes, and solution

## Introduction

In the contemporary world, the security of life and property remains significant to the socio-economic survival of any given society. To achieve that the government owns the responsibility of adequately provide security in a given social formation. Security is the most vital element in human life. Without it, social, economic, and political achievements cannot be attained, (Charas, 2015). Every nation struggles to protect and deepened its core values, aimed at enabling people to lead their lives in free and secure environments according to their shared common beliefs by preserving their national interest, identity, and sovereignty. Which lead to a state of national security, first it deals with the state as the most important object to security or traditional security, later it metamorphous to non-traditional security which deals with human as referent object to security, (Baldwin, 1997).

Rising of insecurity is on the verge of being Nigeria's heritage as no single day goes by without acts of insecurity. More worrying is the fact that, for undisclosed reasons, the Nigerian government seems unable to curb this threat or doesn't want to stop it, despite the pronouncement by the President Muhammadu Buhari after winning 2015 election. Nigeria currently appears to be grappling with security problems and these cuts through its six regional regions, but particularly in the North-East, North Central, and South-South regions. Residents in these regions now sleep with one eye open while the government that is normally entrusted with life and property security appears confused and unable to do so, (Emmanuel & Emily, 2019).

## Conceptual Context Considerations

### Security

Security is an enigmatic concept that meant very different things for people according to their time and place in human history (Rothschild 1995). Security means safety to the average street man or woman, or protection from harm and risk. Protection is very

necessary because, as Zabadi correctly states, "until one can be assured of his physical safety, everything else will be meaningless" (Zabadi, 2011). Imobighe (2001) also adds that it will be difficult for individuals within a State to participate in productive activities without security. correspondingly, without security, the state is bound to witness great difficulty in connecting its human development and the promotion of the general well-being of the people.

Williams (2013) defines security as widely associated with mitigating the threat to cherished value, particularly if left unchecked in the near future threatens the existence of a specific referent object. Onifade C. (2013) Security is seen as a situation that emerges from the establishment of ways of protecting individuals, information, and properties from hostile people, influences, and behavior. It has to do with a situation in which people can travel around within a given natural space or elsewhere without any real and imaginary threats to their lives or properties. A condition where, with their two eyes firmly closed, people will sleep at night. Security of Life and property is really the fundamental reason for a government to exist in the first place, as attested by the various theorists of social contracts (Hobbes, Locke, and Montesquieu).

### **Insecurity**

Insecurity is just the opposite of what we have as security. Insecurity like security is often used in a number of ways. Many people would take it to mean lack of safety or the existence of danger; hazard; uncertainty; lack of trust; doubtful; inadequately guarded or protected; lack of stability; disturbed; lack of protection and unsafe (Achumba et al, 2013). Insecurity will make you lose trust, be frightened, unsettled, oppressed, lose focus, and be devastated and lose your humanity. Adebajoko & Ugwuoke (2014) opine that insecurity is the State of being subject in every respect to terror, threat, risk, molestation, bullying, harassment, etc. Insecurity, for example, can be conceived as a threat to the state that often accounted for the arms and nuclear weapons race to protect the state.

According to the Encarta dictionary (2009), defined insecurity as the state of being unsafe or insecure or a state of mind characterized by self-doubt and vulnerability. It can be anything from childhood, disturbing situations, mistreatment, and individual fears. Security awareness may be poorly mapped against observable objective security. For example, it has been stated that the fear of kidnappers in the Kaduna-Abuja road and other parts of the north is less common compared to the fear of Boko-Haram. The existence of security personnel may even be taken for protection itself. For instance, the presence of security men in the Kaduna-Abuja road and another part of the north most especially north-east may interfere with each other and even cancel the impact of insecurity issues, but civilians still believe that the presence of security men served as proactive measures towards the curbing of the acts.

### **Causes of insecurity in Nigeria**

There is no doubt that Nigeria has great potential for greatness, particularly with its large population consisting of a dynamic workforce, a growing economy, abundant natural resources, diverse raw materials, huge oil reserves, and intellectual reservoirs. Despite these aspects of greatness, Nigeria continues to be a developing country struggling the most frantically to find its feet among the nations' committees due, among other factors, to the prevalent insurgency and insecurity that have continued to present a challenge to its development and growth. Nweze (2004) have pointed out some causes of insecurity in Nigeria which the followings:

#### **1. The Menace of Unemployment and Poverty**

It is a fact that unemployment causes poverty and extreme poverty leads to a crime that gives rise to insecurity. Aliyu (1998) characterized poverty as a situation in which people live below a defined standard of living income so that individuals and nations are classified and identified as poor. While unemployment is defined as when people are not engaged in meaningful work and are lacking the basic needs of life. Every year, tertiary institutions graduated many students who have been unfortunately thrown into the labor

market with no hope for job opportunities in sight. Many become frustrated in an effort to keep mind and body together and engage in violent and criminal acts such as lucrative kidnapping, militancy, and armed robbery. Others have been terrorists' victims and are quickly radicalized. Nwagbosa (2012) believes that past governments have failed to put in place actions that will reduce unemployment and poverty rates, which have been the major causes of insecurity in Nigeria.

## **2. Elite exploitation of Ethnicity and Religious Differences**

It is worth bearing in mind that the country's diverse ethnic make-up is not itself a cause of insecurity in Nigeria; however, political and religious leaders across the nation sometimes use ethnic sentiments to achieve their selfish ambitions. Throughout this way, the elites exploit people's minds to stir up mistrust and resentment among different ethnic groups and among the country's major religions that cause Nigeria's insecurity. In a multi-ethnic country like Nigeria, the relationship should be cordial, without reciprocal distrust, fear, and a propensity to a violent confrontation between members of one ethnic or religious group and another of that ethnicity or religious group. Adagba, et al, (2012); Achumba, et al, (2013), similarly asserted that control of scarce resources, fuel, land, economies, traditional and political offices resulted in mass killings and property destruction communities in various parts of the country. Nigeria's various ethnic groups also draw attention to neglect, racism, dominance, abuse, victimization, injustice, marginalization, nepotism, and intolerance. This often results in ethnic violence and religious conflicts.

## **3. Corruption**

Nonetheless, corruption was largely responsible for government failure and systemic infrastructure collapse, resulting in large-scale insecurity in Nigeria. The state of insecurity in Nigeria is unquestionably a result of government failure, traceable to widespread corruption. Corruption is poor not because money and profits change hands in an unequal way, and not because of participants' motives, but because it privatizes

important facets of public life, bypassing representation, discussion and choice processes. Corruption is responsible for Nigeria's massive unemployment, it's the reason Nigerian youth and businessmen lack electricity to run their businesses, it's the reason many businesses fail. Unemployment and deprivation are the two main causes of Nigeria's insecurity. By creating unemployment and poverty, corruption leads to instability in Nigeria. According to Charas, (2014) Past governments, both Military and Democratic, had attempted to focus attention on good governance, prudence, transparency, and accountability through a variety of means, including the creation of the Murtala Mohammed Administration Code of Conduct in 1975, the Ethical Revolution of Shehu Shagari Civil Administration in 1979, the War Against Indiscipline and the Corruption of General Muhammadu in 1984, General Ibrahim Babangida's mass mobilization for self-reliance, social justice and economic recovery in 1985, General Sani Abacha's Failed Banks Tribunal in 1994, Olusegun Obasanjo's Anti-Corruption Act in 2000.

#### **4. Weak security apparatus**

Nigeria's security system is seen as very poor in both personnel and equipment. Security officers are poorly and poorly trained and poorly remunerated. As a result, the requisite expertise is not available to meet modern security challenges. The contribution of the security personnel to the Nigerian project of ensuring general safety is equally of serious concern. This weak security system can be due to a number of factors including corruption, insufficient police, and other security agencies funding, lack of modern equipment, poor safety personnel health, and inadequate staff. Nigeria is largely under police jurisdiction and this partially explains the Nigerian Police Force's failure to effectively tackle the country's crimes, corruption, and insecurity. Olorisakin (2008) asserts that the police population ratio in Nigeria is 1:450 which falls below the United Nations' standard. This implies that as a country, Nigeria is grossly under-policed and this perhaps explains the police's inability to effectively tackle crimes and security challenges.

Many of the soldiers fighting the insurgency in the northeast of the country have been ambushed on some occasions and many have been killed by the rebels at Boko Haram as a result of information leaked to them by those who were supposed to fight them. Again huge sums of money made available for the acquisition of weapons were embezzled and misappropriated or outdated equipment purchased and the offenders were not punished appropriately. In some other situations, firearms meant to be found in the possession of the insurgents for the Nigerian troops. The lack of cooperation between the Security Agencies is also noted. The case of some soldiers who killed three police officers in Taraba State and injured others, who had an official duty to apprehend a kidnapping kingpin not long ago, and also a soldier who shot a Mopol in Maiduguri demonstrated the weak security framework in Nigeria further.

#### **5. Porous border**

The country's unstable frontiers, where human movements are essentially untracked, have led to Nigeria's level of insecurity. There is an unregulated inflow of Small Arms and Light Weapons into the country as a result of the porous borders which has enabled militancy and crime in Nigeria. Edeko (2011) has reported that Nigeria hosts over 70% of about 8million illegal weapons that have been used to create a security crisis. In addition, the porous condition of both the Nigerian borders has contributed the uncontrollable influx of migrants, predominantly young people, from nearby countries such as the Republic of Niger, Chad and the Republic of Benin accountable for some of the insecurity promoting criminal activities in Nigeria, (Adeola and Olayemi, 2012).

#### **6. Marginalization And Inequalities In The Country**

Nigeria's current government has been strongly charged with ethnic disparity, and the marginalization of some sections of the country in the provision of basic infrastructure, and theses have significantly compounded Nigeria's security (Nwadiolor, 2011). Currently, key political positions were given to people from Northern extraction while the South-East was left in the cold. That may explain the agitation for the Biafra Republic

and Shi'a strongly known as the Islamic Movement of Nigeria (IMN) and several breaches of security this followed the agitation. Besides, it is quite clear that Nigeria's life chances are extremely disparate. Vast majorities of the public have a sense of deprivation, oppression, marginalization, and this has resulted in dissatisfaction and loss of hope, particularly among the youth. Such young people are now voicing their disillusionment with the state of affairs by any means possible, whether legal or illegal. The consequence of this is growing uncertainty (Onuoha, 2011).

### **7. Bad governance and poor Leadership**

That fact remains Nigeria's fundamental cause of insecurity from the past till now. Any government anywhere has the primary function of providing basic services such as water, electricity, good road network, quality education, and general infrastructure. Ironically, these basic things are not there in Nigeria and the people, in general, are Frustrated and demoralized. Demoralization and anger logically provide a strong fertile ground for aggression and general insecurity. The scarcity of these basic amenities in Nigeria is embarrassingly not due to a shortage of funds but rather to corruption at the highest level of leadership structure. A reality articulated by Hazen and Horner (2007), of a wealthy nation with poor people in the majority.

It is therefore an enormous task to take responsibility for giving leadership direction in such communities or societies in a multi-ethnic and religious society like Nigeria, given the current scenario of the democratic politics in which the nation has been located. To this end, believing that weak leadership, has added more challenges to the uncertainty and causes of insecurity not just in the north but also in Nigeria in general, might not be an unfounded statement According to Charas, Mbaya, and Liberty (2014), a number of violent cultures such as thuggery, indiscipline, corruption, abduction, bombing, etc. have come in since the arrival of third and fourth republics in 1999 and 2009 respectively, which was just a decade ago after the previous military invasion.



### **The solution to Insecurity in Nigeria**

Insecurity in Nigeria poses a threat to life and property, hampers business activity, and discourages local and foreign investors, all of which hampers and morons a country's social and economic growth and development. Since the nation gained political independence in 1960, we have been experiencing rising insecurity in Nigeria. Recently, the rising insecurity has assumed a dangerous dimension that even threatens the Nigerian state's business life.

Removing such challenges should be Nigeria's number one priority at all levels because the nation cannot achieve any significant development despite insecurity and terrorism. Governments need to be proactive in resolving security issues and threats by modern methods of intelligence gathering and sharing intelligence, preparation, logistics, encouragement, and the implementation of advanced technology to address security challenges.

The way out in Nigeria to solve the problem of insecurity is by government pushing growth with its policies. The creation that we are addressing here involves:

- i. There is a need to establishment Community Policing within each divisional police headquarters for effective management of insecurity.
- ii. There is a need to created an economy with appropriate social, economic, and physical infrastructure for business and industrial growth.
- iii. There is a need for our security apparatus to ultimately improve the training of security officers, sufficient training in modern security methodologies, the provision of state-of-the-art equipment and appropriate remuneration, good service conditions, and convenient after-service arrangements.
- iv. The government should boost people's living standards by establishing more centers of entrepreneurship across the nation, most notably in the North and North East.

- v. The government should create more job opportunities for the youth; this will make them abstain from committing all such crimes.
- vi. Politicians who use thugs should be barred from politics for life.
- vii. Governments should promote good governance, openness, accountability through the use of print and digital media, and inform the public through conferences, seminars, and NGOs.

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