

The Impact of Poverty and Insecurity on Sustainable Development in Nigeria

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Abstract

Nigeria has all it takes to be great in terms of human and natural resources to develop one of the greatest economies of the world yet most of her citizens lives in poverty; this unpleasant development has made her being rated as one of the poorest nations in the world. This study examines the impact of poverty and insecurity on sustainable development in North- Western Nigeria: a case study of Katsina State from 2015 – 2022; the objective of the study is to identify the causes of poverty and insecurity and their impact on the lives of the citizens. The study adopted primary and secondary sources of data collections using questionnaire which was complemented with the secondary source of data by reading text books, journals, dissertations, research projects, conferences, seminar and workshop papers on poverty and insecurity. Data were presented and analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics which involved the use of descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution, mean and percentage. The findings suggest that the level of poverty in Nigeria is responsible for the insecurity in the country; though poverty is not a sufficient variable in the explanation of the intense nature of insecurity in Nigeria, nonetheless there is a relationship between poverty and insecurity. The study recommends that good governance can guarantee peace and security so government must create a vibrant economy that will provide social, economic and physical infrastructure that will drive industrial growth and development and ensure social security and curb the menace of poverty and insecurity.

Keywords: Impact, poverty, Insecurity, Development, Sustainable development

Introduction

The rising wave of insecurity has assumed a dangerous dimension which is threatening the corporate existence of the country and the ravaging plague of poverty has continued to stunt the ability of its people to develop and improve their living condition; while poverty is not restricted to one country but it is most often prevalent in Nigeria which often limits people's ability to deal with its recurring decimal, Nigeria has all it takes to develop one of the greatest economies of the world yet Nigerian citizens wallow in poverty without access to modern health care delivery system, qualitative education and other infrastructural facilities.

These unpleasant development indicators have led to Nigeria being rated as one of the poorest country in the world; the main causes of unsustainable development and insecurity are poverty and underdevelopment, efforts to address the root causes of their effects despite the several anti- poverty programmes initiated by successive administrations have yielded

insignificant results thereby deepening the poor conditions of the people (Felix & Osunmakinde, 2014). Though, poverty may not be the only variable for the intense nature of insecurity in Nigeria, nonetheless there exist a nexus between poverty and insecurity as being experienced in Nigeria and there is a strong link between poverty and insecurity.

In the past decade Nigeria has witness an unprecedented security challenges occasioned by the activities of insurgence in the North East epitomized by Boko haram, Kidnappers and banditry in some part of the North-Western States of Katsina and Zamfara, sokoto and militancy in the southern region of the country characterized by political assassination, ritual killings; all these social menaces put together impinges on the security of lives and property of both Nigerians and foreigners living or doing business in the country. it is against this background that this research seeks to assess the impact of poverty and insecurity on sustainable development in Nigeria from 2015- 2022.

Kidnapping and Banditry in the Sokoto, Zamfara, Katsina Axis

Nigeria has confronted several security conundrums in recent years, including armed banditry, which poses a severe threat to the north-west and the entire nation. North-west Nigeria has been hit by an unprecedented wave of kidnappings, maiming, killings, population displacements, cattle rustling, and disruption of socio-economic activities due to the rise of armed bandits in the region. These events have created a climate of uncertainty that has become a cause for concern for the government and the citizenry; the causes, manifestations, and dimensions of armed banditry in north-west Nigeria, and its security implications. It provides a survey of both the visible and less-visible actors in the conflict. One of the scariest threats for families in Nigeria is the frequent kidnapping of school children from their classrooms and boarding houses; the most celebrated of these cases of kidnapping was the 276 Chibok girls that were kidnapped from their school in Borno State and the millionaire kidnapper (Evans) case in Lagos and the activities of Turji in Sokoto and the Zamfara and Katsina states in the North West region of the country, about 2,000 students have been abducted from their schools since December 2020 and some were released only after millions of naira was paid as ransom. Some of the kidnappers are commonly referred to as "bandits". These criminals raid villages, kidnap civilians and burn down houses; attacks by the bandits have forced thousands of people to flee their homes and seek shelter in other parts of the country.

The north-west is the epicenter of these attacks; in Zamfara state alone, over 7,000 people have been killed since 2012 and the attacks are still going on. Hundreds of schools were closed following abductions at schools in Zamfara and Niger state, where children as young as three years old were seized. By every indication, Nigeria's lucrative kidnapping industry is thriving – expanding into previously safe areas – and seemingly beyond the control of the country's army and this really poses a real threat to trade and education, as well as the country's farming communities (Ojo, Oyewole & Aina, 2023)

Herdsmen/ Farmers clashes in North Central Areas

There have been violent clashes between nomadic animal herders and farmers in Nigeria for many years but disagreement over the use of land, water and grazing routes exacerbated by climate change and the Sahara Desert encroachment as herders move to look for pasture have led to thousands being killed in clashes over limited resources; herders–farmers conflicts in Nigeria are a series of disputes over arable land resources across Nigeria between the Fulani herders and the mostly-Christian non-Fulani farmers, the conflicts have been especially prominent in the Middle Belt (North Central) region of Nigeria though there have been attacks on farmers by Fulani herdsmen against farmers who are mainly Hausa also who are almost entirely Muslim.

Many Fulani communities who are usually farmers, have also been attacked and raided by Fulani bandits and other militias; notwithstanding the conflict was basically on land-use between farmers and herders across Nigeria's Middle Belt, it has taken on dangerous religious and ethnic dimensions mostly because most of the farmers are Christians of various ethnicities while most of the herders are Muslim Fulani pastoralists; Thousands of people have died as a result of the conflict, especially sedentary farming rural communities are often target of attacks. Attacks on herders have also led them to retaliating by attacking other communities; specifically, Benue State has recorded the deadliest attacks where many people were killed when gunmen opened fire on a camp for those fleeing the conflict and some have also blamed herders for kidnapping people and demanding a ransom.

Terrorist attacks epitomized by Boko Haram in North East Nigeria:

with the coming to the scene by Boko Haram in 2002, the insecurity situation in Nigeria seemed to have assumed higher and more complex dimensions, apart from the frequency and intensity of deadly attacks and carnages, insecurity situation in Nigeria cuts across cities, towns and villages that there is hardly anywhere to run to for cover. Lives and properties are not safe for urban dwellers and the rural dwellers. People live in apprehension almost every day;

the agricultural sector became a target for militants in need of supplies; data shows that cash, food and equipment were frequently stolen; the danger has made other things like transportation more risky and expensive thereby putting pressure on the economic output. “The impact of Boko Haram on the Nigerian economy is relatively localized but the instability has had an effect on the agricultural products from the north and has severely reduced cross-border trade with Cameroon, Chad and Niger and the impact most felt in the northern states which have always been far from Nigeria's positive development story (Mackson, 2017)

Boko Haram launches deadly raids, in some cases hoisting its flag and imposing extremist rule on local people. It levies taxes on farms and the sale of agricultural products. The once booming international fish market in the Chad Basin is now completely controlled by the group; the challenge is made harder by Nigeria's ungoverned spaces – areas that are remote and largely ignored where the groups torment rural communities without fear of reprisal. Apart from the insecurity situations discussed above other dimensions insecurity in the country include but not limited to the following;

- i. Armed robbery
- ii. Ethnic and Religious tensions in the Benue, Plateau and the Taraba axis.
- iii. Political/ Post Election violence Etc.
- iv. Yahoo boys and Ritual killings in the South West
- v. High profile murder and political assassinations;
- vi. Violent agitations for resource control especially in Niger Delta area is prominent in South-South and West, militancy and pipeline vandalization activities in the Niger delta,
- vii. Violent agitations for self-determination as shown by Kanu and the IPOB activities in South East Nigeria: agitations for self-determination by IPOB (Indigenous People of Biafra) and MASSOB (Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra) in South East.

Suffices to say that the security threats in Nigeria is far beyond human security because

flooding submerged hundreds of thousands of acres of farmland and forced many people away from their homes and many lives were lost. In Northern part of the country desertification threaten the source of livelihood of people such as livestock rearing and agricultural farm produce. Food insecurity has worsened and became imminent due to the displacements of people and has exacerbated complex humanitarian challenges by making a large number of people to be Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) across the country; the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR, 2021) reported that more than 2.9 million persons are internally displaced persons (IDPs) in North-east.

The continuous spate of IDPs in Nigeria has induced food insecurity and severe malnutrition due to reduced food supply from food producing areas and increased food demand in the seemingly safe urban areas and this in turn has led to sharp food price rises in local markets. The insecurity situation has also threatened Nigeria's democracy by making it almost impossible to hold elections in different parts of the country. A defining feature of Nigeria's preparation for elections is first to make a strong security arrangement to ensure voters' safety thereby leading to over- militarization of Nigeria's electioneering processes; the country's education system is badly affected by the rising state of insecurity, the spate of school children abduction have equally weaken parents confidence in the formal educational system in Nigeria. Especially, in the Northern region while the North-east is faced with Boko Haram's anti-western education campaign, the North-west is hobbled by fears of abduction of school children from formal schools solely for profit-making purposes (Abga, Aide & Mela 2020)

The Nexus between Poverty and Insecurity

In the past decade, Nigeria has witnessed an unprecedented security challenges occasioned by the activities of militants in the South-South region, kidnappers in the south east, violent armed robbery in almost parts of the country, political assassination, ritual killings and activities of Boko Haram in some parts of the northern region especially north east; these social menaces when put together impinge on

the security of lives and property of both Nigerian citizens and foreigners living or those trying to invest in the country, this has become worrisome and triggers a sense of insecurity that challenges Nigeria's efforts towards national economic development because it tends to scare foreign investors to contribute to Nigeria's development.

Poverty and insecurity are twin problems of development in Nigeria. Poverty is a major problem in Third World countries in general and in particular Africa to which Nigeria belongs. Versteegen (2001), in his work view poverty and insecurity are closely related; in her opinion, violent conflicts have led to death of many people, displacement and destruction of properties which led to loss of many years of development efforts and investments, on the other hand, when aspirations are not met, people may resort to armed conflicts which in turn make life insecure for people within the community. Those who argue against the fact that poverty is a major cause of conflict and insecurity argued that poverty lead to conflict when other factors are present; they argue that poverty is not a sufficient condition for the occurrence of conflict, According to Nelson (1998) in Ekpenyong, Ukommi and Agha (2010) the links between economic grievances and ethnic conflict are exclusive variable and strongly conditioned by a wide range of non-economic factors that there is no denying the fact that conflict has a direct impact on poverty. During severe conflicts, there is always wanton destruction of lives and property in both private or public which makes life insecure; such environments become investment-unfriendly and thus poverty becomes the order of the day,

Economic growth in the nation's GDP has not translated to reduction of the number of people living below poverty line, the poverty level in Nigeria has become worrisome and the subject of growing concern to policy makers. Though poverty reduction has become the major goal of the government, much is yet to be done; insecurity is also rife in many parts of the country with people dying on a daily basis from factors which are political, strategic, economic, social, or ecological nature. Poverty in the country is more pronounced in conflict-prone areas while insecurity is rife in poverty-stricken areas which generate the question of the

relationship between poverty and insecurity and their implications on sustainable development (Ajodo-Adebanjoko & Walter, 2014).

The notion that poverty breeds insecurity has been a contentious issue within the academic arena. Some scholars believed there is a direct link between poverty and insecurity; whereas others argued that 'insecurity' is caused by other factors empirical evidence suggests that continual poverty and inequality breed conflict, ill feelings and insecurity, however, some critics have tried to disprove the notion that poverty has a direct consequence on insecurity in the world (Pipes, 1995). Some argued that poverty has no correlation with conflict but ethnicity, political instability and resource control are important causes of insecurity (Kanbur, 2007) but if one may ask what the causes of insecurity? Is it ethnicity, resource control agitation, religious intolerance or bad governance? There is causality from poverty to insecurity (Kanbur, 2007). The deprivation theory of Ted Gurr in his hypothesis explains the reason why people dabble into violence; the psychological aspect of the theory is that "aggression is always a consequence of frustration" and at the same time "frustration always leads to some form of aggression" (Leeds 1978). The poor are led to violence owing to their relative deprivation and needs (Odumosu 1999); this scenario agrees significantly with the current security situation in Nigeria; the act of frustration, denial and lack and want have accentuate several youths in Nigeria to take up arms against the state as typified by kidnapping, Boko haram and militancy (Mackson, etal 2020)

According to Awaka (2012) as cited by Akwara (2013) more than 80 percent of conflict-related deaths occurred in less economic advantage states and that violence and insurgency are caused by poverty and other factors that have been inimical to the development of any society); from the foregoing discussion, it could be asserted that most of the security challenges facing Nigeria have their root causes in the high level of poverty and inequality in the country. While several factors could have contributed to insecurity and low level of national development, poverty is a central causal factor. Insecurity rises with poverty because poverty

impairs the people's ability to provide basic necessities for their households; it constitutes a major threat to national security and development because the poor people especially the youth are often manipulated to undermine national stability by getting involved in violent disorder in the country at any point in time thereby making it difficult if not impossible for any meaningful development to take place (Kirby, 2011).

Nigeria has a large and growing population of poor and unemployed citizens, many of whom have few or no economic opportunities are often manipulated by politicians to cause disorder in the society which often threaten nation's national security; social insecurity in Nigeria has continued to engender crime rate leaving unpleasant consequences for the nation's economic growth and development. The socio-political and economic tripartite evil of poverty, crime and violence and the abysmal failure of successive administration in Nigeria to address challenges of poverty, unemployment and an equal distribution of wealth among ethnic nationalities ultimately resulted to anger, agitation and violent crimes against the Nigerian state by some individuals and groups. Such crimes as mentioned elsewhere include militancy, kidnapping, bombing, armed robbery, destruction of government properties (Oladiran, 2014); these activities are often carried by individuals or corporately which indeed affect legitimate social and economic activities in the country (Akintokunbo, 2011).

The problem of insecurity has the damaging consequences suggesting that Nigeria is not a safe and secure place as such cannot not be suitable for economic investment, investors particularly foreigners have in the last few years left the shores of Nigeria for other African countries where there is relative peace, Workers, both local and expatriates have fled the violence inflicted areas. This development has multiplied the number of unemployed and poor youth roaming the streets that are used tool for violence which invariably leads to loss of human capital that would have been gainfully invested for national development; the ugly trend poses a threat to the future of the nation's sustainable growth and development (Albinus, 2012; Oladiran, 2014). Yearly, unspecified

millions of naira is being paid as ransom for the release of victims of kidnapping. Furthermore, the effects of poverty on national security and development tend to limit the capacity of the people to harness the resources that will improve their living condition; the impact is seriously felt in the agricultural sector as well as other sectors of the economy.

Since farmers in Nigeria lack the appropriate technology, updated skills, modern technology, capacity building, innovative techniques, tools, lack capital to invest in this sector (to improve the soils and multiply the yields), because of this poor state, the sector has seriously been affected. Considering the high level of population growth in Nigeria in relation to the shrinking food production and the economy, there is a serious threat to food production and security. It is apparent that Nigeria is passing through a turbulent period: a period characterized by high level of poverty and insecurity with their attendant effects on national development; incidence of insurgency and criminality are high and widely spread and that one of the greatest threats to national security and development in Nigeria is the large army of poor people. Therefore national development can be achieved in Nigeria only if poverty and insecurity are combated; if poverty and insecurity are allowed to reign, then the dream of sustainable national development and national stability will continue to be a mere fantasy (Vambe, 2016).

Sustainable Development in Nigeria

The concept of Sustainable development in Nigeria is a complex and multifaceted challenge, given the country's large population, diverse ecosystems, and a range of economic, social, and environmental issues. Achieving sustainable development in Nigeria requires addressing numerous challenges while leveraging the country's considerable potential; some aspects related to sustainable development in Nigeria has historically been heavily dependent on oil exports for revenue, government recognized the need to diversify the economy to reduce its vulnerability to fluctuations in global oil prices. Initiatives have been launched to promote agriculture, manufacturing, technology, and other non-oil sectors to foster economic sustainability and

that adequate infrastructure is crucial for economic growth and sustainable development and therefore has been investing in infrastructure projects, including road construction, port development, and power generation, to improve connectivity and support economic activities.

Nigeria is working to increase access to clean and renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind power, to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and improve energy security. Initiatives like the Solar Power Naija program aim to provide solar power to millions of households but the country faces environmental challenges, including deforestation, land degradation, and pollution. Conservation efforts include reforestation programs, policies but the country is often faced with the twin challenges of poverty and insecurity especially in the last decade. The impact of poverty and insecurity on sustainable development in Nigeria from 2015 to 2022 has been significant and multifaceted. These challenges are interrelated and have posed considerable obstacles to the country's efforts to achieve sustainable development goals. Here's an overview of how poverty and insecurity have affected sustainable development during this period:

Economic Impact

Reduced Investment and Growth: Persistent insecurity, particularly in the northeastern part of Nigeria due to activities of Boko Haram, has deterred foreign investments and hindered economic growth. This has limited the resources available for development projects and poverty reduction initiatives.

Agricultural Disruption: Insecurity has disrupted agricultural activities, leading to decreased food production and food insecurity, which, in turn, exacerbates poverty and malnutrition among vulnerable populations.

Resource Allocation: The government has had to allocate a significant portion of its budget to security-related expenditures, diverting resources away from critical development sectors such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure.

Social Impact

Displacement and Migration: Ongoing insecurity has led to the displacement of millions of people, creating internally displaced persons (IDPs) and straining resources in host communities. This has exacerbated poverty and increased competition for limited resources.

Access to Basic Services: The conflict has disrupted access to education and healthcare services, particularly in conflict-affected areas, leading to a decline in human capital development and limiting opportunities for sustainable livelihoods.

Youth Unemployment: High levels of youth unemployment, exacerbated by insecurity and limited economic opportunities, have created fertile ground for recruitment into criminal and extremist groups, perpetuating the cycle of insecurity.

Environmental Impact

Resource Degradation: Insecurity has led to resource degradation, such as illegal logging and poaching, in certain regions, undermining the sustainable use of natural resources and further impoverishing local communities.

Governance and Institutional Impact

Corruption and Inefficiency: The nexus between insecurity, poverty, and corruption has eroded public trust in government institutions. Inefficient and corrupt practices have hindered the effective implementation of poverty reduction and development programs.

Institutional Weakness: The government's ability to provide security, enforce the rule of law, and protect citizens' rights has been challenged in conflict-affected regions, contributing to a sense of insecurity and impeding sustainable development efforts.

International Relations

Impact on Foreign Relations: The security challenges in Nigeria have strained diplomatic and economic relations with neighboring countries and international partners, affecting foreign aid and investment.

Efforts to address the impact of poverty and insecurity on sustainable development in

Nigeria have included:

Conflict Resolution: The Nigerian government has engaged in efforts to negotiate with armed groups, seek peaceful resolutions, and restore stability to conflict-affected regions.

Poverty Alleviation Programs: Various poverty alleviation programs, such as the National Social Investment Program (NSIP), have been implemented to provide financial support, food assistance, and skills training to vulnerable populations.

Security Sector Reform: Initiatives to strengthen security forces, improve intelligence, and enhance the rule of law have been pursued to address insecurity.

Development Initiatives: Despite challenges, the government has continued to invest in infrastructure development, education, and healthcare, aiming to create an enabling environment for sustainable development.

Addressing the impact of poverty and insecurity on sustainable development in Nigeria requires a multifaceted approach that includes not only security measures but also poverty reduction, good governance, and inclusive economic growth strategies. Additionally, international cooperation and support are essential for resolving these complex challenges and fostering sustainable development in the country.

Theoretical Framework

There are many theories propounded by many scholars and theoreticians to explain the concept of poverty and insecurity; different schools of economic thought have a range of views on poverty especially from the 19th-century classical and neoclassical thought through the Keynesian/neo-liberal shift which brought poverty to the forefront of the policy agenda to the most recent theories; this paper reviews the relative relevance of understanding poverty and insecurity and considers their influence on current views held by the general public but the theoretical framework adopted for this work is the Marxian radical theory.

By suggesting radical changes in the socio-economic system, Marxian economists and

other radical theorists highlight the possibility that economic growth alone may be insufficient to lift poor people out of poverty because those who belong to certain classes may not reap any of the benefits of overall income growth. Similarly, by emphasising the concept of class, it provides a shift in perspective, focusing on group rather than individual characteristics with individuals' status considered dependent on the socio-economic environment in which they live. Nevertheless, adequacy of income remains a key factor considering the fact that within a capitalist system, alleviation of poverty may require minimum wage laws, action to eliminate dual labour markets, and anti-discrimination laws seen as one of the most effective anti-poverty strategies. The exploitation of the poor by the rich groups in society may also occur via the quality of the environment; for example, the poor tend to suffer most from air pollution (normally generated by the wealthier groups) given their residential location (Davis & Miguel, 2015) A further contribution of Marxian/radical economists is the sense that poverty is a moral as well as a technical issue; this is often lacking in more mainstream economic frameworks, except when they integrate political theories of justice in their analytical framework suggesting radical changes in the socio-economic system,

Applicability of the Theory to the Topic under review

The applicability Marxist/radical theory in addressing insecurity and poverty in Nigeria societies is that the theory explained that to keep the cost of labour unnaturally lower than its value added through the threat of unemployment in Nigeria, with the “reserve army of unemployed” people in the country poverty in a Nigeria economy can only be alleviated via strict regulation of the market, e.g., in the form of minimum wages. A wide range of authors in the political economy field suggest that poverty is predominantly the result of structural factors, including stratified labour markets as well as prejudice and corruption; in both cases, the policy message is that anti-discrimination laws and labour market reforms are essential to overcome structural barriers that impede employment and cause poverty as well as insecurity. Linking insecurity problems to

poverty can also be analyzed from a radical point of view; the presence of unemployed workers which is ultimately caused by corruption to have surplus labour, artificially lowers wages by a simple labour supply. This was believed to be an inherent dysfunction of the labour market which only the state, when controlled by the working class can regulate. One of the central elements of Marxist theory is that the primary aim of the state regulation should be to enhance the working conditions of laborers and promote higher wages among them (Blank, 2010). Hence, the theory is relevant in explaining the topic under consideration in view of the fact that poverty and insecurity are relatively interrelated and are causal factor to one another and that in the Nigerian society the ruling class or the elites often manipulates the (masses) to their advantage.

Poverty and Insecurity in Nigeria and its Impact on sustainable development

The security situation in Nigeria has become increasingly complex and uncertain; various non-state armed groups have emerged and consolidated coercive power to terrorize the people as evidenced by the activities of the armed bandits, criminal gangs, separatist groups, Islamic fundamentalists, amorphous kidnapers and others often referred to in the Nigerian media as “unknown gunmen.” These actors differ in their objectives, tactics, and operational simulations. As a result of the activities of these armed groups and their attendant security consequences, Nigerians were afflicted by a multi-layered crisis rooted in long-standing tensions between ethnic and religious groups and attacks by criminal groups and armed bandits such as kidnapping and armed robbery; the crisis was intensified owing to an increase in banditry which have resulted in widespread displacement due to inter-communal violence between herders and farming communities. These armed groups organized attacks that feature cattle-rustling, rape, looting, plundering, kid-napping, and murder; between 2018 and 2020, at least 4,900 deaths were caused by armed banditry, which also generated hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the north-west; For instance, between January 6 and 8, 2022, armed bandits attacked several villages in

Zamfara State, killing more than 200 people and leaving 10,000 displaced. These among other events have claimed several lives and caused significant economic destruction.

The activities of armed bandits in Nigeria are not limited to the north-west, as they also have a significant presence in the north-central states of the country. More than 1,000 cases of kidnapping for ransom were reported in 2021, in March 2022, armed bandits operating in the north-western state of Kaduna attacked a train heading to Kaduna from the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. The train attack along the Abuja-Kaduna axis claimed the lives of eight passengers, while several others were abducted, banditry attacks against military bases and airports, have revealed the sophisticated nature these groups and their ability to carry out deadly operations which have left most states in a state of perpetual insecurity. This crisis trend can be fully understood in the context of climate change, environmentally induced migration, indigene-settler dispute, contested land and grazing rights, competition over the control of discovered gold and other resources, low administrative presence, and the politicization of the conflict, which have metamorphosed into deadly crisis thereby threatens national security. Today, armed banditry, which is characterized by armed robbery, kidnapping, murder, cattle rustling, and rape, is the most urgent national security concern in Nigeria. The state of Katsina, Sokoto, Kaduna, and Zamfara are the most directly affected by activities of armed bandits and Islamist terrorist groups such as Boko Haram are increasingly engaged in recruitment, training, logistics, weap-onry, and attacks on vulnerable communities. This shows the vulnerability of the civilian population which made it difficult for security operatives to respond to distress calls of locals and made it challenging for security agencies to effectively deal with the situation without raising human rights and environ-mental concerns (Mustapha, 2023).

The link between poverty and insecurity in the Nigerian cannot be over emphasized nor could it be denied. Nigeria is a nation blessed with intellectuals, technocrats and abundant mineral resources, yet the majority of the citizens live in abject poverty. The effect of

poverty is pervasive; a poor man is a problem for society and even unto himself, he is always angry, never productive and seeks succor in militia activities. Poverty to a large extent is the root cause of insecurity in Nigeria, with the lingering security challenges and the difficulty of the security apparatus of the government to respond promptly to attacks on citizenry and to guarantee safety and security to lives and properties of the citizenry in the country, the question that borders everyone in Nigeria today is “can there be assurance of security?” can people still sleep with their two eyes closed? Is the security of lives and properties achievable? Since then, Nigeria has been enmeshed in a state of insecurity leading to scores of deaths of innocent civilians, foreigners, some members of the nation's security personnel, elected officials and the masses. The insecurity challenge has assumed formidable dimensions forcing the country's political and economic managers and indeed the entire nation to rue the loss of their loved ones, investments and absence of safety in most parts of the country (Moronfolu, 2023). The number of violent crimes such as kidnappings, ritual killings, carjacking, suicide bombings, religious killings, politically-motivated killing and violence, ethnic clashes, armed banditry and others has increasingly become very worrisome; government has tried several methods from “force-for-force” to carrot-and-stick approach to diplomacy but the problem seems to rise with greater horror like the proverbial phoenix, though there has also been strong advocacy for a multi-stakeholder intervention to the insecurity situation rather than lean on military options alone but the problem has defied solution.

The wave of general insecurity is fuelled by poverty which has made national security threat to be a major issue for the government and has prompted huge allocation of the national budget to security; no region or state has been spared from the scourge of conflict though their prevalence and intensity may not have been the same in occurrences across the country, the situation was further intensified by elements of globalization, natural disasters, proliferation of weapons and light arms, corruption, executive lawlessness and so on. The economic costs of insecurity are enormous; people who joined the

armed forces and were killed or flee can no longer work productively, schools, power stations, and roads that are destroyed reduced the productive capacity of the economy; the displacement of people reduces the production of exports thereby reducing foreign exchange earnings, import potentials and consequently further constraining output, leading to a decline in employment and earnings, the menace remains a threat to governance and economic growth in Nigeria.

Despite government's growing expenditure on internal security both at the National and State levels, individuals in their various rights, work places and houses spend heavily to provide security for their personal lives and properties; in spite of these efforts, the menace keeps exacerbating, thus in almost all parts of the country, there exist some levels of insecurity, there are instances of ethnic conflicts in some part of the North, kidnapping in almost all parts of the country, terrorism and religious extremism by Boko Haram in North East, herdsmen disturbances in the North and Central, ritual killings in the South West and Eastern security network rampage and attacks on Police Stations and the community and other political and economic disturbances. These disturbances and insecurities in its various forms affect economic growth (Moronfolu, 2023).

The increase rate of sectarian violence, crimes and terrorism are connected with unemployment (Adegoke, 2015) and poverty is the product of unemployment (Nwagwu, 2014). Poverty breeds a high rate of state insecurity which borders on ethno religious conflicts, indigenes and settlers divide, armed robberies, abductions, kidnapping and other criminal activities in Nigeria (Okolie, Onyema & Baseey 2019). Poverty and unemployment have served as main ingredients to nursery beds (breeding ground) for numerous ethno religious crises in Nigeria. This is because the country has a mighty reservoir of poverty-gripped people who out of frustration, are readily available for warmongers, willing to serve as mercenary fighters (Nwagwu, 2014). Ighodalo (2012) asserts that “poverty is a principle cause of political, social and economic conflict in the country; poverty is antithetical to the principles and core values of democracy because poverty

in the midst of plenty creates disaffection among the populace and leads them toward violent behavior; it inhibit the people's to make independent choices and participate actively in decision-making and it reduces their self-esteem and ability to demand for accountability from those they elect”.

Poverty is responsible for the unrelenting pace of youth militias in Nigeria (Jike, 2017). This supports the assertion of Nwagwu (2014) posited that “the Niger Delta youths, the movement for Actualization of Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) the Oduduwa People's Congress (OPC) and the insurgence of the Boko-Haram - a religious faceless sect without ideology comprised young people without salary-earning jobs. The incidence of suicide bombing, terrorist attacks, kidnapping, destruction of lives and properties, armed robbery, vandalization of corporate facilities such as the power holding installations and oil pipelines, car-snatching, drug abuse and other criminal acts are unlawful activities associated with these groups”. Similarly, Nwagbosa (2013) holds that the failure of successive administrations in Nigeria to address challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequitable distribution of wealth among ethnic nationalities is one of the major causes of insecurity in the country. The rising crime rate in Nigeria's today is a symptom of a much more serious, deeply rooted problem of which studies have associated it to a high rate of poverty (Ogbinyi, 2017). Therefore, there is a direct relationship between poverty and the high rate of insecurity of lives and properties in Nigeria. Some of the specific impact of Poverty and Insecurity on sustainable development in Nigeria is as follows

Ethno-Religious Strife

Ethno-religious conflicts, according to Ibrahim and Igbuzor (2002) have surfaced due to the new political environment that paved way for political consciousness and identities that are tied to ethno-religious identities. Many Nigerians have been killed or maimed since 1999 in sectarian and communal attacks and reprisals between Muslims and Christians (United Nations Human Right Commission 2008) as cited by (Saheed and Alofun 2010). Poverty, unemployment, inequality and bad

governance have been blamed for the continued skirmishes between the Moslems and Christians in Nigeria; *the failure of the Nigerian leaders to establish good governments, forge national integration and promote economic progress has led to mass poverty and unemployment. This has resulted into communal, ethnic, religious and class conflicts, ppoverty and unemployment therefore served as a major precursor for many ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria because the country has a reservoir of poor people who warmongers as mercenary fighters, theoretically is that poverty and unemployment increase the number of people who are prepared to kill or be killed for a given course at token benefit. This explains why all ethno-religious crises that ever occurred in Nigeria have a large turnout of people (including the North-Western Nigeriar-aged) as fighters”* (Salawu 2010); Awara et al. (2013) stress that the Jos religious crisis in 2008, the post-election violence of 2011 in the northern states were occasioned by the poverty situation in the country due to frustration among the youths who suffered mass poverty, inequality and unemployment (Ibrahim 2006).

Political Violence

Another impact of Poverty and Insecurity in Nigeria Electoral Violence

Electoral violence in the political history of Nigeria has had great damage and the colossal loss of lives. Although, some experts believed that poverty, ignorance, injustice, politics, overzealous religious leaders are some of the reasons for the spate of political violence in Nigeria but political conflicts are often caused by certain individuals who benefit at the expense of the state (Saheed & Egwaikhide 2012). The army of unemployed youths is usually used by politicians for thuggery especially where there is "a high level of income inequality in a country increases the possibility of violence against the state especially when a number of alienated persons within a society that can easily mobilize and possibly collaborate with other groups that feel the same.”

Kidnapping

Nigeria accounted for 26 percent of kidnapping in the world in 2013 according to a specialist

crisis prevention and response consultancy (NYA International 2013). Kidnapping started in the Niger Delta region as a style of protest against the high incidence of poverty and poor living conditions within the region. Most of the kidnappings in Nigeria are carried out by discontented youths (Ngwama 2014). Most kidnapped victims' family preferred to pay ransoms to kidnapers than reporting the case to the police authority for fear for the killing of the victims (Umejei 2010). In some case "victims are maimed, raped and manhandled in such a manner the stigma remains permanently. The family and associates are knocked down by intractable trauma" (Kapoluyi 2009). From the economic point of view, (Tzanelli 2006) raised the idea that "kidnapping is regulated by the laws of demand and supply and is a type of social action that involves the most efficient means to meet the desired end." In Nigeria, kidnapping is motivated by economic factors of which the common reason behind kidnapping is that the citizens are very poor and that the rising incidence of chronic poverty and unemployment, (CBN 1981) and Kidnapping happens to be the only industry of last resort aimed at forcefully getting a share of the nation's wealth" (Akpan, 2010).

Militancy

(Kimiebi, 2010) averred that the chaotic situation and armed attacks that pervaded the Niger Delta region were occasioned by the pollution of farmlands, increasing poverty and the neglect of the region by the multinational oil companies and successful governments. The frosty relations between the host communities and the multinational oil corporations have made the oil companies a potential target by armed militant groups. The youths do not benefit from the oil companies in terms of employment so the youths began to bomb oil installations and kidnapping of foreign oil workers. According to Oromareghake et al. (2013) the "youths engaged in self-seeking and criminal activities such as kidnapping or hostage taking in exchange for levied ransom; youth seeking revenge for the oppressive attitude toward members of the elite class as response to a repressive state."

Boko Haram

The activities of Boko Haram within the Nigerian state have placed the country in the international limelight. Since the first attack in 2009, the sect has launched unprecedented and coordinated attacks within the northeast troop. The nation's capital Abuja has not been excluded from the attacks of the Islamic terrorist group. The United Nations building and the Nigerian police authority headquarters have been bombed by the sect. The bombing of the Nyanya motor pack and abduction of over 257 female students from Chibok on 14 April, 2014 have brought international support across the world. Bill Clinton alluded that the insurgency was caused by the high level of poverty while some security experts are of the view that the Boko Haram atrocities are not the manifestation of the increased poverty in the region but an Islamic terror group having the agenda of Islamizing Nigeria. Other scholars have argued that Boko Haram is an urban uprising of discontented youth fighting against economic injustices. Whatever the argument for or against Boko Haram, there are *salient facts which cannot be demised is that even if the group has theological undertones yet its swelling rank is as a result of a huge reservoir of unemployed youths from many parts of the country who have completely become disenfranchised and are ready to provide the group with its foot soldiers who commit all manners of atrocities, including assassinations and suicide bombings in the name of religion.*

Conclusion

Findings from the study suggest that the greatest challenge to the security of Nigeria is the army of poor and the unemployed youth. Statistics shows that the present state of unemployment in the country is fifty percent, while the national poverty rate is over seventy percent of the population. These have led to a surge in criminal activities in Nigeria. In the final analysis, the paper recommends good governance, socio-economic development and good counter terrorism measure as the panacea for the Nigerian security challenges in the North west and Katsina state in particular.

Recommendations

I. Government must ensure good

governance that can guarantee peace and security throughout the country and ensure the collective well-being of the citizens through well-conceived, effectively implemented economic policies and human development programmes.”

- ii. There is need to create a vibrant economy by providing social, economic and physical infrastructure that will bring industrial growth to provide gainful employment, quality education and social security for the people.
- iii. Government must devise new strategies in tackling all forms of insecurity, especially Boko Haram, kidnapping, banditry and all other forms of criminality that causes insecurity in the country.
- iv. The security agencies battling the insurgency must be motivated regular payment of their allowances and provision of adequate and up to date fighting equipments.
- v. The Nigerian armed forces, the police and other paramilitary organizations should be trained in counter terrorism to effectively contain any form of insecurity.

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