

Security and Economic Development in Nigeria: A Leadership Perspective

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Abstract

This paper critically examined the impact of insecurity on the economic development of Nigeria. Specifically, it established the implications of insecurity on economic growth and development of Nigeria. The study utilized secondary data on security challenges in the country. It was found that Nigeria has a history of ineffective leadership reflected in poor governance. It is argued that this is due to the leaders' inability to proffer and implement lasting solutions to problems of corruption, ethnic clashes, religious violence, unemployment rate, poor education and so on. The resultant effects have been loss of lives and properties, poverty, and economic backwardness. The paper identifies effective leadership and governance as non-negotiable instruments of change. Recommendations for the improvement of the leadership strength of Nigeria were also suggested.

Keywords: Corruption, Economy Development, Leadership, Security.

Introduction

Security is a very urgent issue in every society and no nation will be able to make progress without a formidable security measure put in place. Right from ancient times, kingdoms and empires had put measures in place that address internal and external security issues for the purpose of protection of lives and properties. One major function of every government is the provision of security for its citizenry. The inability to provide adequate security measures has often led to various vices- crime, violence that pose as challenges and serious threat to national peace and economic progress. Although, it can be argued that no nation, whether developing or developed can be absolutely free from crime and violence, the difference between these nations however, is how they manage the threat (Oladiran, 2012). This is where effective leadership, management and governance become paramount.

In contemporary times, insecurity has been a recurring problem in Nigeria. Evidence of security challenges exist such as the lingering Boko Haram insurgency in the north-Eastern region parts of Nigeria, Niger delta militancy, the Jos and Sokoto crises, kidnapping, armed robbery and ritual in the south, west and eastern part of Nigeria as well as the recent Fulani herdsmen clashes in different parts of the country. These have become a big threat to the peace and economic development of the country and have forced the government to spend much resources addressing them. Despite the huge resources the government has channeled in combating crime and violence, there seem to be very little success. Hence it seems as if the Malthusian paradigm could be rephrased as: "insecurity in the country is growing in a geometric

progression while government efforts at combating it grows in arithmetic progression". To reverse this impending disaster, there is need for a reordering of the leadership of the country.

Considering the continuous rise in security challenges in Nigeria and the government machinery not being able to adequately curtail the situation, the following questions readily come to fore: will insecurity ever end in Nigeria? Can the economy of Nigeria survive it? What role those effective leadership and good governance play in addressing security issues? The objective of this paper therefore, is to critically examine the impact of insecurity on the economic development of Nigeria. This paper is a theoretical review and also utilized secondary data in the area of security and economic development. It also examines literature on leadership and governance. The rest of this paper proceeds in the following manner: It begins by providing an understanding of the meaning of security and economic development, then it looks at effective leadership and good governance, followed by insecurity and the Nigerian economy; it also presents effective leadership as key to Nigerian security challenges. Lastly, the conclusion and recommendation are put forward.

The Concept of Security

Security is a term that denotes a system that demonstrates the ability to maintain a high level of peace and decorum. It reflects the ability to handle situations that perpetrate danger and threat with a high degree of urgency. It occurs when measures are put in place to address issues related to safety. Achumba, Ighomereho, and Akpor-Robaro (2013) described security as stability and continuity of livelihood,

predictability of daily life, protection from crime and freedom from psychological harm. In the view of Nwagboso (2012), security is associated with the alleviation of threats to cherished values, especially the survival of individuals, groups or objects in the near future. This view relates security to survival, hence pointing out the essence of security. Security is therefore directed to the survival of lives, properties, general social well-being, industrialization, business expansion, economic growth and development.

The Concept of Economic Development

Economic development is a term used to refer to a substantial transformation and growth in the various sectors of the economy. It is the process by which a nation improves the economic, political and social well-being of its people (Wikipedia, 2018). Economic development evolves as a result of continuous measures put in place to address issues relating to growth, security and sustainability. It is through economic development that a society gets metamorphosed from primitive stage to more industrialized nation. Economic development does not take place in a particular area only but a corresponding increase or growth in all areas of a society including education, health, infrastructure, security strength, leadership ability, governance and political stability. Abedi (2011) posits that economic development is sustained rise in both real per capita income and quantity and quality of social and economic amenities in a country. While economic growth addresses increase in output of goods and services, economic development embraces economic growth and the presence of facilities (Abedi, 2011). Where there is economic development, it is an indicator of prosperity which is manifested in the standard of living, political stability and security of the people. Thus Iyoha, Oyefusi and Oriakhi (2003) assert that growth and development experienced of the East Asian Tigers depend on factors such as investment in physical capital and human capital, indigenous base, structural transformation, administrative efficiency among others. Sustainable economic development therefore, must recognize the importance of growth, environmental protection and increased opportunities for the poor and marginalized groups (World Bank, 2017).

Insecurity and the Nigerian Economy

Recently, Nigeria faces very serious internal security problems and needs more urgent responses. This

becomes worrisome considering her position in globe, especially in the African continent. Nigeria is not only the most populous country in Africa but also strategically located in a region (Gulf of guinea) that is a major source of the world's oil (Dambazua, 2014). Security challenges in the country include Boko Haram insurgency in the north-eastern states of Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa, Niger Delta militancy and piracy in south-south geopolitical zone comprising Bayelsa, Delta and Rivers, ethno-religious conflicts, trans-border criminal activities and election-induced violence (Dambazau, 2014). Olakunle (2018) argues that security challenges in Nigeria are self-inflicted through well organized criminal or ethnic gangs that seem to defy solutions. He further attributed security challenges in the country to bad governance.

Although, there are indications that Boko haram insurgency is reducing in the north east, there is still much to be done considering the emergence of the Fulani herdsmen clashes in Benue state and other places in the country.

Global terrorism report (2017) indicates that Nigeria remains the third most terrorized nation in the world. It occupied the same ranking in 2015, and 2016. It was ranked fourth in 2014 Nigeria following after Iraq and Afganistan which occupy the first and second rankings respectively (Ukpong, 2017). However, the report states that Nigeria recorded the biggest decrease in terrorism by 80% in the year 2016 whereas deaths at the year 2015 stood at 3,100 (Ukpong, 2017).

Also, the International NGO Safety Organization (INSO) (2018), discloses that the gross incident rate (GIR) which consists of all security incidents (from January to August 2018) in Nigeria sum up to 1,406. It also revealed that since 2009, there has been more than one million internally displaced persons (IDPs) and an estimated 20,000 people have been killed by Boko Haram (INSO, 2018).

Furthermore, Trading Economics (2018) records that terrorism index in Nigeria decreased to 9.01 in 2016 from 9.31 in 2015. It averaged 6.50 from 2002 until 2016, reaching an all time high of 9.31 in 2015 and a low record of 3.86 in 2002.

Table 1: Nigeria Terrorism Index from 2002-2016.

Actual	Previous	Highest	Lowest	Dates	Unit Frequency
9.01	9.31	9.31	3.86	2002-2016	Yearly

Source: Nigeria terrorism index/2002-2018/data/chart/calender/forecast-Trading Economics

www.tradingeconomics.com>Nigeria

Table 2: Nigeria Terrorism Index from 2008 -2016

Year	Terrorism index
2008	5.79
2009	6.44
2010	6.31
2011	6.95
2012	7.96
2013	8.2
2014	9.21
2015	9.31
2016	9.01

Source: Compiled from Nigerian terrorism index 2008-2018/data/chart/calender/forecast-Trading.

www.tradingeconomics.com>Nigeria

Table 3: G20 Terrorism Index of Year 2016

Country	Terrorism index
India	7.53
Turkey	7.52
France	5.96
Saudi Arabia	5.81
China	5.54
United States	5.43
Russia	5.33
United Kingdom	5.10
Germany	4.92
Indonesia	4.55
South Africa	4.09
Japan	3.60
Mexico	3.29
Australia	3.09
Canada	2.96
Italy	2.75
Netherlands	2.41
Spain	1.70
Brazil	1.57
Argentina	0.81
South Korea	0.61
Switzerland	0.27
Singapore	0.00

Source: Nigerian terrorism index 2008-2018/data/chart/calender/forecast-Trading.

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The global terrorism index measures the direct and indirect impact of terrorism. It ranks from 0 (no impact) to 10 (highest impact). From table 2, terrorism was highest in year 2008 with an index of 5.79. The index was on the increase till the year 2015

when it decreased from 9.31 to 9.01. The decrease indicates an improvement in the war against terrorism by the army and the doggedness of the presidency under the leadership of Muhammadu Buhari.

The various tactics used in curtailing the excesses seemed to have yielded some degree of result; “python dance”, “crocodile smile”, “lafiya Dole”, “scorpion sting” and a others played critical roles in the ranking (Ewepu, 2017). However, by comparing Nigeria with the G20 countries of table 3, it is observed that Nigeria has a higher terrorism index than all the countries of the G20. This implies that much have to be done to improve on the security challenges. It can also be deduced that the G20 have stronger economies because terrorism, insurgency or insecurity is relatively low. Following from Singapore, we notice that it is possible for a country to have no insecurity problem.

Although, there are indications that Boko haram insurgency is reducing in the north east, there is still much to be done considering the emergence of the Fulani herdsmen clashes in Benue state and other places in the country.

There cannot be economic development when there are security problems. Many companies have closed down and some relocated as a result of insecurity challenges in the area where they operate their businesses. The effect of this situation is evident in Table 4 below in which the GDP has experienced decline since year 2014 and has the highest value in the year 2017. Inflation rate and unemployment rate have also increased during the period. This problem stems from poor management of the insecurity which has aggravated to affecting the economy.

Nwabueze (2018) notes that:

“It cannot be doubted that effective management of the economy is necessary to bring about economic growth, economic development and national transformation. No doubt too, Nigeria has, over the years since independence in 1960, achieved a good measure of economic development in terms of infrastructural development etc., yet the development such as it is, is not of a type and quality to transform the country into a developed state in the sense of the advanced countries of the world... Nigeria is not, in

any meaningful sense a developed, but rather an underdeveloped state.”

The above opinion identifies a gap in the economic development process in Nigeria. It presents the

present economic situation of the country worse of relative to precedents. One would expect that the economic situation of modern day Nigeria is far better than the previous years.

Table 4: Nigeria Economy Data (2013-2017)

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Population (million)	169	174	179	184	189
GDP per capita (USD)	3,082	3,312	2,766	2,206	1,995
Economic growth (GDP, annual variation in %)	5.5	6.2	2.8	-1.6	0.8
Unemployment Rate	3.7	4.6	4.3	7.1	7.0
Inflation Rate (CPI)	8.5	8.1	9.0	15.7	16.5

Source: Nigeria Economy Data (2018). Focus Economics. Retrieved from www.focus-economics.com/nigeria... On 10th October 2018.

From the foregoing, it is clear that internal security challenges are a great threat to the Nigerian economy. They cripple development by rendering political and social activities of the country ineffective.

Effective leadership, as Key to Nigerian Security Challenges

Nigeria is in dire need of effective leadership. This has become so pertinent especially in contemporary times where insecurity is ravaging the economy. No nation can be better than the quality of leaders it has. The development of a society may be found to be a function of the leadership strength and nature of governance of the government machinery. Nwabueze (2018) noted that:

“Leadership is a critical part of Nigeria’s problem of governance because the educational qualification prescribed for our political leaders by section 131(d), as amended by the National Assembly in 2010, and section 318(1) of the constitution does not equip them to be able to combine ideas and power, intellectualism and politics... A semi-literate president or governor is what the prescription tantamount to”.

The above assertion finds relevance considering the nature of policy implementation and the inability of some political leaders in Nigeria to articulate ideas and engage in conscious rational thoughts. Since the constitution does not provide for highly educated people to occupy elective positions and governance, there is no doubt that the leaders will continue to

remain bereft of ideas and logical reasoning that will move the country forward.

There are many factors that can be attributed to the causes of insecurity challenges in Nigeria of today. Chief among these factors are poor governance and lack of effective leadership at all levels of governance (Dambazau, 2014). Nigerian governments are often characterized by corrupt practices, poor accountability and it is therefore pertinent for Nigerian leaders and government to look inward and identify those areas they have failed in the administration of national policies.

Achumba et’al (2013) argue that the kind of leadership needed in Nigeria are visionary leadership, a leadership that is detribalized such that it has at leadership position only people who are able to inculcate in their people or followers, the ideals of common citizenship as transcendent factor among all Nigerians.

We cannot talk about good leadership and governance when we are still struggling with conducting a free and fair election in a democratic government. Dambazau (2014) identified free, fair and credible election environment as the first step towards good governance. He further argued that where there is no free and fair election, there can be no political, social, and economic stability. This strongly applies to Nigeria. A situation whereby the country which is supposed to allow multi-party system to thrive becomes dominated by two major political parties is alarming. The APC and PDP dominate the political

arena and rigging has become the most important instrument that determines election success.

Also, many politicians now defect between parties; from either APC to PDP or vice versa turning themselves into political sycophants and flatterers of the ruling party. They tend to approach election process with a mind-set of “do or die” affair and this has often made them very militant (Dambazau, 2014). Many go about with thugs who often end up stealing ballot boxes for rigging the election. Dambazua (2014) noted that the formation of the militant groups in the Niger delta and the Boko Haram sect in the northeast were initially part of the army of political thugs formed by some gubernatorial candidates in the Niger Delta and Borno State, respectively. Also, some leaders refuse to leave office when their tenure is getting over, instead they vie for a second term and utilize the power of incumbency to intimidate other aspirants and manipulate the electorate through rigging to win the election. These tendencies cannot make for good leadership and governance, neither does it help to reduce corruption and insecurity, instead it increase them.

As a result, many politicians come into power to satisfy the demands of their “god-fathers” and party members at the detriment of the masses. When they come into power, they find it difficult to conceptual and articulate issues, instead they squander the resources on settling those who supported them during the election campaign period. Effective leadership is therefore a very important issue that requires serious attention in Nigeria.

Poor leadership is also demonstrated among police officers who are fond of taking bribes and engaging in other corrupt practices. This is perhaps a central factor that make the public to stereotype the police as over-zealous and corrupt officers who are ready to do anything to gain promotion; they arrest the innocent and free the criminals. What an irony!

Conclusion

Nigeria, often described as the giant of Africa has been faced with internal security problems which she has not been able to completely solve. Although there have been attempts to improve on the security situation in the country, more still have to be done. Nigerian leaders must learn to benchmark best practices and see how such practices can be of help to their own country. They should learn from advanced countries. The government must be ready to drive toward a change in the status quo.

Recommendations

Nigerian leaders should seek for more international support in curbing insurgency attacks. They should study the G20 countries and find out how they were able to surmount their insecurity problems, especially those countries with very low terrorism index.

Also, more Individuals should be recruited into the army, community youths should also be empowered and trained on counter-terrorism attacks. Another strategy to adopt is that corrupt practices within the army should be effectively checked. Army officers should be disciplined to act as deterrent to others. There are certain orders which create conflict and tension among the army; such can result from the case where wanted criminals and terrorists are captured, arrested and allowed to escape after a while. Such orders are tantamount to sabotage. Saboteurs should be dealt with in the army. The use of whistle blowing should also be encouraged and adequately managed in the army.

Furthermore, the public attitude towards the police should be improved upon. The police have a very important role to play in the society by reducing crime rate. They pose as an important force to the reduction of internal security problems. One way of improving the perception of the public towards the police is through proper training of police officers to desist from illegal activities, followed by sensitization of the public on the improved police officers’ outlook.

Another important aspect that should be taken very seriously are education and employment opportunities through youth empowerment. Education and employment play major role in security and economic development. There should be more investment in education. The government should increase the education budgetary allocation so that more institutions are built and developed. When the youths are well educated and gainfully employed, they will not present themselves to be recruited into insurgency groups. The youths should be empowered with skills that can make them contribute meaningfully to economic growth. It is perhaps the failure of the government to address unemployment and poor education that crime have thrived in Nigeria. To implement this policy therefore, the Nigerian government should begin from the basic education. The secondary school curriculum should be reviewed to include subjects like security education and conflict resolution in which students are being educated on the dangers of terrorism and how it stiffens economic development. The subject has been included in the primary school curriculum. It should be extended to the secondary schools- the junior and senior classes. The subject should be made compulsory for all

students. This will enable students to learn how to handle disputes, understand what constitute sabotage and become abreast of more security matters.

Lastly, the constitution of Nigeria should be reviewed and amended to provide for educated people, at least graduates for elective positions especially at governorship and presidential level. Educated people are literate enough to come up with fresh ideas that can move the country to desired heights. It should also provide an age limit not more than 70 years for such positions. The country needs young and dynamic youths to occupy leadership positions; youths who would contribute their strength, vigor and intellectual prowess to developing the country; youths who are ready to serve humanity on the platform of accountability, transparency and true democracy; youths who are ready to uphold the true tenets of democracy. They should be able to forestall corrupt tendencies and their cohorts.

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