

Insecurity as Impediment to National Development

¹Salihu Ibrahim, ²MAM Sameem

¹Niger State College of Education , Minna
salhuibrahim123@gmail.com

²South Eastern University of Sri Lanka
risameem@seu.ac.lk

ARTICLE DETAILS

History

Received : February

Revised Format : March

Accepted : April

Keywords :

Insecurity, Impediment, National Development

ABSTRACTS

Recent historical narrative of Nigeria has been largely filled with the question of insecurity. Every part is faced with the menace of security challenges that have made life miserable and National development elusive. The paper looked at the menace of insecurity across the country and analyzed its implication on the development of the nation. It is found that insecurity is a harbinger of underdevelopment. Using qualitative approach the paper benefits from desk review of literature. The paper is significant as it illuminates on the dangers of insecurity to the socio-economic development of the nation. It will also add to the pool of existing works on the subject matter of insecurity and national development.

©2023 STIM Lasharan Jaya Makassar

INTRODUCTION

No nation can develop under the atmosphere of insecurity. A popular African saying have it that *what peace could not resolve crisis can never*. Since the turn of the century rate of insecurity across the globe have greatly increased. In Nigeria, security challenges have constituted menace to national development in many folds. Life and property have little or no value as armed ‘bandits’ recklessly kill and destroy properties. Even though there have been security challenges at different points of our national history, but the situation since 2011 beginning with the unhealthy situations in the Niger Delta, the nefarious activities of the “Odua People’s Congress and the most catastrophic of all the Boko Haram in Northern Nigeria have been alarmingly terrible.

In more recent years there is the challenge posed by the so-called cattle rustlers and the armed bandits terrorizing the North West and parts of Central Nigeria area. The western and eastern parts of the country are not left out of current jamboree of kidnapping, banditry and senseless killings. The activities of such bodies like the IPOB and other terror bodies across the southern enclave of Nigeria continued to create mayhem and general insecurity.

Therefore Nigeria today is faced with many security challenges haven witnessed various crises caused mainly by political, social and religious factors. Since independence in 1960, the country has witnessed a civil war, the Maitasine crisis, Ibo/Hausa and Yoruba/Hausa, Tiv/Jukun crisis, Muslim/Christian and inter party crisis of all kinds. In recent times crises in Plateau, Taraba, Kano, Benue, Borno, Kaduna, Nasawara, Niger and the Niger–Delta states have left us with horrifying mental images (Gurama, 2010). The EndSAR# tag equally ended up in colossal destruction of lives, public and private properties. The implication is that citizens lack the stable mindset to pursue their economic activities that will translate to National development. The paper examined conceptual issues surrounding the subject of

insecurity through review of existing works, it discuss insecurity as a menace to national development in a historical perspective. The work further illuminate on the implication for national development and ends with a conclusion. The importance of the research is that national planning agencies, policy makers, security agencies and the academia will find it useful. It will also add to the pool of existing literature on the subject matter.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Insecurity as a concept is viewed variously; it is viewed as uncertainty about the future (Vomanen, 2009). Oxford dictionary defines it is as uncertainty or anxiety about oneself; it is also the state of exposure to danger, threat and lack of protection for life and property. Classical scholars like Thomas Hobbes have submitted that in the *state of nature* which is characterized by anarchy and no formal civil authority of the state structure but the powerful prevails over the weak, no justice and therefore no security (Garner, Ferdinand, and Lawson 2012). Impediment implies to hinder or obstacle to certain activity or development such as peace and security. The lack of security of life and property is a major obstacle (impediment) to national development hence progress can only be made under peaceful condition (Okeshola, 2014). Rodney (1972) saw development as two sides of a coin. He contends that it is advances in such aspects of human life as increase in capacity to produce for a better life. Thus in a situation whereby such productive capacity have been hindered by threat to life development therefore becomes elusive. National development according to the U N is increase changes in social, political and economic aspects of a nations' life both in qualitative and quantitative manner.

THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING

Various scholars have tried to provide their variants of theories to explain the concept of insecurity, development and their connections some of which are: Historical Materialism (Marx and Engels, 1973), Structural functionalism (Augustus Comte, 1798-1852; Herbert Spencer, 1820-1903 and Emile Durkheim 1858-1912 and Pears Talcott 1902-1979); Class struggle (Marx and Engels, 1882); Elite theory which is a reaction to Marxism was propounded by Pareto (1963) and Mosca (1939); relative deprivation theory associated with the ancient Greece and popularized by Gurr, 1970. The paper employs the theories of historical materialism, class struggle/conflict theory, deprivation and elite theories to explain the concept of insecurity. It goes further to utilize dependency and conspiracy theories to explain national development.

The materialist conception of history posits that economic forces are the top most as the super structure or major pillar of the society. Therefore, the evolution of economic institution is the driving force of history and the basis of the society, Marx (1975). The nexus in this theory is that it elucidates the preposition that the mechanism of the social system in the society hinges on the forces and the relations of production. The forces of production are in constant process of quantitative transition while relation of production tends to be conservative. It is the contradictions between new forces of production and the conservative production relations that usually bring about insurgency which leads to qualitative change in the society to terminate the old relations of production and new one emerge for the betterment of the masses. Closely related to the above is the Class struggle/conflict thesis. As posited by Marx and Engels (1882):

The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and the oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, ended either in a revolutionary reconstitution of the society at large or in common ruin of

the contending classes.

The authors of this theory conceived that the history of human society is anchored on class struggles and violent conflicts. Marx in the book *Capitalism* summed that the society is divided into two major opposing classes;- the Bourgeoisie and the Proletarians. There is always conflict between the as the former always seek to exploit the later through the ownership and control of means of production. It is the unresolved exploitation and contradiction between the two that have always led to rebellion, insurgency and consequent insecurity by the exploited. Adherents of this theory believe that the contradiction cannot be resolved except unless a structural change in favor of the proletarians (Ritzer and Goodman, 2004). The theory have a lot in common with that which explain the factor of deprivation and poverty in understanding reasons for insecurity and upheavals in the society. The theory of relative deprivation (Gurr, 1970; Obah- Akpowoghaba, 2013) postulates that when people are deprived of their basic or essential needs while other few are wallowing in affluence the consequential result is rebellion, anarchy and insecurity. Thus the widened class between the haves and the have not in the society has exacerbated the condition of the masses thus intolerance, impatient and insecurity becomes the order of the day.

Scholars have also tried to explain insecurity from the perspectives of Elite suppositions, which contest that the group (Elites) manipulate power and national resources resulting into conflict and insecurity. Mosca (1939) and Pareto (1963) were the leading proponents of the theory as reaction to Marx and Lincoln on state and democracy respectively (Epstein, 2011). The manipulation of political power provides the elites an unprecedented access to misappropriate and plunder funds meant for the development of the nation at the expense of the masses. Thus basic facilities such as education, portable water supply, and other social services not made available for the masses including security and employment provide the necessary corollary for both violent and non-violent insecurity in the society.

One theory that have found entry into discussion of terrorism and insecurity is the Conspiracy theory Goetzel (1994) which hold that an event or phenomenon occur as a result of a conspired interest between interested parties, specifically that some covert but influential agency with typically a political motivation and oppressive in intent is responsible for the unexplained event. The theory is historically linked to prejudice, witch hunt, wars, and genocide Douglas, et'al (2019) Nefes, (2018). They are mostly believed by those who perpetrate terrorist attacks and have been found to have been used by Germany under Nazi and Soviet Union (Douglas, et'al (2019)) South Africa, (22) USA 2020 Presidential election leading to the storming of the U S Capitol in 2021(24).

It is a commonplace believes in Nigeria that there has been for a longtime a sinister plan by the developed world especially the capitalist West to destabilize the country. This has also been evidenced by a onetime popular report of the U S A I D that Nigeria will extinct as an entity by 2015. Other similar insinuations have been made before and after the year yet we are still together however one will be tempted to agree with the assumptions given the waves of crime and insecurity that have perverted the fabrics of the country.

Therefore it is maintained that the developed countries in their bid to successfully destabilize the country sponsor different kinds of terror organizations to cause general insecurity in the country. Thus the unending so-called religious militia (Boko Haram etc), IPOB, MEND, OPC, Fulani and other cattle thieves and the new enterprise in the country 'Banditry' cannot be stopped by the security agencies in the country because there is an 'invincible hand' that is making and frustrating every effort by the Nigerian state.

On a general note these theories help to provide lead to explaining the underlining forces behind the incessant insecurity challenges in the country. The continuous social, economic and political insecurity is only a means of baptizing underdevelopment in country that is

already impoverished in all angles of development indices.

For the purpose of this presentation, the author is in comfort with the materialist conception of history which encapsulates other Marxian theories such as the class struggle, conflict, and capitalism. The premise set here is that society rests on the super structure and so the individual and once that structure is not reliably affirmed then men must go to war to survive. The conflict in class as a result of antagonisms only manifest because the have not is oppressed by the have that have only appropriated from the surplus of the state thus causing discontent. Feeling relatively or seriously denied as posited by the theory (Dollard et al, 1939) individual become frustrated and consequently violence prone leading to insecurity in the society. It is in view of these porous corridors in our national life that conspirators who think an opportunity have come to strike the nation in to pieces. Thus, both the internal collaborators and their external conspirators are busy causing mayhem across the nation.

GLOBAL INSECURITY CHALLENGES SINCE 1945

The end of the Second World War in 1945 was a turning point in global peace as both the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) emerged as leaders of contemporary world politics, power, and economy which produced rivalry amongst them. Mounting tension between the two ideological blocs that emerged has exacerbated the already tensed global peace atmosphere. The arms race became the dominant part of international politics known the cold war era was a monumental evidence of global insecurity. The climax of the rivalry was the Cuban Missile crisis of 1961 when Russia was able to plant its nuclear base in America, a situation that brought the world untold psychological torture for fear of another world war.

The period 1960-1999 witnessed several global crisis that were responsible for insecurity of lives and property and these range from: the Arab-Israeli war of the early sixties to the Iran/Iraq war, Saudi/Yemen crisis, Israel/Palestine unending conflict, Syria, Russia/Ukraine, Brazil, Columbia, Mexico, Malaysia, India/Pakistan crisis. Others are Vietnam, Afghanistan, Myanmar and the continental Africa.

The endless list of universal crisis has only been responsible for the deterioration of global security thus making development difficult. Development can only triumph where peace and harmony exist hence since the era of attainment of political independence African states have maintained a high tempo of insecurity politically, economically and socially. Our journey out of colonial domination was not peaceful yet crisis of different nature continued to bedevil the continent in the forms of electoral violence, tribal/ethnic violence, religious crisis, constitutional crisis (eg; Nigerian civil war and the Apartheid policy regime in South Africa) and more recently the various terror groups such as; Al-Shabaab in east Africa, Al-Qaeda, Ansar al-Sharia, Lord resistant army in Sudan, Islamic State in Somalia and many others on the list.

The implication of these entire crises is that development is retarded and progress and well-being is denied the people. Africa is identified more with violence and consequent underdevelopment because of insecurity in the continent which thereby reduced it to mere beggars for foreign aids. The land and people are is a perpetual disarray and hunger as insecurity have denied them the opportunity to be engaged in peaceful utilization and harnessing of the available human and material resources.

THE CHALLENGES OF INSECURITY IN NIGERIA SINCE 1960

Nigeria attained nationhood in 1960 (Falola and Heaton 2010) from the British colonial masters and since then has continued with the effort of nation building and development. Soon as the country attained political independence it was bedeviled by different crisis leading to insecurity of all kinds. The elections of the early 1960s (Obaro, 1980), the national census 1963(Michael, 1980), the regional crisis especially that of Western Nigeria between Awolowo and Akintola, the January, 1966 coup' de tat, the wanton killing of particular ethnic

group in other regions and majorly the Nigerian civil war of 1967-70 (Obaro, 1980; Falola and Heaton, 2010; Folashade and Oluranti, 2012) all where forms of insecurity that citizens have suffered.

While the 1970s was a decade of reconstruction and rehabilitation from the civil war the country was also celebrating the boom in oil wealth. The succeeding decade witnessed the Maitasine crisis which resulted in heavy loss of lives and properties especially in Kano. The newly found oil wealth changed so many things that even our value and ethical systems went into comatose with a few people getting extremely rich from the appropriation of public fund and the larger percentage of the population drowning in the sea of abject poverty. Between the 1980s and the 90s various kinds of upheavals took place across the country including that caused by the annulment of June 12, 1993 election purported to have been won by Chief M.K.O, Abiola Falola and Heaton (2010). The episode shook Nigeria to its foundations and caused mass exodus of people to retreat back to their places of origin especially the Yoruba and the Hausa groups.

The heightening clashes between nomadic pastoralists and crop farmers in many southern parts of the country, particularly in the South-East geopolitical zone, were interpreted as a subtle invasion of the region by northern elements. That resurrected the agitation for Biafra. The Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra [MASSOB], set up in 1999, led the pack. The successful operations of the Niger Delta militants were a strong inspiration and seemed to boost the possibility of successful military engagement. MASSOB quickly became a dreaded militant group. Street cults such as the Aba Boys also grouped to resist the government headed by Northerners believed to be behind the Southward migration. The split of MASSOB eventually resulted in the emergence of the Indigenous Peoples of Biafra [IPOB] in 2012, currently proscribed by the federal government as a terrorist organization.

Since the return to democracy in 1999 various kind events have taken place that has led to insecurity of either life or property in the country. The most horrendous and recent are the religious extremist groups, the sectional separatists, tribal sentimentalist, the cattle rustlers and the human bandits. All these groups cause terror in the society bringing insecurity and consequent underdevelopment. At present every security outfit in the country seems to be overstretched as both human and material resources have been adequately expended on the problem yet the degree of hopelessness is still high. It is now the vogue that government at all tiers in the country negotiates with terrorists and bandits to settle peace and ransom for the abducted. Shameful enough the military high command in the country told the world that the war against terror (Boko Haram) is not like any other conventional type which the Nigerian army is better trained. Ironically it implies that our military is incapable of managing the affair or a state conspiracy is been played as explained Gurr (1970).

Security threats in contemporary Nigeria have gone beyond the level of hearsay and distant rumor; it is a reality that we are now face-face with. At a time the federal government contemplated inviting the United States to assist the nation fight insurgents and terrorists across the country.

The government's politicization of the insurgency and terrorism give headroom for their rapid expansion and replication despite the pressure from neighbouring countries to contain them. However, absolute poverty, illiteracy, and neglect of the youth in many of the northern states created ready pools of recruits that found solace in the use of munitions. Combining our porous borders and our corrupt immigration agencies, trade in small arms and other munitions used in the Libyan war blossomed and found their way in droves into the country. Ultimately, injustice, inequity and ethnic distrust paved the way for the scary cumulus of insecurity seemingly engulfing us currently. Even the external influences that amplified the existing insecurity conditions borrowed their strength from these pre-existing 'bads' which we nurtured and used to our peril. These inequities caused the 1966 coup, unleashed a chain

of military rulers for more than four decades on us, resulted in the springing up of militias, and the creation of armies of poor, illiterate and unemployed persons that eventually became pawn-employees in the hands of terrorists. But these root causes, namely injustice, inequity, and ethnic distrust, can most effectively be eliminated through a robust citizen created Constitution and an effective justice system. Perhaps, we still have a little time to do the needful and save our country from destruction.

INSECURITY AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The development of any nation depends largely on its level of security which explains how peaceful the people are living and secure their properties (Sani, Mukhtar and Muhammad 2015). It is only when a society is secure that it will attract investors and development and progress can be achieved.

Insecurity in Nigeria as caused by corruption, tribalism, religious bigotry and extremism and indiscipline (both leaders and the led) has been responsible for the present state of affairs in the country.

There seems to be a collapse in the state institution which has fostered the menace insecurity hence lawlessness is the order of the day. Anybody does what he feels like and no government agency or institution can stop it. Sophisticated weapons are used freely to openly terrorize law abiding citizens at either home, on the road and farm. Lives and properties are lost to criminals on a daily basis, embezzlement; poverty and wickedness have continued to cause decay and underdevelopment in the country.

In recent times the dimension of terror has changed from armed robbery and religious or sectional attacks as in the cases of Boko Haram and MEND, OPC and IPOB to banditry and outright destructions of poor farming settlements in remote villages. The implication of these atrocities on national development is that other than killing lives, agricultural production disrupted. Recent report (2021) shows that many parts of Northern Nigeria will be faced with serious change of food insufficiency based on the backdrop of the fact that many farmers have been either killed or forced to migrate to join others in the cities.

Development majorly aims at a secured and healthy environment for all and to a maximum simultaneous attainment of national, organizational and individual goals that is sustainable overtime. The main obstacle to development in view of this paper is insecurity as shared by Call, 2000; Igbuzor, 2011; Ujah & Eboh, 2006; Val-OGU et al, 2017). Akpobibibo (2003) noted that the principle behind development is to make life meaningful to all. Therefore security is crucial for development to take place and on the contrary its absence stagnate economic growth and socio-cultural development.

Apart from outright electric power shortage which constitutes another form of insecurity, the general absence of security of lives and property has denied Nigeria the foreign investors it deserves to have. Most of those that were in the country earlier have packed out and new ones are afraid hence they are the prime targets. Given a population of about 200 million and vast land for agriculture and mineral exploitation yet the country is brought to it kneels due to the menace of corruption and insecurity hence the low GDP despite government supposed efforts.

CONCLUSION

Insecurity is a historical phenomenon that has occupied mans' history since inception but its modern wave beginning with the two world wars had global and catastrophic effects on human civilization. In Nigeria, the challenges of insecurity have become the order of the day especially since the return to democratic rule in 1999.

The position of this paper is that, the concept of insecurity implies fear of the unknown but presumed danger is very prevalent among Nigerians. People are afraid of travels, going to the farm, stay at home and even going to worship places. Human lives have become worthless as it is easier to 'waste' by common criminals yet government is busy going into negotiations with them. The waves of violent crime and abductions have become so common that security is no longer guaranteed to any person even senior public officers and military personnel. The question is who then will invest money in a lion's den?

Theoretically, the Marxist historical material which spells man's desire to meet his economic needs explain also that some peoples' greed have denied others what ought to be theirs. Consequently, class antagonism and squabbles emanate leading to confrontations and violent discharge of anger. On the other hand we have a conspiracy theory which posits that events recently happening are not far from calculated position of foreign interest and some internal collaborators who are vowed that the country must be split by all means including all forms of violence.

The recommendation here is that given our population of 200million and huge oil wealth, government MUST employ people in civil service, triple the number of policemen to at least 10 million and military also to 10 million. Make Nigeria at least for once a police state where every citizen is an informant.

Finally, the fight against corruption and elements of discontented in the society by the present government is not good enough as such there should be more practical measures of dealing with earring public officers and their collaborators.

REFERENCES

- Ayegba, U. S. (2015). Unemployment and poverty as sources and consequence of insecurity in Nigeria: The Boko Haram insurgency revisited. *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, 9(3), 90-99.
- Barkindo, B. Omolewa, M. with Babalola. (2001) *Africa and the Wider World 3: Africa since the scramble*. Longman, Nigeria
- Crowther, M. (1980). *The Story of Nigeria*. Faber & Faber, Nigeria.
- Douglas, Karen M.; Sutton, Robbie M. (12 April 2011). "[Does it take one to know one? Endorsement of conspiracy theories is influenced by personal willingness to conspire](#)" (PDF). *British Journal of Social Psychology*. **10** (3): 544–552. [doi:10.1111/j.2044-8309.2010.02018.x](#). [PMID 21486312](#). [Archived](#)(PDF) from the original on 3 November 2018. Retrieved 6/6/2021.
- Douglas, Karen M.; Uscinski, Joseph E.; Sutton, Robbie M.; Cichocka, Aleksandra; Nefes, Turkey; Ang, Chee Siang; Deravi, Farzin (2019). "[Understanding Conspiracy Theories](#)". *Political Psychology*. **40** (S1): –35. [doi:10.1111/pops.12568](#). [ISSN 0162-895X](#).
- Epstein, R. A. (2011). Direct Democracy: Government of the People, by the People, and for the People. *Harv. JL & Pub. Pol'y*, 34, 819.
- Falola, T., & Heaton, M. M. (2008). *A history of Nigeria*. Cambridge University Press
- Goertzel, T (1994). "Belief in conspiracy theories". *Political Psychology*. **15** (4): 731–742. [doi:10.2307/3791630](#). [JSTOR 3791630](#). "explanations for important events that involve secret plots by powerful and malevolent groups"
- Gurr, T.R. (1970). *Why Men Rebel*, Princeton, Nj: Centre Of International Studies, Princeton UP.
<https://www.businessamlive.com/a-history-of-insecurity-in-nigeria/>
- Ifamose, F. and Ojo, O. (2012). *Main Trends in Nigerian History*. Moronfolu Press Limited, Lagos
- Igbuzor, O. (2011). *Peace and Security Education: A Critical Factor for Sustainable Peace and*

- National Development, International Journal of Peace and Development Studies Vol. 2(1), 1-7, January
- Ikime, O. (Ed.). (1980). *Groundwork of Nigerian history*. Heinemann Educational Books
- Marx, K., & Engels, F. (1970). *The German Ideology* (Vol. 1). International Publishers Co.
- Marx, K., Engels, F., & Moore, S. (1972). *Manifesto of the communist party* (p. 337). Peking: Foreign Languages Press.
- Mosca, G. (1939). 3. On the Ruling Class.
- Nefes, Turkey (2018). "Framing of a Conspiracy Theory The Efendi Series". *Handbook of Conspiracy Theory and Contemporary Religion*. BRILL. pp. 407–422. [ISBN 978-90-04-38202-2](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-90-04-38202-2).
- Omonijo, D. O., Obiorah, C. B., Onyekere Oliver, C. U., Anyaegbunam, M. C., Shaibu, A. O., & Ogunwa, C. E. (2017). Exploring social theories in the study of insecurity in contemporary Nigeria. *The Journal of Social Sciences Research*, 3(7), 59-76.
- Okeshola, F. B. (2014). Violence and insecurity in Nigeria: the bane of national development. *European Scientific Journal, ESJ*, 7(26).
- Oyewale, M. A. Boko Haram Catastrophic Terrorism And Insecurity Question In Nigeria. <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=10168&context=dissertations>
- Pareto, V. (1963). *A Treatise General Sociology* (1915-19).
- Rodney. W, (1972) *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. Bourgol'E Dar'salam, Tanzania
- Sani, I., Mukhtar, J. I., & Muhaamad, G. I. (2015). Insecurity and the Challenges of National Development-Nigeria in Perspectives. In *CONFERENCE COMITEE* (Vol. 4, No. 2, p. 526).
- Ujah, O. and Eboh, E. (2006). *The Security Factor in Business Environment across Nigerian States*, African Institute of Applied Economics, Becans Working Paper 1
- Val-Ogu, G. S., Uzochina, D., & Olorunyomi, B. R. (2017). *Policing and Nigeria's national security: Implications for national development*, (1999-2016).
- Vornanen, R., Törrönen, M., & Niemelä, P. (2009). Insecurity of young people: The meaning of insecurity as defined by 13–17-year-old Finns. *Young*, 17(4), 399-419.
- Walker, R B. (1990). Security, sovereignty, and the challenge of world politics. *Alternatives*, 15(1, 3-27).
- Yahaya, J. U., & Bello, M. M. (2020). Kidnapping and Hostage taking: an emerging Issues of Insecurity in Kastina State *Journal of Advances in Social Science and Humanities*, 6(3), 1 154-1162.