

An Appraisal Of Security Challenges And National Integration In Nigeria: A Study Of Buhari Administration

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Abstract: *This study appraised security challenges and national integration in Nigeria with particular reference to Buhari Administration 2015 to 2019. Specifically, the study sought to examine the extent of security challenges in Nigeria; to determine the challenges of tackling security issues in Nigeria; and to investigate the effect of security challenges on national integration in Nigeria. The study is anchored on relative deprivation theory. The study adopted historical research design. The source of data for this work was purely secondary sources. Content analysis was employed in analyzing the data. The study found that terrorism, banditry and militancy are the major security challenges in Nigeria. The study further found that government failure to address the basic necessities of the people, loss of societal values and mismanagement of security funds are the major challenges of tackling security issues in Nigeria. The study further found that security challenges affect negatively national integration in Nigeria. The study concludes that security challenges affect national integration in Nigeria negatively. The study recommends amongst others that government must be proactive in dealing with security issues and threats, through modern methods of intelligence gathering, and intelligence sharing, training, logistics, motivation, and deploying advanced technology in managing security challenges.*

Keywords: Boko Haram, National Integration, Security Challenges, Terrorism

Background to the Study

All around the world, the concern for security have taken the centre stage of local, national and international discourse. The concept of security is therefore mostly not detached as a condition for peace and development. According to International Peace Academy (2004), the ability to provide security based on good governance are essential for sound conflict management, the effect of which provides a safe and secure environment in which to entrench other programming initiatives. In other word, it provides a safe and enabling environment for other important socio-economic, religious and political development. The importance of security to national integration cannot be undermined.

Security can be described as the stability and continuity of livelihood, predictability of daily life, protection from crime, and freedom from psychological harm (King, 2016). Similarly, Nwagboso (2012) viewed security as the act of being safe from harm or danger, the defence, protection and preservation of values, and the absence of threats to acquired values. These definitions are constituent element of the concept of human security or internal security, with fundamental difference from what is often termed as national security, where the focus is on the survival of the state against military threats posted by other state (Stephen, 2006). They are however insecurities arising from most internal factors that have great implications and similar threat posed by external forces or other states. National integration on the other hand is the attempt at uniting or bringing together the hitherto multi-ethnic groups of people with diverse culture, histories, languages, religion and belief systems into one which would remove primordial and subordinate loyalties and sentiments to ethnic groups.

The need for national integration has been emphasized and embarked upon at different stages of development in Nigeria. In General Yakubu Gowon's Civil War Victory Message to the Nation on the 15th January, 1970; he expressed the need to pursue unity in diversity/national integration vigorously. More importantly, apart from the aforementioned, the 1999 Constitution as amended in Chapter II, Article 15, sub-section 2 clearly stated: "...national integration shall be actively encouraged, whilst discrimination on the ground of place of origin, sex, religion, ethnic or linguistic associations or ties shall be prohibited" (FGN, 1999). In all these, it is open that the pursuit for national integration is parallel to the attainment of sustainable security and peaceful co-existence in Nigeria.

Nigeria as a country blessed with diverse socio-cultural and religious background has great potentials for socio-economics, religious and political development but has since its independence been faced with domestic challenges that threaten the nation. In the last decade the situation has even become more damming. Sheriff and Faith (2014) maintain that in the last decade Nigeria has experienced an increase in violence and criminality, which tended to undermine hope for development and political stability. According to Buhari (2015) at no other time in our history has the issue of security been brought so urgently to the front burners like now, the very territorial integrity of the nation has been violated...what we could only imagine some years ago has become daily realities. In general terms these are majorly what is often referred to as internal security challenges but with great impact on the values, welfare and unity of the country.

The issue of insecurity in Nigeria is no more a challenge, but a cancerous problem; the regularity of religious, political, communal and ethnic based insurgences, upheavals, conflicts and violence in post-colonial Nigeria has attained endemic proportion. In fact, the description of the trending precarious situation in Nigeria as insecurity is perhaps an understatement; the prevailing

terrorist/Islamic fundamentalist threats and attacks, unrelenting kidnappings and assassinations at virtually all societal strata, irrepressible armed robbery muggings as well as structural ethno-religious cum communal conflicts among several other anti-social as well as life threatening and claiming activities have cumulated in the creating an insecure and almost uninhabitable atmosphere in Nigeria (Ehi, 2009).

Even though, Nigeria has over four hundred ethnic groups with a great variety of cultures and languages (Olukoju, 1997). The possibility of national integration is not bleak as many suggest. Considering the current menace of insecurity in the nation, it is necessary to voice out that the activities of our security outfit (Nigerian Civil Defence, Police Force, SSS, Army and JTF) coupled with heavy fiscal support from the government can never procure Nigerians the desired enduring security, peace and tranquility. Instead, it would only suppress the problem on the surface in preparation for more overwhelming mayhem of violence, insurgency, crime, armaments and fundamentalism. Based on the foregoing, this study investigated the impact of security challenges on national integration in Nigeria.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses stated were formulated to guide this study.

Hypothesis One

Ho: Terrorism, banditry and militancy are not the major security challenges in Nigeria.

Hi: Terrorism, banditry and militancy are the major security challenges in Nigeria.

Hypothesis Two

Ho: Government failure to address the basic necessities of the people, loss of societal values and mismanagement of security funds are not the major challenges of tackling security issues in Nigeria.

Hi: Government failure to address the basic necessities of the people, loss of societal values and mismanagement of security funds are the major challenges of tackling security issues in Nigeria.

Hypothesis Three

Ho: Security challenges do not affect negatively national integration in Nigeria.

Hi: Security challenges affect negatively national integration in Nigeria.

The Extent of Security Challenges in Nigeria

It is pertinent to note the security challenges which the Nigerian government has to grapple with if security is to be restored to Nigeria. First of all is the failure of security agencies in the country. In particular, the failure of the intelligence services to contain the recurring security breaches. These security agencies appear incapable of matching the sophisticatedness of these miscreants. They discharged their duty unprofessionally and unmotivated. One wonders how they can veritably help the Nigerian government in restoring security to the country. In fact, the current trend of violence is imprinting on the psyche of Nigerians that the government security apparatus is incapable of guaranteeing the security and safety of its people.

Another security challenge comes from the judiciary arm of government of the country. In Nigeria, the Judiciary has occasionally compromised cases that concern insecurity and thereby making the law not to act as a deterrent again. This challenge needs to be speedily resolved since many Nigerians have become conditioned to the acts of carnage, brigandage, looting, massacre, butchery and bestiality (Idike, Eme & Okechukwu, 2015). Indecisiveness on issues bothering on insecurity from the part of the Nigerian government is another security challenge. This indecisiveness is not peculiar to the present Nigerian government but it has been an attitude of every federal government since the first republic. The leaders of this country need to cultivate strong political will to oversee this security problem and not appear ever clueless, negligent and predictable (Ogbonnaya & Ehigiamusoe, 2013).

Unemployment appears to be the strongest security challenge of the Nigerian government. So alarming is the rate of unemployment in this country. Many Nigerians of whom are in the youth bracket are not gainfully employed. This situation has continually fanned the embers of insecurity in Nigeria to flames. These youths are frustrated by their unemployed state into perpetrating crimes of various degrees.

Another of these security challenges is the issue of lop-sided development of the country. As Nwadiolor (2011) rightly pointed out, "the deliberate concentration of Nigeria's capital resources to the development of a few cities in the name of federal and state capitals, culminating in the prevalence of a large population of rural and underdeveloped communities who later came to see the developing cities of Lagos, Port-Harcourt, Kano, Enugu, Ibadan, Kaduna and Calabar to mention but a few, as a different country has equally compounded the security of this country." The situation created is such that the rural areas dwellers consider as enemies and subsequently, appeared to have waged a cold war against the urban areas dwellers. The rural areas dwellers out of envy for the goodies enjoyed by the urban areas dwellers, engage in organized criminal expeditions to the cities and retreat to escape security agencies, and this has continued till date.

The final and not the least of these security challenges is the nefarious and virulent activity of the Islamic sect *cum* terror-group, *Boko Haram*. This terror-group has constituted itself a thorn in the flesh of the current government of Nigeria. The group has claimed responsibility for most bomb explosions and mayhem experienced within the country in recent times. The sheer lawlessness and carnage carried out by these renegade of Islam have heated up the nation and made the country less secure (Akande, 2014). Since the return of Nigeria to civil rule in 1999, security challenges have posed a serious threat to smooth governance, reaching new

high in 2012. Different militia groups had at one point or the other held the country to ransom. There is the Egbesu Boys in the Niger Delta; the Bakassi Boys, in the South-East and the Odua People's Congress (OPC) in the South West, and now the Boko Haram sect in the North. At different times in the past, these different groups have held the Nigerian nation to ransom. In each of these different times, the groups reigned, the nation's security agencies were unable to deal with them or quell their lawless conduct through superior fire power.

The government has always reached a form of settlement with these organisations. The trend is that each time the government reached a compromise with these lawless groups, it became weaker and new groups emerged to use violent means to extract a commitment from government. In a typical behaviour of a nation that thrives on a rent economy, the government has always sought to buy peace and always ended with the peace of the graveyard like the current situation in the Niger Delta where former militants have been transformed into either top level government contractors or emergency crude oil refiners in the creeks or kidnap merchants, despite an amnesty programme that still costs the government billions of Naira every year (Eme & Anyadike, 2012).

In the North, the lingering Boko Haram insurgency, which started in 2009 in Maiduguri, Borno State, North East geo-political zone, has brought the economy of the North to a standstill. Major consumer goods' companies have seen their distribution chains destabilised as the distributors of their goods in the Northern part of the country have been forced to relocate to the south. The violence in the north has spared no one, as the recent attack on the Emir of Kano shows. The telecom companies have seen their telecom facilities destroyed while bank branches have been attacked and robbed. Several road construction companies have seen their expatriate staff kidnapped and in some cases killed. Although the actual figure of deaths arising from the deadly strikes by the Boko Haram sect may be difficult to pinpoint, media reports estimate that over 10,000 people have been killed since 2009. The economic cost of the violence may however be difficult to evaluate immediately in terms of lost investment opportunities and actual cost of damage done to existing infrastructure and human lives (Haruna & Nzomiwu, 2012).

No nation is free of security challenges. These challenges also vary from one country to the other. Thus, Nigeria's security challenges would definitely differ from those in Egypt, USA or Russia. For instance, in US today, the dangers posed by" weapon possession are perhaps the greatest security challenges confronting the country. Threats/challenges to a country's security may range from low level civil disorder, large scale violence, even armed insurgency or terrorism. These threats may be directed against citizens or the organs and infrastructure of the state itself. Foreign powers may also act as a threat to a country's security by either committing or sponsoring terrorism or rebellion without actually declaring war.

Challenges of Tackling Security Issues in Nigeria

The main goal of security has always remained the same; the effective protection of people and property. To our understanding the challenges of providing adequate security in Nigeria entails any factor(s) that causes or hinders the achievement of the effective protection of the people, property and unity of the country. We highlight some of the major challenges as follows:

Government Failure to Address the Basic Necessities of the People: The failure of the Nigerian government to address the basic necessities of the people and the disparities in the allocations of resources breeds the thought of marginalization, inequalities and unfairness among Nigerians. This consistently stimulates grievances by the frustrated people and propels the emergence of militancy and other violence. In such situations the security of lives and properties are rarely guaranteed.

Loss of Societal Values and Morality: According to the new world encyclopedia, morality in its everyday sense refers to a code of conduct, by which human beings regulates their lives. The dictionary defines values as the things that have an intrinsic worth in usefulness or importance to the possessor, or principles, standards, or qualities considered worthwhile or desirable. Namara (2012) posit that moral values such as truth, freedom, charity etc when functioning correctly, are life protecting or life enhancing for all. Regrettably in Nigeria today, our societal values for truth, good character, handwork, diligence, dignity in labour, commitment and discipline have gradually been exchanged for greed, laziness, quick money syndrome, and other unholy activities. The effects are reflected in the high incidences of armed robbery, kidnapping for ransom, ritual killings and even the unholy activities of some security operative to receiving bribe and in negligence of their duties.

Corruption and Mismanagement of Security Funds: Corruption has become a persistent phenomenon and probably the root cause of many socio-political and economic problems in Nigeria and has contributed immensely to our present insecurity situation. The corrupt practices of political leaders and Security bosses are not only reflected in the mismanagement of funds that should ordinarily be used to provide social amenities but also in providing adequate security needs such as modern security hardware's and technologies, continuous training of security personnel etc. most alarming among others is the misappropriation of about \$2.1 billion security funds by Col Dasuki (former National Security Adviser to the president) and other security generals (Fummanya 2015). Collaborating with this Obiamaka et al (2012) emphasized that, the practice of misappropriating and stealing huge sums of public money under the guise of enhancing national security has come under increasing scrutiny in Nigeria. The ambiguity and secrecy associated with the concept of national security has helped institutionalize unaccountable governance at all levels of government.

Faulty Recruitment Process and Poor Training of Government Security Agents: The selection, recruitment and training of security personnel should normally include interviews to ascertain motives, background checks, psychological checks and other standards that accurately measure the qualities required for adequate security. Thorough Training is also necessary to ensure that security personal have core body of knowledge (community relations, culture sensitivity and importance of diversity) and certain skills to create a safe and orderly society. Unfortunately, the situation is not completely true in the recruitment and training of security personnel in Nigeria. They are a lot of deficiencies in the syllabi and inadequacies in the initial and on-the job training of security

personnel (Cleen foundation sector reform study, 2009), recruitment has been commercialized or is determined by the strength of god fatherism, and Training facilities are overcrowded and downgraded (Oilly, 2014). At the end most security personnel lack the professionalism to function well.

Negligence or Lack of Patriotism Among Security Personnel: Connected to faulty recruitment process into government instituted security agencies is the problem of negligence and lack of patriotism. Like many other job or professions in Nigeria, most persons join the security forces in search for daily bread rather than for the sack of protecting lives and properties hence they are very quick to abandon their security duties at the slightest sense of trouble. Ntayi (2013) recounting lack of patriotism as one of the failures of security in Nigeria expressed that patriotism is lacking when a man lackadaisically does what he has undertaken to do for his nation, and allows self deference to take precedence over and above national interest and allegiance. He further explains that such persons are perhaps they are the ones with the temerity to air the despondency, hopelessness, and inability of the security force to contend with the forces that seek to destroy our lives.

Low Level of Cooperation Among Security Agencies: In a paper titled “Achieving Synergy Between National Security And The Economy: The Place Of Effective Public Relations” the former Nigerian Director of Defence Information (DDI), Maj-Gen. Chris Olukolade (rtd), declared that low level of cooperation among security agencies in the country was having serious negative impact not just on their operations but on the nation’s collective interest such as on national security and economy (Daily post, 2017). Similarly Odoma (2014) noted that the prolonged case of Boko Haram insurgent may not be unconnected to the lack of synergy between security operatives and also between civil population and security agencies. He explains further that due to frequent frictions between security agencies, they hardly enjoy the confidence of the civil population and by extension, lack the necessary co-operation and support from them.

Ignorance and Religious Extremism: Ignorance and religious extremism is an irrefutable factor that hinders adequate security measures in Nigeria. Faith (2013) observed that Nigeria is still a superstitious society submerged in an abyss of ignorance. It is an underlying factor which aids and provides a fertile ground for all other ills of society including corruption. The challenges posed by ignorance ranges from citizens ignorance of their rights, ignorance of security risk and security measures, ignorance of true religious teachings, and ignorance of many sustainable knowledge. These levels of ignorance consequently creates and enabling environment for the propagations of erroneous and destructive interpretations and teachings which give birth to hate crimes and extremisms as evident in ethno-religious crisis and communal conflicts.

Porous Borders: In recent time Nigeria has witnesses a lot of security problems caused and aggravated by the porous nature of her borders. The Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) has disclosed that there over 1,400 illegal border routes into the country (Chuwang, 2016). The porosity of our boarders allows smuggling of arms, trafficking of kidnapped persons and infiltration of terrorist and herdsmen. Vincent (2013) opined that the nature of our porous borders especially in the north-east formed the epicenter of insurgency, terror attacks, and raids by guerrillas and herdsmen who hit targets and easily escape outside the country.

Security Challenges and National Integration in Nigeria

Global insecurity orchestrated by both man- made and natural disaster such as: erosion, terrorism, kidnapping, armed robbery and armed banditry is gradually becoming a national embarrassment to the Nigerian people. The upsurge in criminal activities seems to have taken a new dimension to the extent that Nigerians are becoming worried, as it portents a great danger to the unity of the country. Peace and harmony seem to be eluding our people. A lot of things seem to have fallen apart and the Centre can no longer hold. Our existence as a nation is threatened, and our existence as people is equally being threatened. Yesterday was the menace called kidnapping, but today is the deadly and dastardly group called Boko Haram. Before Boko Haram we had the Niger Delta militants, the Egbesus from Bayelsa, OPC from the west, the MASSOB from the east, the MOSSOP from the Ogoni land and all forms of political assassinations and armed robberies. There is no society that does not have headache with crime, but when a nation begins to have organized groups that take a position against the state such as Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND), the epidemic kidnapping in the South East, and now the Boko Haram which is an extension of international trend, it also inform one that the apparatus of the state for maintaining security, law and order is threatened. Too that one should look for the causes of that insecurity, because when you get a situation where people carry arms irrespective of whether they themselves are going through during the process, then, you begin to wonder about the state of discontentment in our society. And when you analyze the age bracket of the criminals it also tells one about the rate of unemployment in the country that cannot accommodate this army of youths (Business day, 28 May, 2012).

The security challenges bedeviling Nigeria is a serious threat to her national unity and integration. Most threat to national integration of Nigeria has met brutal force and coercion. An attempt by the Igbo tribe to secede from the federation resulted to a civil war in 1966; another attempt of Isaac Adaka Boro to secede the Niger Delta area from the federation landed him in jail. The recent attempt by MASSOB leader Umezurike to re-kindle the Biafran spirit landed him in jail. The recent security challenges confronting Nigeria as noted by the Nobel Laureate Professor Wole Soyinka that, the country is already drifting (Oderemi, 2013) i.e., it is gradually returning to the inglorious era of disunity, which precipitated a civil war some thirty years ago.

Similarly, the United Nations and the United States of America have separately expressed deep concern on the state of affairs in Nigeria and called on Nigerians to tread softly in the interest of national unity and integration. The 1999 constitution of Nigeria provides a legal framework of Nigeria’s national unity. Specifically, section one under the General Provision in part one

states that, “Nigeria is one indivisible and indissoluble sovereign state to be known by the name Federal Republic of Nigeria”. The implementation of this provision is a function of the government. The government has the task of promoting and protecting national unity and integration. This could be done through promotion of public welfare, justice, democracy and for Nigerians to understand one another and to see each other as equal part of an indivisible nation; and for Nigerians to believe there is a place for them under the Nigerian State (Olayode, 2009).

National integration should be a key target of government policy at all levels. Nigerians are not too satisfied with the progress made by government in promoting greater integration amongst the countries various tribes or ethnic groups (Wakili, 2009). However, numerous government policies and laws differentiate Nigerians on the basis of ethnic background, to the point that, some tribes or ethnic group feels they have been the target of discrimination. Government should take the tasked with promoting greater integration amongst the countries various communities serious. Those that are instrumental to the disunity of Nigeria are not knowledgeable and pragmatic about the trends of globalization and activities in the international state system. Those things/issues used in polarizing Nigeria are rather strength than weaknesses to the Nigerian state. In a statement issued in Washington, the United States Department identified Nigeria’s ethnic and religious diversity as a source of strength (Oderemi, 2013). Moreso, Nigeria is expected to play a leading role in Africa and the United Nations; internal disunity will prevent Nigeria from becoming a regional linchpin.

It is one thing to possess the intention to abate the insecurity situation and another to really abate it. What is meant here is that Nigerians are actually tired in hearing promises of restoring security from their government. It is high time the government grabbed the bull by the horns. If not, this insecurity, if it has not even started, will affect legitimate social and economic activities in the country. And as Adejumo (2011) made us to understand, problems resulting from insecurity have a damaging consequence of giving the signal to the rest of the international community that Nigeria is not safe and secured and as such not suitable for economic investment and activities. Radio Nigeria (2014) brought to the limelight the gravity of this implication, if these security challenges are allowed to fester, when it observed: “First, it is capable of stalling any developmental intention of the Government. The much needed foreign investment in the country is bound to be elusive if the security situation is not addressed.”

Not just that alone, the security challenges facing Nigeria, as Adejumo (2011) further pointed out, have telling implication for the country’s political system. Every part of the polity must feel that it is being carried along in the process of national integration. “Experience has shown that widespread discontent and loss of confidence in the system have ways of affecting national integration” (Adejumo, 2011). Most importantly, constant violence in the country will impinge on the continued existence of Nigerian democracy. More worrying is the fact that insecurity in Nigeria have not only impacted unhelpfully on Nigeria’s image in the international community, they have also threatened Nigeria’s unity and corporate existence (Walter, 2012). In concord, Akande (2014) cautioned, “our nation stands on the rim of crisis. A stupendous national disaster beckons....The well being of the nation hangs on a balance. If we do not act decisively, the demands of the moment will find us wanting and history will issue a terrible verdict against us.”

Test of Hypotheses

The hypotheses formulated in this study were tested with Chi-square statistical technique at 5% level of significance. The results are presented below.

Test of Hypothesis One

Ho: Terrorism, banditry and militancy are not the major security challenges in Nigeria.

Hi: Terrorism, banditry and militancy are the major security challenges in Nigeria.

Chi-square Tests for Hypothesis One

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	39.424 ^a	12	.002
Likelihood Ratio	12.711	12	.002
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.261	1	.010
N of Valid Cases	249		

The above indicates that the value of chi-square 39.424 which is statistically significant at 0.05 level at 12 degree of freedom. Since, chi-square value is statistically significant at 5% level of significance. We therefore reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis. Hence, we conclude that terrorism, banditry and militancy are the major security challenges in Nigeria.

Test of Hypothesis Two

Ho: Government failure to address the basic necessities of the people, loss of societal values and mismanagement of security funds are not the major challenges of tackling security issues in Nigeria.

Hi: Government failure to address the basic necessities of the people, loss of societal values and mismanagement of security funds are the major challenges of tackling security issues in Nigeria.

Chi-square Tests for Hypothesis Two

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	43.841 ^a	12	.000
Likelihood Ratio	17.371	12	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.829	1	.003
N of Valid Cases	249		

The above indicates that the value of chi-square 43.841 which is statistically significant at 0.05 level at 12 degree of freedom. Since, chi-square value is statistically significant at 5% level of significance. We therefore reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis. Hence, we conclude that government failure to address the basic necessities of the people, loss of societal values and mismanagement of security funds are the major challenges of tackling security issues in Nigeria.

Test of Hypothesis Three

Ho: Security challenges do not affect negatively national integration in Nigeria.

Hi: Security challenges affect negatively national integration in Nigeria.

Chi-square Tests for Hypothesis Three

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	41.236 ^a	12	.000
Likelihood Ratio	27.871	12	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	15.851	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	249		

The above indicates that the value of chi-square 41.236 which is statistically significant at 0.05 level at 12 degree of freedom. Since, chi-square value is statistically significant at 5% level of significance. We therefore reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis. Hence, we conclude that security challenges affect negatively national integration in Nigeria.

Discussions

This study investigated security challenges and national integration in Nigeria with particular references to Buhari administration from 2015 to 2010. The study found that terrorism, banditry and militancy are the major security challenges in Nigeria. terrorism, banditry and militancy contribute significantly to the level of security challenges in Nigeria. Terrorist activities particularly that of Boko Haram insurgencies and other terrorist groups in northern Nigeria have threatened the very existence of the living beings, ranging from social and cultural aspect. Also, "Bandits" have emerged as the new bogeyman for insecurity in Nigeria, joining a long (and still growing list) that includes Boko Haram, cultists, herdsmen, kidnappers and militants. In different parts of Nigeria, banditry is used to describe different variants of outlawry. Banditry particularly in northern Nigeria have been allowed to degenerate into a complex national emergency with dire territorial and security implications. Since, the inception of Buhari regime in 2015, bandits has been launching systematic attacks targeted at individuals, communities and, eventually, the state. Furthermore, militancy, particularly in the oil rich region of Nigeria has constitute a major security challenge in Nigeria. The Niger Delta is a trouble spot in contemporary Nigerian politics and, in fact, a hotspot of youth militant activities. This is because the nature of oil exploitation and the politics of distribution of oil wealth have created disempowerment, frustration and deprivation that underpinned outbreak of violence and conflicts in the form of youth militancy. The literature is awash with causes and consequences of Niger Delta militancy. Also, the violent repression and the militarisation of the Niger Delta by the Nigerian state is well documented in literature.

The study also found that government failure to address the basic necessities of the people, loss of societal values and mismanagement of security funds are the major challenges of tackling security issues in Nigeria. The failure of the Nigerian government to address the basic necessities of the people and the disparities in the allocations of resources breeds the thought of marginalization, inequalities and unfairness among Nigerians. In Nigeria, millions of people lack access to adequate housing, water, sanitation, durable dwellings, adequate space, and secure tenure particularly in the urban areas. This makes it imperative for governments to apply social assistance programme for the poor and vulnerable. Accordingly, Otto and Ukpere (2012) noted that insecurity is a result of malignant environment dominated by man's insensitivity to man. Many people in authority take advantage of their positions to force down policies that impoverish the masses so much as it benefits them and a few others. High handedness is also another problem whereby Nigerians see themselves as adventures with the business called Nigeria and so are concerned mainly with how much enters their pockets no matter how that happens.

Also, loss of societal values constitutes the major challenge to tackling security issues in Nigeria. Nigeria is experiencing moral decadence as a result of negligence of Nigerian norms and values, which made society secured and safe. Norms and values are very important to national transformation. Since transformation has to do with change of moral character for better, through the

renewal of the inner most nature the norms and values defines the objectives or goals, and the directions or path it should follow. The failure of any society to follow the identified positive norms and values will bring about retrogression in its development. Norms and values have the power of social integration in the society. Both have the force to unite various groups within the society. The society will immensely benefit if its moral norms and values are intensively promoted. All concerned Nigerians are lamenting about the loss of societal values in the nation. There is wealth without hard work; dishonesty, fraud and cheating. This has actually discouraged many Nigerians from giving their best in service to the nation. Where norms and values concerning fundamental human rights in both public and private sectors have been violated, the people and government will live in an atmosphere of instability and insecurity which do not promote national transformation. Therefore, reactivating Nigerian norms and values are essential ingredients in the transformation of the nation, because it is a missing link that is breeding moral decadence in the society. This will help to stem the tides of insecurity in Nigeria.

Finally, the corruption in the management of security funds constitutes another challenge in tackling security issues in Nigeria. The alarming rate of insecurity is not less disturbing in spite of the reform undertaken and substantial share of the national budgets allocated to the security sector. There have been serious and continuous threat to national and individual security in the form of organized crimes, election related violence and violent extremism. This state of insecurity in Nigeria is greatly a function of government failure traceable to systematic and political corruption especially in the management of funds made for security purposes. In this regards, Eme and Onyishi (2011) identify the causes of insecurity in Nigeria as- improper funding of the police and other security agencies, non-payment of the allowances and salaries of these security agencies due to systemic mismanagement of security funds. Therefore, it is concluded that government failure to address the basic necessities of the people, loss of societal values and mismanagement of security funds are the major challenges of tackling security issues in Nigeria.

The study further indicates that security challenges affect negatively national integration in Nigeria. The upsurge in the level of security challenges are becoming worried, as it portents a great danger to the unity of the country. Peace, harmony and national integration seem to be eluding our people. Most Nigerians are not too satisfied with the progress made by government in promoting greater integration amongst the countries various tribes or ethnic groups. Numerous government policies and laws differentiate Nigerians on the basis of ethnic background, to the point that, some tribes or ethnic group feels they have been the target of discrimination (Oderemi, 2013). Experience has shown that widespread discontent and loss of confidence in the system have ways of affecting national integration (Adejumo, 2011). More worrying is the fact that insecurity in Nigeria has not only impacted unhelpfully on Nigeria's image in the international community, they have also threatened Nigeria's unity and corporate existence.

It is poignant that security challenges in Nigeria are rapidly breaking the cords of unity/integration between the various ethnic entities in the nation. As a matter of fact, the sieges of insecurity in Nigeria have resulted in high level of ethnic consciousness at the expense of national integration. In line with this, Iwundu and Thom-Otuya (2013) noted that the security challenges bedeviling Nigeria is a serious threat to her national unity. Adebile (2015) contends that insecurity in Nigeria has gone beyond disorganizing the domestic environment especially in the area of national integration; it has succeeded in labelling Nigeria repulsively in the international community. Therefore, it is concluded that security challenges affect national integration in Nigeria negatively.

Findings

In summary, the findings of the study are:

1. Terrorism, banditry and militancy are the major security challenges in Nigeria.
2. Government failure to address the basic necessities of the people, loss of societal values and mismanagement of security funds are the major challenges of tackling security issues in Nigeria.
3. Security challenges affect negatively national integration in Nigeria.

Conclusion

This study investigated security challenges and national integration in Nigeria from 2015 to 2019. Content analysis was employed in analyzing the data generated through secondary sources. The study found that terrorism, banditry and militancy are the major security challenges in Nigeria. The study also found that government failure to address the basic necessities of the people, loss of societal values and mismanagement of security funds are the major challenges of tackling security issues in Nigeria. The study further found that Security challenges affect negatively national integration in Nigeria.

National integration is the primary goal of every well meaning government especially in a multi ethnic and cultural nation. National integration is essentially dependent on the level of security, justice, fairness and peaceful co-existence by people. In the absence of security, national integration cannot be sustained as it destroys economic, human and social fabrics of the nation. The activities of terrorist, bandits and militants have almost crippled economic activities and social life in Nigeria particularly in the Northern Nigeria. Also activities of other militia groups in other parts of the country pose serious threat to national integration these regions. The security crises in different parts of Nigeria is destroying existing infrastructure and preventing a peaceful environment for the development of further infrastructure, and a safe environment for economic activities by individuals to give them economic empowerment that will enable households not only to cater for their present generations, create wealth, but also to provide for future generations.

Security challenges like terrorism, banditry and militancy constitutes serious threat to development of Nigerian state; the socio-economic impacts are huge result in human cost and displacement of the people from their homes. This has further added to the continued political instability and lack of national integration in Nigeria. For instance, Boko Haram sect is not just any militia

group in Nigeria pursuing its legitimate interest in the society. This is a fringe terrorist group that has virtually declared war on Nigerian state on the account demanding for cancellation of secular constitution of the state. It has killed and destroyed hundreds of innocents Nigerians through suicide bombings in several states of the federation. Boko Haram sect has sacked police stations and other security formations, catering away arms and ammunition from them. The group have assaulted prisons and freed criminals.

Consequently, insecurity becomes the order of the day, where bandits had grown wings, trying to overpower the custodian of the nation's socio-political cum economic development. This resulted to poverty and underdevelopment, weak public institutions, poor governance, and unethical leadership. Security challenges in Nigeria especially the activities of Boko Haram, banditry and militancy are catastrophic and needs quick response, due to its significant effects on the health, welfare of the people and political stability on Nigerian state. Federal government should be bold enough to deal decisively with those found guilty in connection with these security issues irrespective of their highly placed in the society. The study concludes that security challenges affect national integration in Nigeria negatively.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. A National Conference should be convoked to enable the ethnic groups articulate and dialogue on issues of national importance. Resolutions there can be reflected in the constitution and in government policies and programmes.
2. Our leaders should be courageous enough to stamp out the menace of terrorism and other crimes irrespective of whose Ox are gored. When a leader sits back and watch the nation gradually rocked the boat, people begin to question his intellectual capability.
3. There are so many overtly functions or visibly demonstrated over-lapping functions of our security agencies. The SSS, police, the army, customs, etc. need their functions properly redefined in order to allow for efficiency, and be held culpable when any lapse is recorded from any quarter.
4. Government must be proactive in dealing with security issues and threats, through modern methods of intelligence gathering, and intelligence sharing, training, logistics, motivation, and deploying advanced technology in managing security challenges.
5. Governments at all levels should ensure that rising poverty indices are reversed and a realistic social security programme is pursued and systematically implemented to ensure that the populace meets their basic needs.

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