

A Historical Analysis of Governance and Insecurity in Contemporary Nigeria State, 1999 – 2022

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ABSTRACT

The study on a historical analysis of governance and insecurity in contemporary Nigeria state from 1999 to 2022 explains democratic administration within the period in relation to the nature of insecurity in our country. The work briefly evaluates the administrative policies of the regimes and maintained that the activities of armed groups still prevails without maximum confrontation from the government. As governance is considered as exercise of political powers to enhance the welfare of citizens insecurity on its own refers to an illegitimate act by persons or groups that threatens the peace and unity of the country in such manner that security of life and property are not guaranteed. Marxist approach applied in the study is an expression of how the economic and political exploitation of those in authority arouse confrontations of the lower class against the leaders through the use of arms. Hence insecurity in the context of study centred on the activities of Boko Haram and the armed bandits in northern Nigeria, a brief discuss on their origin, nature of attacks and its impact on the socio-economic development of Nigeria were highlighted. Nevertheless, insecurity as a serious challenge in Nigeria nation requires a collaborative effort with utmost sincerity to end the menace.

Keywords: Governance, Insecurity, Nigeria and Development



INTRODUCTION

The country Nigeria got her independence on 1st October, 1960. After independence Nigeria started experiencing self-governance that were threatened by military coups, civil war and agitations by minority groups. By the return to democracy in 1999, governance in Nigeria has passed through various administrations. Between 1999 to 2007, under the governance and leadership of President Olusegun Obasanjo, emphases were laid on fighting corruption as a panacea for good governance. This however led to the establishment of Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) and Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) in 2000 and 2002 respectively.

And immediately after the end of Obasanjo's regime, his successor Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar'adua took over the governance of Nigeria from 29th May, 2007 to 5th May, 2010. As he focused on achieving the administrative programs of his predecessor, his interest was centered on achieving a secured nation through establishing peace and reconciliation in the Niger Delta, which metamorphosed the amnesty programme in Niger Delta which metamorphosed the amnesty programme in Niger Delta. Equally on his policy was the continued war against wide spread of systematic corruption.

As the government ended after Yar'adua's death, President Goodluck Jonathan took over the mantle of leadership upto 29th May, 2015. During the period, security challenges in the north-east threatened the sovereignty of Nigerian State. But in an attempt to maintain a strong, peaceful and united country, President Goodluck Jonathan considered restructuring as a better option to address all issues that could bring impediment to the unity and development of Nigeria nation. To achieve this, a national constitutional conference was constituted of which their recommendations were ignored by the successive government.

Nevertheless, as governance was transited to President Mohammed Buhari on 29th May, 2015 with emphasis on how to promote agriculture, encourage export, improve security and fight corruption, insecurity was high as every region experienced various forms of security challenges in the country. Within the period under review, the activities of various gangs or groups who threatens the peaceful existence of the nation and their influence to national development shall be focused on the Boko Haram Sect and the armed bandits in northern Nigeria.



Clarification of Concepts

The concepts on the theme which need explanation are governance and insecurity. Inspite diverse view of scholars on the concepts, in the context of this study governance and insecurity are clarified to reflect the Nigeria situation.

Governance

Governance as explained by Nwabueze (2002) cited in Abimbola (2012:34) refers to the exercise of political power to promote the public good and welfare of citizens. He further assert that public good encompasses the norms or values of free, just, ordered and law governed society as well as those of happenings and the good life. Similarly, UNDP report on Governance for Sustainable Human Development (1997) defines governance as good governance and opine that governance should be participatory, abide by the rule of law, transparent, responsive, possess consensus orientation, equity, efficiency, accountability and must have strategic vision.

Governance could also be referred to as the exercise of political authority and the use of institutional resources to manage problems and the affairs of people under the government of a state. It deals with decision making by leaders or those in position of authority and as well the implementation of policies on citizens for the purpose of political administration.

Similarly, World Bank (1992) in her explanation considers governance as a process by which the legitimized power had been exercised for the utilization of resources of a country for development but not growth. Also, Hanggi (2005:24) explains governance as an analytical perspective which helps to capture complex governing mechanisms in a given issue – area characterized by a constellation of different type of actors operating at different levels of interaction.

Insecurity:

As security simply refers to protection of life and property devoid of any physical, psychological, emotional and financial threat by individuals or group of persons against human and national development, insecurity therefore denote any act or activities by persons or group of persons that threatens the peace, unity, security and development process of a nation (Abraham, 2018:38). It could also be perceived as confrontational act or activities by an illegitimate group capable of threatening national defence and as well the integrity of a nation. Insecurity could also equally be



referred to any act from individuals or groups that endangers the life and property of citizens in the society.

Theoretical Framework

In the study of governance and insecurity in the Nigerian State, it has been observed that the inability of the governing class to provide for the governed brings about societal conflict which in other worlds are demonstrated in various forms that threatens national security. Since insecurity emerge as a result of dissatisfaction from the governed against the riding class, the Marxist approach is most appropriate in the study.

The Marxist approach see conflict as a social mis-normal resulting from the contradictions in the environment through social interactions. Marx emphasis was that social relations and the mode of production in the society brings about competition and antagonism between various groups. The conflict is buttressed through economic and political exploitation of the higher class against the lower class (Okpaga, 2006:779).

Relating Marxist approach to the study, it explains how the inability of the governing class in providing for the welfare of the governed generate resentment demonstrated through acts of insecurity. This however is perceived as solutions to address the exploitative tendencies of the ruling class in Nigerian society hence it has failed in giving hope to the disadvantaged majority.

Dimensions of Security Challenges in Nigeria

Arising from the nature of governance in Nigeria where those in authority dominate and exploit the governed without considering their welfare, there emerged various groups that constitute great security challenge against national development. The groups which appears to be regionalized influences the entire structures of government in Nigeria. Among the groups whose activities had become very worrisome in northern Nigeria include:

Boko Haram Sect

Boko Haram as explained by Ugochukwu (2012:60-63) is an Islamic sect synonymous with bomb attack was founded as “*Jama atu Ahlis sunna Lidda*” a wait *wal-jihad* which in Arabic means “people committed to the propagation of the prophet’s teaching and jihad by Mohammed Yusuf. It was residents of Maiduguri where Boko Haram was formed in 2002 who translated it in Hausa language to mean “Western education is forbidden”. They attributed corruption among Muslims



to western education. As against national interest, they demanded for an end to democracy and full implementation of the Sharia law in the country (Olaniyan and Akinlele, 2016:61). It is however pertinent to state that despite bomb attacks, the activities of the sect also include kidnapping mainly within the north east region of Nigeria. Most of their activities are listed below:

Attacks by Boko Haram

Date	Actions Executed	Result	Place of Attack
3 – 7 – 2011	Attack at a bar close to police barracks in Maiduguri, Borno State.	6 persons killed and 10 injured	Maiduguri, Borno State
4 – 7 – 2011	Threat to bomb Abuja as F.C.T was grounded to a halt.	Military security were mounted at checkpoints	Abuja
6 – 7 – 2011	Bombed the patrol team of joint military task force on operation restore order.	Severn (7) soldiers killed.	Maiduguri, Borno State.
12 – 9 – 2011	Attack at a beer parlour in Maiduguri	Four (4) persons were killed.	Maiduguri
20 – 10 – 2011	Attack at a barbing salon, Shehuri and Abaganaram ward	Four (4) persons killed (1 prison guard and 3 civilian)	London Chiki, Shehuri and Abagawaram ward of Maiduguri
22 – 10 – 2011	Attack on Journalist	Death of Zakari Isa of Nigeria Television Authority	Maiduguri network centre
26 – 11 – 2011	Bomb attack at Geidan	Destruction of police station, 23 shops, First Bank, churches and INFC Office.	Geidam, Borno State.
16 – 12 – 2011	Attack on Air Force Officers	Three (3) killed and one (1) officer injured	Kano
26 – 8 – 2011	Attack at UN Building.	Twenty-six (26) dead and 116 persons injured	Abuja
16 – 01 – 2012	Sporadic gunshots by the Islamic sect.	Dislocation of over 200 Christian families to Jos, Plateau State.	Yobe State (along Potiskum road)
20 – 01 – 2012	Book Haram attack in Kano.	About 250 persons	Kano, Kano State



		killed including channel television cameraman, Mr. Enenche Akogwu	
07 – 5 – 2013	Bama bomb attack	55 persons killed	Bama, Borno State
06 – 7 – 2013	Attack by the Islamic Sect	42 persons killed	Yobe State
14 – 4 – 2014	Abduction of Chibok Girls	Over 200 girls were abducted.	Government Girls Secondary School, Chibok, Borno State
19 – 02 – 2018	Kidnap of Dapchi girls	Kidnap of Dapche school girls	Dapchi, Yobe state

Source: Osunkoya, 2014:41-42.

From the above attacks, the successes recorded by the Boko Haram Islamic sect amount to various interpretations by scholars on the seriousness of Nigeria government towards the security of life and property of the citizens.

Bandits and Their Activities

Bandits are armed group of people who are majorly residence of north – west Nigeria who imposes security threat against Nigeria nation through series of attack, kidnapping, killings, rape, and intimidation of innocent persons. Also in their unlawful practices are payment of ransom from victims and cattle rustling. Similarly, bandits could be referred to as a body of criminals who terrorize and take valuable properties of the rural people and travelers (Oyewole, Aina & Ojo, 2023).

As a combination of criminality and local embedded conflict, armed banditry consist of incredible warlords robbers and terrorists who actually operates as their names implies. It constitute a form of non-state armed group who often capitalize on existing social grievances among communities, ethnic groups and Nigerian states whereby citizens are terrorized within any hours of the day. However, bandits by their nature constitute a serious threat to national security (Holmes, 2014).

On the origin of bandits or armed banditry which occupies states in the north-west (Jigawa, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Kaduna, Sokoto and Zamfara), Nigeria is traced to the pre-colonial period. During the pre-colonial era, the region, Jaafar (2018) assert that it was very significant in international trade and migration as Kano and Katsina were well recognized in the trans-Sahara routes for trade and tourism. The bandits which inhabited the region during the period



constituted major threat to caravan trading, tourism, political stability and territorial integrity of communities within the north-west. Because of their high level of criminality during the period, the colonial order reinforced the powers of the precolonial states in northern Nigeria and subjugated the activities of armed bandits with considerable success (Ikime, 1980).

However, in the contemporary Nigeria state as the resurgence of armed banditry could be traced to 2011, it was seen as a cultural group whose aim was to emancipate the Fulani from oppression by security agents, politicians and traditional rulers. Grazing areas in the region were encroached upon and taken over at a time when the herders are migrating to neighbouring states. Before 2011, membership was restricted to only the Fulani with conditions such as pledge of cash, cattle, sex, leisure and intimidation as basic requirement for enlistment. Most herders possibly joined the group to escape harassment by armed bandits after they noticed that they were rustling cattle.

In spite the primary aim of the bandits to defend herders from any form of oppression their activities became worrisome between 2013 and 2022 when nine hundred and nine (909) attacks in the north-west Nigeria were recorded against the armed bandits. Areas of attack are shown below:

States	No. of attacks
Jigawa	5
Kaduna	342
Kano	1
Katsina	208
Kebbi	14
Sokoto	54
Zamfara	275

Despite the number of attacks carried out in north-west Nigeria by the armed bandits, it has been argued that their activities by extension are recorded in other regions of the country. For example, the bandits were accused of being responsible for the 28th March, 2022 of Abuja – Kaduna train attack where 398 persons were abducted and Dr. Chinelo Nwando was killed on the incident. In the south-west, on 5th June, 2022, the bandits were suspected as part of the group



who lunched attack at St. Francis Catholic Church, Owo Ondo State where over 40 persons were killed. While in the north central the Abuja – Kuja prison jail break which occurred on 5th July, 2022 had five (5) persons killed and 879 inmates were freed by the attackers.

Impact of Boko Haram and Armed Bandits on National Development

Activities of these groups has been a threat against Nigeria’s national unity. For example the Islamic sect on January 2012 issued on order that all southerners and Christians in the north should relocate to the south, while northerners in the south should return home (Ugochukwu, 2012:67).

By the abduction of Chibok Girls, Dapchi girls and threats on school in northern Nigeria, it halted the education system in the north as schools were officially closed by various state governments in the region. Similarly, the university of Ibadan and university of Benin on September 2011 experience a stampede following rumous of an e-mail sent to university authorities of their plans to bomb twenty (20) universities in Nigeria.

However, Albert (2017:10) explicitly narrated that the activities of the Islamic sect diminished the significant role of the Sambisa forest which hitherto saved as a game reserve area due to the concentration of animals to a dumping group of abducted victims in northern Nigeria where all forms of crime and criminality are being practiced.

Furthermore, Boko Haram activities particularly in Borno State altered the structural control of local government in the state. This was evident when eleven (11) out of the total of twenty-seven (27) local government areas were under the control of the Islamic sect. The affected local government areas were Gwoza, Bama, Marte, Monguno, Kaga, Gubio, Mata, Dikwa, Ngala, Guzamala and Abadan. It was against this misnormal that the governor of Borno State Babagane Zulum on 1st December, 2022 confirmed that the last two local government areas mentioned were still under the control of Boko Haram (Saharaporter.com).

The pluralization of camps for Internal Displaced Persons (IDP) in Nigeria emerged as a result of incessant attack by the dreaded Islamic sect and bandits in the north east and north west. Nigeria Displacement Report 43 (February, 2023) revealed 309 camps and camp – like settings in Nigeria. The report has a total of 2,375,846 person IDP’s with Borno State on the lead having 1.6 million, followed by Adamawa with 221,253 IDP’s, while Yobe State is the third highest with



150,874 persons. However, this lowered the socio-economic development of the affected states in Nigeria as funds are invested on the internal displaced persons.

Nevertheless, as insecurity remains a serious challenge in the area, there emerge high poverty rate in both the North West and North East regions of Nigeria. The United Nations Development Programme's report on Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) (2017) shows that five (5) of the ten (10) states with high rate of poverty in Nigeria are from north west, followed by north east with 43.0% and 44.0% respectively, while the north central is the third poorest region in the country with 41.0%. The argument is that hence the areas are devastated by the armed groups, agriculture as a means of livelihood is abandoned, trade and commerce cease to flourish while investors relocate to other areas favourable for human development.

As residents of the affected regions flee from their homes and traditional economic systems abandoned, there is scarcity of food and high incidence of hunger ravaging the people. Consequent upon this, is malnutrition on both the young and the elderly which inturn affect national development.

Conclusion

The paper in considering governance and insecurity in Nigeria had a concise review of various government policies from President Olusegun Obasanjo to Mohammed Buhari which explains their inability in security management as paramount for the continuous security challenges in the country. As the study focused on insecurity in northern Nigeria, its dimensions were centred on Boko Haram and armed bandits whose activities are perceived as the source of insecurity in the affected regions. Highlight of the work reveals the origins of both groups and various forms of attack executed against the people which invariably affected national development hence the socio-economic systems in the regions suffers a setback.

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