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PERSPECTIVES ON SECURITY AND HUMANISTIC STUDIES

Isaac O. Albert

*Department of Peace, Security and Humanitarian Studies
Faculty of Multidisciplinary Studies
University of Ibadan*

Abstract

This paper explores the potential of linking security and humanistic studies as its primary goal and addresses contemporary security challenges in Africa and the world. This paper utilizes a qualitative research approach, drawing on existing literature from various disciplines such as political science, sociology, psychology, and history. Several key findings were identified. Firstly, security studies traditionally focus on state-centric, military-oriented approaches, often neglecting the broader human dimensions of security. Humanistic studies, on the other hand, emphasize the value of empathy, social justice, and individual agency. By combining these perspectives, a more comprehensive understanding of security can be achieved, one that addresses physical threats and considers social, economic, and cultural aspects, including areas of human needs. Secondly, the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration in addressing complex security challenges is also crucial. By bringing together experts from different disciplines, a holistic, eclectic, scientific approach can be developed, considering multiple factors and perspectives. This interdisciplinary approach is essential for understanding the root causes of security issues and formulating effective and sustainable solutions. Finally, the paper argues that linking security and humanistic studies can contribute to developing a more inclusive and human-centred security discourse. By prioritizing human well-being and dignity, a shift can be made from a state-centric approach to a people-centric approach, empowering individuals, and communities to actively participate in shaping their security. This paper makes a compelling case for linking security and humanistic studies to address contemporary security challenges in Africa and the world. By combining these disciplines, a more comprehensive understanding of security can be achieved, interdisciplinary collaboration can be fostered, and a more inclusive security discourse can be developed.

Keywords: Security discourse, systemic review, human-centred security, humanistic studies

Introduction

The main goal of this paper is to link security and humanistic studies. What is security and what is humanistic studies? Why should we and how do we link the concepts or disciplines? What are the possible paradigms for doing this? These are critical questions to approach the current trends of security challenges in Africa and the world. Multiple academic disciplines have a role to play in dealing

with the issues that are creating various threats. The world has evolved beyond the age of “knowledge for knowledge’s sake,” and scholars are expected to be development-relevant in their work by providing sustainable solutions to emerging or existing problems. More than ever, scholars are expected to be accountable for their research processes by providing evidence of the socio-economic relevance, benefits, and impact of their work. Humanistic studies have been slow and seem not to be ready to claim its expected space in development studies. This partly explains why the impact scores of the discipline are usually low on assessment platforms such as Google Scholar, Worldcat, JSTOR, etc., compared to those of other academic specializations. This current article argues that scholars in humanistic studies feature too marginally in security studies or affairs. Stakeholders requiring the services of experts must look in the direction of people from other academic specialisations in the scarcity of professionals with backgrounds in humanistic studies. This article is a scholarly inquiry into the problem and how the situation should be effectively redressed.

What constitutes security? There are many conceptualisations of the term, but as a point of departure, Security is freedom from fear and want and the presence of human dignity. Security is assured when these are present, and insecurity prevails when they are absent. However, the meaning of the term is easily affected by history, geography, and the changing human perception of realities. Overall, it first gained academic currency in the field of philosophy in reference to the exigencies of individual human survival. The meaning of the concept changed after the Second World War as it started to be applied to state survival under the bipolar logic of the Cold War. At the global level, it concerned the fear of humanity being wiped out by the possibility of nuclear warfare between the East and West. What it means further expanded at the end of the Cold War in the late 1980s with issues of human rights and protection of societal values and heritages starting to be given frontline attention in security considerations. This emphasis gave birth to some new security concepts such as societal security, human security, cultural security, political security, environmental security, international security, comprehensive security, homeland security and the like (Baldwin, 1997). As Jore (2019) argued, this period witnessed security now being “perceived as a shared responsibility covering different levels and sectors in society... in stark contrast to a few decades ago, when security was predominantly perceived as the responsibility of the police and army”. In this contemporaneous context, the term has been defined as “the perceived or actual ability to prepare for, adapt to, withstand and recover from dangers and crises caused by people’s deliberate, intentional and malicious activities such as terrorism, sabotage, organized crime, cyber-crime, etc.” (Jore, 2019:157).

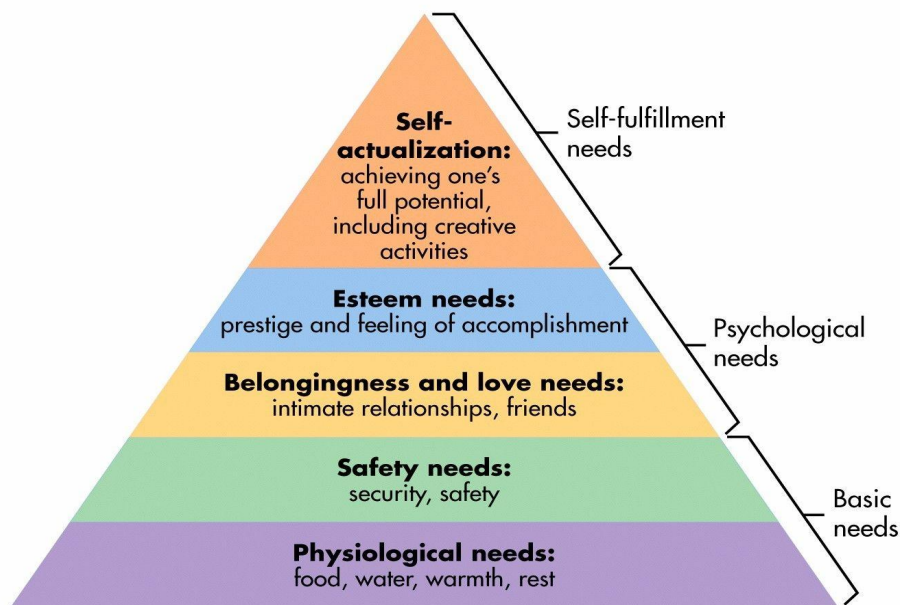
In other words, security now has to do with anything that could contribute to human dignity and happiness. It should be the concern of all academic disciplines.

How does humanistic studies come in? What is meant by humanistic studies? To the University of Humanistic Studies at Utrecht in the Netherlands, it “is an academic study that further elaborates the meaning and significance of humanism and worldviews within contemporary society.” It has also been defined as:

... an interdisciplinary program that will help students better understand what it means to be human through the study of history, literature, philosophy, religion, languages and world civilizations. Humanistic Studies explores some of the central questions in life, such as the meaning of beauty, justice, and the “good life,” as well as the importance of language, culture and artistic expression...The humanities comprise those fields that study human creations of all sorts, including literary studies, creative writing, linguistics, history, ancient and modern languages, cultural studies and philosophy” (University of Wisconsin).

The field of specialization helps students develop a greater understanding of what it means to be human through the study of history, literature, philosophy, religion, languages and world civilizations and explores questions central to life, such as the meaning of beauty, justice, and the “good life,” as well as the importance of language, culture and artistic expression. These values system readily links humanistic studies to the attainment of the five core human needs articulated by Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. The needs are:

Fig. 1: Abraham Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs



University of Humanistic Studies in Utrecht, Netherlands,

The position of Abraham Maslow is that every living being has five basic needs: (1) physiological, (2) safety (3) belongingness or love, (4) self-esteem, and (5) self-actualization. The focus of humanistic studies is on how these needs could be met; this explains the “human” in the term. The theory asks questions around the problems associated with and the consequences of being unable to meet these needs. Disciplines in humanities such as linguistics and languages, literature, classics, archaeology, history, religion, philosophy, anthropology, law, as well as creative and performing arts—study aspects of these needs and the society and cultural environment within which they must be met using methods that are typically critical, speculative, and comparative.

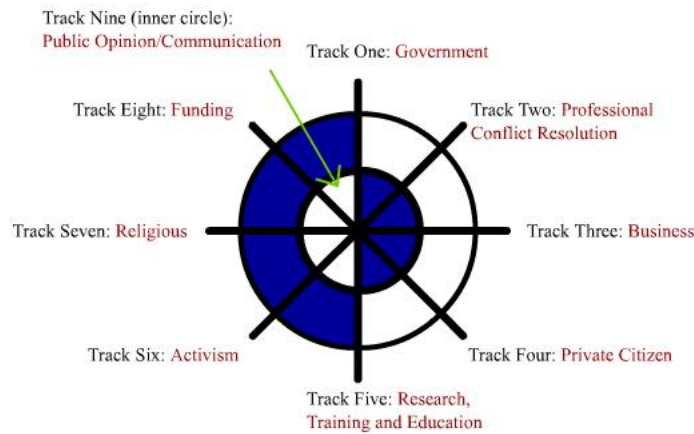
Security studies are linked to all aspects of these human needs, and this is well articulated by the human needs’ theory of conflict and peace. The argument here is that the more the basic needs of citizens are met, the more secure a society is. Conversely, societies that create little space for meeting human needs would have more conflict issues (Burton, 1988). To ensure that the global community gains more attention to meeting these needs, the concept of “human security” has been scientifically coined and promoted in the contemporary world. It was defined by UN General Assembly resolution 66/290 as “an approach to assist... in identifying and addressing widespread and cross-cutting challenges to the survival, livelihood and dignity of the people”.

The terminology calls for “people-centered, comprehensive, context-specific and prevention-oriented responses that strengthen the protection and empowerment of all people” (Marker, 2003) and focuses on three values: (i) freedom from want, (ii) freedom from fear, and (iii) respect for human dignity. In this context, the UN Commission for Human Security, founded in 2001, argues that human security means protecting people from critical (severe) and pervasive (widespread) threats and situations. It means using processes that build on people’s strengths and aspirations. It means creating political, social, environmental, economic, military, and cultural systems that will give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity together.” (Commission of Human Security, 2003:4). In other words, the concept of human security moves us away from the traditional, state-centric conceptions of security, which focus on the safety of states from military aggression to the realm of the security of the individuals and their need for protection and empowerment.

Human security calls notice to a people-centered approach to advancing peace, security, and development at the local, national and global levels of the political system. Doing so softens the study of threats, i.e., security. It promotes the “whole of society” approach to security management. By this, the article argues that all strata of society must have something unique to contribute to making peace possible. It is in this context that security management is now said to be a

multi-stakeholder problem that is everybody’s business. The task should no longer be left to the state alone; it requires the contribution of the larger society. This line of thinking made the Institute of Multitrack Diplomacy in Washington (USA) frame what is today known as “multitrack diplomacy.” Multitrack diplomacy suggests that security management should be approached from multiple points. In this regard, the Institute identified nine important stakeholders (technically labelled “tracks”) needed for dealing with security challenges as shown below:

Fig. 2: Multitrack Diplomacy Matrix



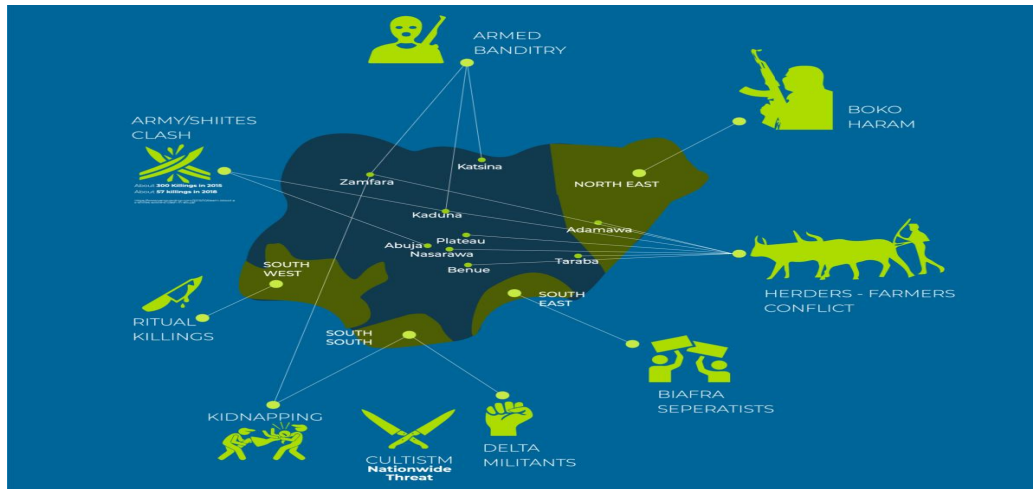
The tracks, as presented above, are Tracks (i) the government, (ii) civil society organisations, (iii) business organisations, (iv) prominent private citizens, (v) academic institutions, (vi) activists, (vii) religious organisations (viii) funding institutions, and (ix) the media. Each track could respond to security alone or in partnership with other tracks.

One of the most cross-cutting tracks is “track 5”: research, training, and education. All the other tracks need it for building and growing its capacity. This is the core area in which security and humanistic studies are linked. Unfortunately, humanistic scholars do not perform well in security studies. Security studies are dominated by scholars in the core social sciences. Core social scientists are doing so well in the field because they have successfully used their knowledge and understanding of various aspects of society to ask security questions that concern people. Their contributions to peace studies and practice are “appropriated tools” from humanistic studies. By this, the article argues that they are constantly retraining and developing their capacities to perform roles and tasks that scholars in humanistic studies are unavailable to perform. Leading social scientists across the world are constantly improving, retraining, and acquiring new tools and knowledge for deepening their scholarship. For example,

in 2008, the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) and SEPHIS (Netherlands) contracted me as the convener of the Extended Social History Workshop on “Historicizing Migration.” The goal was to teach migration scholars from the social sciences how to use historical methods and make historians learn how to use social science methods to improve their academic outputs. The training took place at St. Louis, Senegal for three weeks from 3-21 March 2008. The project involved scholars from different parts of Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Latin America. In the process of this kind of opportunity to retrain scholars, several new forms of humanistic studies have developed and become popular around the world. These include digital humanities, humane science, medical humanities, humanistic psychology, critical humanities, and so on.

Several humanities-centered initiatives and programmes run globally to help bring more scholars from humanistic studies into development studies generally. However, many African scholars benefitting from these programmes return home with no new skills that enable them to catch up with the rapidly changing scholarly world of multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary studies. While fellowships and advertised projects could make scholars more global in their outlooks, their organizers or sponsors hardly mention disciplines but specific human problems to be solved. It could be violence, diseases, migration, environmental crisis, economic depression, etc. It is expected that the researcher applying to be part of such engagements would launch out from their disciplinary backgrounds and then connect with other disciplines to establish and strengthen the contributions to the knowledge they seek to make. The inability to do this well at the proposal writing level is automatically interpreted as a weakness and reason for not approving the application. This is a significant reason why humanistic scholars do badly in grantsmanship. Those recruiting scholars for security-related studies usually find proposals from scholars in the humanities that could be more impressive. This is why these scholars hardly feature in security intervention projects. Nevertheless, the security problems in West Africa and the Sahel are increasing daily and international efforts are being mobilised to intervene at various levels. Nigeria’s security problems increase regularly as presented in the following map produced in 2018 on the distribution of violent conflicts in Nigeria:

Figure 2: Map of Violent Conflicts in Nigeria (December 2018)



Source: Idayat Hassan, “From Boko to Biafra: How insecurity will affect Nigeria’s elections,” *African Arguments*, December 18, 2018, <https://africanarguments.org/2018/12/boko-biafra-nigeria-insecurity-2019-elections/>

The map shows that Nigeria's six geopolitical zones were bedeviled by one form of violence or the other as Nigeria approached the 2019 elections. The situation is worse today and there is no assurance that things will improve soon. As all areas of academic specialisation struggle to contribute to gaining a better understanding or solving these security problems, humanistic studies cannot continue to play the role of an onlooker, as is now evident. This becomes more worrisome as some of the consultants brought in from outside to help manage the Nigerian problems also belong to humanistic studies. At this point, this study is forced to ask: What is happening outside Nigeria that is absent in Nigeria? and how do we bridge this gap?

The first step for colleagues in the humanities is to start learning development scholarship to high levels of research. The contribution of humanistic studies to security management must be considered. What can these scholars contribute to managing more significant social, economic, political, and environmental problems? Humanistic scholars are now expected to move beyond their traditional training to start exploring other disciplines' methods and analytical tools, especially the social sciences. For example, those in history must use the tools of their colleagues in other disciplines, just as these other disciplines also rely on historical data or philosophical foundations. Scholars in migration history must learn from demography and social statistics, those in economic history must

understand economics for adequate scientific economic analysis and those in political history must easily understand what political scientists do.

The problem is that many want to remain what and where they were and still be accommodated by the rapidly changing academic world. Even in African Studies, our institutions could be doing better. Many high-impact journals have now stopped receiving papers from scholars who need help to update their knowledge. For example, *Africa Affairs*, a journal of over 120 years old Oxford Academic publication of the Royal African Society in the United Kingdom, expressly said: “African Affairs has moved away from publishing articles of purely historical interest. Articles with a historical focus should be relevant to contemporary concerns” (African Affairs). What is required now is for those examining the past to be development-relevant; they need to write in a manner that could enable the present gain from their investigation. Several other journals quietly reject papers that fail to show relevance or are considered mere storytelling or lacking analytical depth.

What is needed now to improve contributions from humanistic studies is an eclectic approach to social issues and the scientific analysis of data. Those teaching historiography, for example must critically work on this problem. Historians around the world now teach and benefit from “critical historiography” for updating research methods. It is no longer a matter of teaching students “History and the social sciences” and then quarreling with doctoral students attempting to apply social science methods to their data analysis. The future of these junior scholars is sometimes impeded by so doing. In other words, today’s historians should no longer approach the evidence at their disposal with a bowed head. The data must be critically interrogated using different analytical tools to get as close to the truth as possible. That is when what is written down could actually be applied to problem-solving, whether now or in the future. It is like a sick person being subjected to multiple laboratory tests to ascertain what happened and how the problems should be treated.

The Steps Forward

A scholar seeking to merge humanistic and security studies is being pushed into “public humanities.” It is a choice that must be carefully made because it is highly demanding and sometimes risky. Public humanities have to do with organizing knowledge production and knowledge outcomes with the concerns of the public at heart (Smulyan, 2020). It has to do with having to engage diverse publics with humanistic concerns. It is not a matter of “knowledge for knowledge’s sake” but knowledge for addressing prevailing developmental challenges in the society. In the context of the present paper, the main question answered by public humanities is, “How can humanistic studies” contribute to solving the mounting problems in our society? In our context, the question is

asked, “How can history, philosophy, linguistics and others help prevent Nigerian state from collapsing”? As the Public Humanities Hub, Faculty of Arts of the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada observed, “... Public Humanities scholarship is ... about sharing one’s research with the general public through...’ “knowledge mobilization” ... When done well, Public Humanities foster knowledge exchange. It presumes both that Humanities researchers have valuable knowledge to share with diverse publics AND that those diverse publics have valuable insights to share with Humanities researchers through conversations, crowdsourcing projects, policy deliberations, performances, festivals, etc.”.

Relating public humanities to security studies involves the scholar producing the knowledge that could contribute meaningfully to security management. It is not just a matter of publishing for publishing’s sake but engaging in the kind of knowledge production that conflict managers find helpful in their work. There are two possibilities for those willing to come into the field: (i) the curriculum development approach and (ii) individual efforts. The curriculum-development approach has to do with the disciplines in the humanities seeing the need to contribute to development studies and may require adjusting their course contents and delivery in a manner that could enable students to engage with more public issues.

In this case, societal needs dictate what is taught and how they are taught. For example, the terrorists and violent extremists apprehended by security agencies in the Sahel and parts of West Africa tell stories about cross-border relationships that remind scholars of the collapsed Songhai, Mali, and Ghana empires. Soldiers and social scientists encounter several stories that historians are in the best position to make sense of but are hardly present in security studies. Irregular migrants going to Europe through North Africa have since “reopened” the defunct “trans-Saharan trade routes” to North Africa taught in undergraduate history classes. Studying how Nigerian missionaries take Christianity to all parts of the world now may sound more development-relevant and true to humanistic studies at this moment than still dissipating energies on how European missionaries came to Africa. This goes for many of the projects students work on these days. This is not to say that these issues are meaningless but that scholars need to contribute more towards investigating the development challenges in Africa. This is the age of “African solutions to African problems.” Not responding to this continental call by our academic practices would only make people and institutions continue to have lesser affection for the humanities. In other words, the curriculum of humanistic studies in Nigeria and many parts of Africa and what the scholars in the fields do need to be transformed. “Employability” and “development-relevance” is now the name of the “game”!

The second option is for things to remain as they are but for scholars willing to make contributions to security studies and other aspects of development studies to do all they can at the individual level toward becoming peace and security experts, most especially at the early stage in their career as I did. Immediately after completing my Ph.D. in 1994, I (re)trained in the U.S., U.K., Germany, France, Belgium, Finland, Jordan, Israel, Palestine, Egypt, South Africa, and several other parts of the world to merge my knowledge of social history and security. Those seeking to follow this track now have avalanche of training and postdoc fellowship opportunities around the world to assist them. These fellowships are regularly announced. Evaluation of some of these proposals shows that they have too little “value addition” but evidence of inability to function beyond the doctoral training. Hence, they are rejected. Many of those who get the fellowships and use the knowledge well are offered juicy appointments that make them refuse to return home to train the others.

What has been the value added in my own experience? I use my knowledge of history to deepen the understanding of conflict and peace issues and several development organisations (the British Council, DFID, USAID, United Nations, African Union, ECOWAS, Commonwealth Office in London, the European Union, AFRICOM, etc.) have found my services extremely useful in this respect. Mistakes are prevented when development agencies and policymakers consult and work with historians. More than the consultancies, my transnational studies led to the peace and conflict studies programmes in University of Ibadan, University of Ilorin, University of Cape Coast (Ghana), Al-Hikmah University in Ilorin, and the Abubakar Abdulsalami Centre for Peace and Sustainable Studies, Minna. I help to monitor and evaluate other programmes across the African continent.

Several things must be done by a scholar seeking to merge humanistic and security studies. The first is readiness to publish in your mainstream discipline and then security studies, which is more multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary. Attaining this objective provides too little room for leisurely scholarship. Nevertheless, those who work painstakingly get easily recognised globally and often achieve high citation rankings or scores on Google Scholar, Worldcat, JSTOR, Academia and other global academic platforms. Professors Wole Soyinka and Niyi Osundare are perfect examples in this respect. Their politically piercing works (novels and poems) make them African models in public humanities. They write and speak on issues of profound public interest. In some cases, they collide with the government in the process. They are respected globally for being so academically innovative. The rapidly growing *Toyin Falola Interviews: Applying African Voices*, under which prominent Africans are interviewed and their voices digitised for posterity, is another important contribution to the global world of public humanities. In the years to come,

researchers would still go to such tapes to collect their data from those recorded. Siyan Oyeweso's "Yoruba Towns" is another emerging model in public humanities to be closely studied and followed by other humanistic scholars. These scholars lost their original training to create something new, innovative and development relevant. The works of remarkable scholars are bound to outlive them, which is what public humanities should be about. Providing ideas or solutions that will stand the test of time.

The emphasis of this paper is on security and humanistic studies. Linking the two may be more complex than the initiatives discussed above. The situation could be very challenging. A few scholars attempted to come into the field of security studies in Nigeria in the past but withdrew after struggling with one or two ideas. Security studies require high level of sensitivity, preparation and retraining that scholars could easily consider unnecessary diversion. Data must be collected, analysed, written up and the results disseminated under very circumspect conditions. Data collection could amount to "dangerous fieldwork," especially if the researcher must work in a violently divided society. The problems here include gaining access to the communities and maintaining one's safety there, gaining the needed trust for data collection, complying with requisite ethical standards, and interpreting the data. Papers written under these conditions could easily get the scholar into trouble with the government or belligerents. Each stakeholder could accuse the researcher of doing too little or too much. Hence, those coming to the field must be prepared for the risks and equip themselves with appropriate competences for efficient performance.

However, three things are expedient while launching out: (i) readiness to revisit one's epistemology (ii) research methodology, and (iii) work with theories. Epistemology concerns the nature of knowledge and how it is and should be produced or reproduced. In this respect, the researcher must be unequivocal about the aspects of security problems to focus on, why and how? Research methodology involves how to collect, analyse and use data. Theory, which is the third, is probably the most debatable. Some humanistic scholars are shy of using theories. Those coming to the field of security studies cannot sustain that kind of attitude; they must use theories. In this respect, a theory is "a set of related propositions that suggests why events occur in the manner they do" (Hoover, 1980, p. 37). This definition might not be deep enough, but it suffices for our purpose in this paper. Theories have four distinct uses in social scientific thinking:

1. Theory provides patterns for interpretation of data.
2. Theory links one study with another.
3. Theories supply frameworks within which concepts and variables acquire special significance.
4. Theory allows us to interpret the larger meaning of our findings for ourselves and others. (Hoover, 1980:39)

The space available for this paper does not allow us to thoroughly examine how each applies to the subject matter under consideration. However, the lesson to be drawn from the foregoing narrative is that many security theories exist. Those venturing into the field must know and can apply them actionably. It is apt to conclude this paper with the following quotes:

Society has never needed Humanities scholars' guidance more. We live in a time of crisis: climate change threatens the planet, fake news and extreme populism have put democracy at risk, and racism, war, and wealth disparities have made millions of people around the world incredibly vulnerable. Humanities scholars are a largely untapped resource that can expand public discussions and enrich public understandings beyond our current moment in ways that spark the imagination of different kinds of futures - (The University of British Columbia).

.... every facet of the humanities can imbue future cyber security experts with critically desired soft skills that help people work more effectively in tech environments. Of these skills, one of the most widely sought-after is empathetic interpersonal skills – understanding people and what motivates them – along with clear communication capabilities (writing and speaking effectively for the intended audience). (Morgan, 2021:13-16)

The modern world needs humanistic scholarship, as argued. Are they willing to retool for more effective participation in security studies, which is the primary concern of the present paper? This question must be answered at organisational and individual levels in line with the objectives of the conference where this paper was initially presented. The Faculty of Humanities of Osun State University could collaborate with the Peace and Conflict Studies programmes of the University of Ibadan to follow up on some of the issues addressed in this paper. That may be another innovative way to link security and humanistic studies. However, a more straightforward method is for the faculty to collaborate with the university's Faculty of Social Sciences to deal with the issues.

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STRATEGIC OPTIONS IN CULTURAL SECURITY FOR AFRICA'S GROWING POPULATION

Muibi O. Opeloye, Ph.D., FISN

*Professor of Islamic Studies,
Department of Religions,
Osun State University*

Abstract

In the context of Africa's expanding population, cultural security is treated as a relevant subject matter in this study. Preserving cultural legacy is essential for the effective technological, scientific, and economic growth of nations worldwide. This paper examines how cultural security contributes to sustainable development, thereby making the African population a veritable asset. The paper investigates what elements jeopardise cultural security; what effective methods may be implemented to protect African culture; what opportunities exist for African culture to generate riches to make Africa's expanding population an asset; and how African culture (particularly its language component) might be used to speed development. The first section of the study addresses threat elements such as Islam-Christian and Western cultural incursions into Africa. The second segment investigates the role of the government and socialization agencies in protecting indigenous culture from perceived threats. The following sections examine cultural tourism and indigenous languages as possible ways to preserve culture. The study considers cultural tourism an asset rather than a liability in that it may preserve and project culture and generate revenue for the expanding population. Taking a cue from the experience of the identified developed countries, it is argued that indigenous language, in addition to its ability to preserve and project culture effectively, has the potential to facilitate growth and development faster than when a foreign language is used as the medium of instruction in schools. The study puts forward some recommendations that border on the potentiality of language policies, indigenous nuances, and cultural tourism to engender sustainable cultural security.

Keywords: Africa's population, African indigenous culture, African languages, cultural security, cultural sustainability

Introduction

Cultural security is germane to discussing the subject of this paper in the context of Africa's growing population. Considering this, it is appropriate to define the basic concepts of the topic starting with the definition of culture. Culture has been described in diverse ways. Babawale (2015), in his study: 'Harnessing Culture for Sustainable Development...' gives six definitions as proffered by

different scholars, including UNESCO's definition, the total of which interprets culture as a 'way of life of a people.' The components of culture as captured by Albert (2015) include verbal expressions or symbols (in such matters as stories, epics, legends, tales, poetry, and riddles) musical expressions (song and instrumental music); expression by action (dances, plays, ceremonies, rituals); tangible expressions (drawings, designs, paintings, carvings, sculptures, pottery, terracotta, mosaic woodwork, metalwork, jewelry, basketry, needlework, textiles glassware, carpets, costumes) as well as intangible expressions reflecting traditional thought forms and architectural forms. This shows how broad culture is in scope and dimension.

On the other hand, cultural security is defined by Fred Awaah (2014), quoting Ole Weaver, as 'the capacity of a society to conserve its specific character despite changing conditions and real or virtual threats.' It involves the permanence of traditional schemas of language, culture, associations, identity and national or religious practices, allowing for changes that are adjudged acceptable. According to Mary Khimulu (2014), citing Ocholla-Ayayo, a culturally safe and secure environment is one where the people feel safe and draw strength in their identity, culture and community.' Where there is cultural security, there should be the legitimacy of cultural rights protected by political authorities.

The option to deploy in achieving cultural security must be strategic and capable of achieving the end in view, which is population growth that is an asset. Therefore, to discuss the cultural security option for qualitative growth of Africa's population, this paper will address the following issues: 1) what factors undermine cultural security? 2) What viable measures can be deployed to preserve African culture? 3) What potentials are there for African culture to create wealth and make Africa's growing population an asset? 4) How can African culture (linguistic element) be utilised to accelerate development? Putting these in perspective, the aim of this paper is to discuss cultural security to examine how culture can contribute to making Africa's growing population an asset using indigenous language and cultural tourism as the thrust of the discourse within the Nigerian context.

The endangered indigenous African culture

African culture, without doubt, is an endangered culture given the dimensions of threats that have confronted it, dating back to the spread of Islam and Christianity (accompanied by Western culture) into the continent and supplanted the indigenous culture in the different regions of Africa. While Christianity predated Islam in North Africa, Islam predated Christianity in most part of East and West Africa. However, the arrival of Islam in South Africa is the most recent. Islam as a way of life rejects any aspect of the indigenous culture it considers obnoxious while absorbing those it considers amenable, leading to conflict of identity for the

African Muslim. The issue of identity conflict is what Opeloye (2011) addressed in a work titled: 'The Yoruba Muslim Identity Question' where he examined the misconceptions about the interface between African and Islamic cultures and concluded that a sound understanding of Islam is the panacea to resolving the problem. Also, Christianity as a way of life has zero tolerance for the indigenous African religion. The effect of the two religions manifests in different ways:

- i) Many Muslims and Christians will consider it abominable to be at the scene of traditional festivals such as the Osun festival in Osogbo and the Eyo festival in Lagos. To use Islamic term that will be *shirk* (associating partner with God) is considered a heinous sin and unforgivable.
- ii) Due to attachment to Islam and Christianity, it is not uncommon these days to find adherents of both faiths (but more especially the Christians) rejecting deity-derived family names such as Ogungbemi and Ifalonipe, substituting them with Jesus to become Jesugbemi and Jesulonipe
- iii) Concerning the culture of greeting, the traditional mode of prostrating or squatting, which is a sign of deep respect for the elders, is fading away fast, especially among Muslim youth. The Muslim with this attitude finds justification in Q. 72: 18 for their action. Rather than prostrate or squat, they opt for handshake standing, believing that it is sufficient to offer Islam's expression of greeting '*as- salam alaikum.*' This attitude is not as rampant among Christians as it is among Muslims.
- iv) Concerning marital life, the practice of the two religions has overshadowed the indigenous culture. In African culture, unlimited polygamy is the norm. The wealth of an African determines the number of his wives. While Islam limits the number to four with an option of monogamy based on Q. 4 :3, Christianity insists on monogamy. This has become the norm for its adherents even when the practice is deceptive in many cases.

It is not just the religious aspect of the African culture that is threatened; other aspects threatened include language, dressing, communal life, music, and food among others. Regarding language, it is a misnomer that indigenous languages have been relegated while recognition is given to English and French as official languages and languages of instruction in schools. Worse still, some families encourage the use of English or French by the children in daily communication at home. In Nigeria, the Yoruba are the guiltiest. The Hausa are an exception, being proud of the language. Any tribe that neglects its language faces the danger of pushing the language into extinction. Nothing can be more unfortunate, language being the basic identity marker. Once language is lost, the culture in its entirety is lost.

Regarding dressing code, the Islamic mode of dressing for Muslim women (prescribed in Q. 24: 30-31 and Q 33:59 should cover the entire body) is fast gaining ground, especially among the youths. However, the wrong impression created among them is that the complete Yoruba traditional dress needs to match the specifications. It must be emphasised that Islam accommodates peculiarities in the dressing style dictated by local cultures if it meets the standard it prescribes. Hence, there exists the i) Saudi Abaya (usually black and large *niqab*-veil), ii) Afghanistan *Burka*, iii) Iran Chador, iv) headscarf (usually a cloth wrapped around the hair and neck) used in Malaysia, Urban Iran and parts of Europe. I am bold to say that since the underlying principle for the concept of *hijab* is the need to cover the essential part of the body, the traditional Yoruba dress consisting of *buba, Iro, gele, and iborun* satisfies the requirement.

The same applies to male Muslims. A man does not have to dress like an Arab to be a good Muslim. In like manner, the Christian elite class is highly westernised in the mode of dressing, especially in official engagements, this being a practice inherited from the colonial masters. Muslims are also not exempted from this practice.

With regard to family life, individualism has taken over from communal life, resulting in the collapse of the cherished African family system. Individualism tears families apart. As rightly observed by Awaash, in a typical urban setting, people lead individualistic lives, feeling responsible only to their immediate family. In the typical African system, the community collectively reprimands an erring child of the neighbour without qualms. Communalism supports kinship ties, a value also encouraged by Islam and termed *sillu rahima*. Individualistic life is typically a Western value and its adoption pathetically has destroyed the fabric of the African family life.

Regarding cuisine, the healthy rich African food prepared in the home is being abandoned in preference for fast foods from Mr. Biggs, Captain Cook, etc. Snacks such as Meat pie, popcorn, cake etc. are generally unhealthy as they encourage high consumption of sugar.

The funeral ceremonies, the way the Muslims and the Christians perform them are entirely at variance to the traditional system. Despite this, the indigenous culture in some respects has impacted Islamic practice, especially in Yorubaland, in view of the concept of *Fidau* prayers. The 3rd, 8th or 40th-day *Fidau* has no basis in pristine Islam; it appears to have derived from African culture, as Noibi (2012) observed.

Also, globalisation which is sometimes interpreted as westernisation or neo colonisation has a variety of meanings; the one adopted for this discourse defines the concept as meaning the 'speedup of movements and exchanges (of human

beings, goods and services, capital, technologies, or **cultural practices**) all over the planet. One of its effects is that it promotes and increases interaction between different regions and populations around the world. In effect, globalisation implies increased interconnectedness and interdependence of various societies around the world. In the light of this, the concept has both positive and negative impact on the indigenous culture. Through globalisation, we can exchange our food for others food, our music for their music, our dresses for their dresses, and our values for their values.

Strategic Measures to Secure African Culture

To secure culture is to ensure its preservation. It is using deliberate and well-designed methodologies to maintain cultural heritage from the past for the benefit of the present and future generations (<https://www.vh-council.org>). Cultural heritage preservation is sine qua non for the effective technical, scientific, and economic development of nations across the world. According to Endong (2019), this follows the theory that culture is life and that there is a cultural factor in technological development. In view of this truism, most African states and social institutions have, in these recent years embarked on multi-faceted strategies aimed at heritage conservation in their respective national territories.

Securing the African culture strategically rests primarily on the governments. To this end, African governments have committed huge resources to organise cultural festivals such as those organised in Dakar, Senegal in 1966 and Lagos, Nigeria in 1977. The celebrations were packaged to celebrate African culture and showcase African Music, fine Art, literature, drama, dance, and religion to the world. Apart from the international Arts festival, national ones were organised in different countries from time to time.

With specific reference to Nigeria, the Federal Government has a ministry dedicated to culture, tourism, and national orientation to ensure cultural security. Some of the Government's set directions of cultural policies as contained in the policy document are:

- i) Analysis and understanding of Nigerian cultural life, cultural values and cultural needs and expectations of people.
- ii) Affirmations of the authentic cultural values and cultural heritage.
- iii) Building up of national cultural identity and parallel affirmation of cultural identities of different ethnic groups.
- iv) Development of cultural infrastructure and introduction of new technology in cultural activities.
- v) Establishment of a link between culture and education, as well as between education and different cultural industries (National Cultural Policy Document)

Unfortunately, there is nothing concrete so far to show seriousness on the part of the government towards implementing the policy directions. What we have noticed in southwest Nigeria in recent times is the government's enthusiasm for cultural revivalism. In Osun State, for instance, a day holiday is declared as *Isese* day when the traditional worshippers are allowed to celebrate their festivals just as Muslims and Christians have holidays for their celebrations. Moreover, *iwure* (the traditional form of prayer) has been introduced as part of prayers for public functions with Muslim and Christian prayers.

It is a good development that the Centre for Black Culture and International Understanding is in Osogbo, Southwest Nigeria. The center is a great asset for Nigerian governments to partner with in implementing its programmes for securing the African indigenous culture. Government aside, according to Bourdieu (1990) and Brubacher (1939), the agencies of socialisation play a very important role in securing the indigenous culture, namely: Home (family), School, church/ mosque, community (neighbourhood), peer group, role model and mass media.

- 1) Home is considered the most important because it influences the choice of the other agencies for the child. It determines what school the child attends, what church, or mosque he attends, and sometimes, what peer group he associates with. The child's care and upbringing rests squarely on the parents, especially the mother. The child embarks on the life journey with the love and care of the family. It is in the family the child imbibes the first lessons of life and tries to imitate the parents' habits, customs, and behaviour patterns of the parents. Home is thus the first medium of transmitting culture to children. If the child will be cultured or uncultured depends on the parents' disposition. The culture which the parents approve of is what the child imbibes. Parents who do not have time for child upbringing stand the risk of exposing the child to the influence of the deviants within the society. The home will be able to bring the child up as a well-cultured person if the parents themselves are cultured.
- 2) School refers to a whole range of formal educational institutions and it is an active, direct, and formal agency of education and socialisation. It is conceived to give 'heterogeneous society commonness.' The school system, whether public or private is the formal agency of socialisation with structured instruction. It is where the child is trained to be educated, literate and cultured. It is a conscience keeper of society that continuously strives to take humanity to the next higher levels of moral, intellectual, and aesthetic development through engagement with children. All the ramifications of child upbringing: affective, cognitive, and psychomotor are developed to prepare the child for life. For the school system to effectively perform its role in cultural preservation, relevant subjects that

teach indigenous culture must be incorporated into the curriculum. This is why today in Nigeria, 'Religion and National values' are incorporated into the school curriculum at the basic school level.

- 3) Next is the mosque /church. Despite the threat which Islam and Christianity constitute to cultural security as already noted, there are many African indigenous values (as exemplified in Yoruba culture) which Islamo-Christian values complement viz: a) hard work (*Ise ni Oogun ise* meaning 'work is the antidote of poverty'); b) truthfulness (*eni sooto loosa oke ogbe* meaning the truthful is the one favoured by the Almighty); c) patience and forbearance (*suru ni baba iwa, agba to ni suuru oun gbobgo loni* meaning patience is the greatest virtue, the elderly who is blessed with patience has everything); d) love (*bi mose feeri ni mofe kenikeji mi ori O difa fun Ologbara to gesin pade ika* meaning what I want for myself is what I want for my brother illustrated in Ifa corpus with the encounter between the horse racing Ologbara who met with Ika); e) Cooperation (*gbami lojo kin gba o leerun to difa fun alantakun ati agbonrin ti won je ore lojo to tipe* meaning assist me during raining season, for me to assist you during dry season as illustrated in Ifa corpus in the friendship between spider and deer); f) Promise fulfilment (*boju bayejun koun maye*). The role of the mosque and the church will be better appreciated when they inculcate values in the three religious traditions which harmonise their adherents rather than those disuniting them. This is where the dichotomy between religious dogma (*esin*) and cultural values (*asa*) should be appreciated; after all the concept of God as taught by each of the three belief systems would not change anything if there is consensus on common cultural/ethical values bearing in mind that God remains what He is regardless of the conception of Him we may have.
- 4) Community is another socialisation agency. Communalism, which is loyalty to socio-political grouping based on religious or ethnic affiliation, derives from community. It is an agency of socialisation because it is a platform for the inculcation of cultural values through the cooperation of all the segments within the community. Therefore, the attitude of 'mind your business and I mind mine' is not the dictum of the communal system. If individualism as noted, is a threat to cultural security, communalism is the antidote because, in communalism, all forces are joined to protect the community's common good. Any erring member of the community is collectively called to order by the community members. Criminality is rampant in our society because of the collapse of the communal system. In communalism, the responsibility of correcting evils perpetrated by the deviants within the community falls on adult community members. Individualistic life, which is our system now, is inherited from the West. Since very little can be done to revert the system, religious organisations which have evolved over time can play the same role.

- 5) A peer group is a social group that consists of individuals of the same social status who share similar interests and are close in age (<https://study.com>). According to Davies, M. et al. (1981), by becoming part of peer group children begin to break away from their parents' authority and learn to make decisions on their own. It overshadows the parental influence especially in the adolescence stage. They could even become rebellious against the family. 'Show me your friend, I know who you are' is the adage that tells the influence of the peer group. They learn within their group the modes of dressing in vogue; they have their slangs perfectly understood by them, they have their music and the dance steps to match. In other words, they have their idiosyncrasies, which means that the peers assert their influence to form their habits and behaviours. The home has a duty to ensure that their wards do not join bad gangs; otherwise, parental influence and control will be lost.
- 6) The role model is a person looked up to by others as an example to be emulated. Role models influence their admirers' actions and motivate them to strive to uncover their true potentials and overcome their weaknesses. Role models are a must for self-improvement. They are chosen from different life endeavours depending on the individual's interest. In the political arena and international diplomacy, many people across the globe would appreciate His Excellency General Olusegun Obasanjo's candour, sagacity and boldness and consequently adore him as role model. Some soccer fans could take Mikel Obi or Didie Drogba as their role model; the music lovers have their idols they want to emulate; for some it is Burna Boy, for others, it is Davido. Students have their role models among the Professors; the point of attraction could be their international engagements or involvement in public debates.
- 7) Mass media is another socialization agency that profoundly affects a large population. Mass media is a vehicle for spreading information on a massive scale and reaching a vast audience or large number of people. There are two forms, namely print media consisting of books, newspapers, magazines, and non-print media consisting of radio, television and movies. The goal is to reach out to many people without establishing contact between sender and receiver. It is the medium to teach all forms of knowledge: politics, language, culture, religion, history, etc. The emergence of social media has increased its influence. Many bad habits and crimes perpetrated by youths nowadays are mass media products. In effect, it has its negative side. The best the government can do is to come up with a policy that will ensure censorship of its negative influence.

Utilizing Cultural Tourism towards Wealth Creation and Making Population an Asset

Cultural tourism is a virile means of securing and projecting culture for the benefit of the growing population. One of the earliest attempts to define tourism, according to Christopher Holloway et al. (2006), was that of Professor Hunziker and Krapf of Berne University in 1942, which defined tourism as ‘‘the sum of the phenomena and relationship arising from the travel and stay of non-residents, in so far as they do not lead to permanent residence and are not connected to any earning activity, a phenomenon which helps to distinguish tourism from migration. Tourism, as one element of leisure, involves the movement of person or persons away from their normal place of residence, a process that usually incurs some expenditure (John Fletcher 2008).

According to Bhatia (2007), the World Tourism Conference held in Manila conveyed by the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) asserted that world tourism could contribute to the establishment of a new international economic order that will help to eliminate the widening economic gap between developed and developing countries and ensure the steady acceleration of economic and social development and progress of the developing countries. Moreover, the conference was convinced that world tourism could be a vital force for world peace and provide the moral and intellectual basis for international understanding.

Geoffery Wall and Alister Mathieson (2006) list 13 advantages of tourism, number 12 of which I consider striking: it says, ‘tourism development will bring about improvements to local infrastructure, services and facilities that will benefit both residents and tourists. It will stimulate the protection of local natural resources that are often the main attraction of the developing destination. The attention paid to the tourism sector of economy by some countries of the developed world, such as France, Spain, the United States and China, among others, is a consequence of the benefits derivable from the sector. Unfortunately, very few African countries pay serious attention to tourism despite the inherent potential they have for it. The table below shows 10 African countries with the most significant international tourist arrivals in 2018.

Table 1: Africa International Tourist Arrivals by Country Statistics

Country	Region	Total Arrivals in Million
Morocco	North Africa	12.29
South Africa	Southern Africa	10.29
Tunisia	North Africa	8.3
Zimbabwe	Southern Africa	2.57
Cote d Ivoire	West Africa	1.97
Uganda	East Africa	1.85
Kenya	East Africa	1.48
Mauritius	East Africa	1.4
Eswatini	Southern Africa	0.78
Togo	East Africa	0.57

Source: <https://www.statistics.com>

When we compare the situation in Africa with what is obtained in the other parts of the world, the statistics are revealing, as the table below shows:

Table 2: Most Visited Destinations by International Tourists Arrival in 2018

COUNTRIES	CONTINENTS	TOTAL ARRIVAL IN MILLIONS
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FRANCE	Europe	89.4
SPAIN	Europe	82.8
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	South America	79.6
CHINA	Asia	62.9
ITALY	Europe	62.1
TURKEY	Europe/ Asia	45.8
GERMANY	Europe	38.9
THAILAND	Asia	38.3
UNITED KINGDOM	Europe	36.3

Source: en.m.wikipedia.org

It is crystal clear from tables 1 and 2 above that Africa needs to catch up to other continents of the world in the tourism industry. In fact, looking at the statistics briefly shows there is no basis for comparison. With reference to the African continent, it is glaring that Nigeria is yet to find its footing in tourism. This is unfortunate, given her potential for it and the need for her to diversify her revenue base. Popoola et al. (2015) are right when they opine that much of the discourse on tourism has yet to take root in concrete terms. Most tourist sites in the country cannot be compared to those in West African countries. In contrast, East and Southern Africa are far ahead in terms of infrastructure, service delivery and the industry's overall contribution to economic development.

Given the dwindling economic resources of Africa in general and Nigeria in particular the continent, Nigeria has no choice but to take tourism with all the seriousness it deserves to diversify its economic base. Popoola (2015), quoting Trevor Ward, argues that if the tourism sector is developed, it could be another avenue for revenue streams than what had been accruing from the petroleum industry. If well managed, many job opportunities will be created in the hospitality and tourism sector. This is because the country has abundant tourist destinations across the geo-political zones. Important tourist attractions in Nigeria today include Waterfalls (Gurara) National Parks (Yankari), Mountains (Mandara), Parks (Millenium), Museum (Ile-Ife) Gardens (Agodi), Plateau (Obudu), Rocks (Olumo), Shrines (Osun-Osogbo), festivals (Argungu). Focusing on Ile-Ife in Osun State alone, the number of tourist sites is inundating, and it includes Oduduwa Grove and Shrine, Oranmiyan Staff, Oluorogbo Shrine, Okun-Ijio (The Sea of Ijio), Moremi Statue, etc. Ile-Ife, generally known as the Source of the Yoruba race with its concentration of tourist' sites, can be described as the Mecca of the black race. The status of Ile-Ife as the ancestral home of the Yoruba makes it a tourist destination of interest for the blacks in the diaspora. The city needs to be upgraded to become a befitting tourist destination of excellence. Like many tourist destinations in Nigeria, Ile-Ife lacks the necessary infrastructure to make tourists comfortable. This is a challenge to be addressed by the governments of the federation if tourism as an industry is to take pride of place in the country as a significant revenue earner.

Indigenous Language for Cultural Security and Development in a Growing Population

Language and culture are intertwined. Obiegwu et al. (2016) posit that culture is a dynamic and lethal force that should be driven to achieve human growth and language development, while language development leads to cultural enhancement. Therefore, one must understand their language to understand a people's culture. Hence, language is another potent means of securing and projecting culture. Little wonder some of the aims and objectives of the Federal Government's policy on culture are to 1) promote an educational system that motivates and stimulates creativity and draws mainly from our cultural values... and 2) promote creativity in arts, science, and technology. To achieve these aims, the language of instruction in the school system must be the indigenous language as it aids the students understanding better.

Today in the continent, majority of the countries use languages of their colonial masters, especially English and French, as their official languages, while very few use the indigenous languages, as the table below indicates.

S/N	Arabic	English	French	Portuguese	Indigenous
1	Algeria	Cameroun	Benin	Angola	Botswana
2	Chad	Eretria	Burkina Faso	Cape Verde	Burundi
3	Comoros	The Gambia	Cameroun	Guinea Buss	Eretria
4	Djibouti	Ghana	Central A R	Mozambique	Ethiopia
5	Egypt	Kenya	Chad	Sao Tome	Kenya
6	Eretria	Lesotho	Comoros	Principe	Lesotho
7	Libya	Liberia	Congo DRC		Madagascar
8	Mauritania	Malawi	Congo Rep		Malawi
9	Morocco	Mauritius	Cote Devoir		Rwanda
10	Sudan	Namibia	Djibouti		Somalia
11	Tunisia	Nigeria	Equatorial G		South Africa
12		Rwanda	Gabon		Swaziland
13		Saint Helens	Guinea		Tanzania
14		Seychelles	Madagascar		
15		Sierra Leone	Mali		
16		Swaziland	Mauritius		
17		Tanzania	Niger		
18		Uganda	Reunion		
19		Zambia	Rwanda		
20		Zimbabwe	Senegal		
21			Seychelles		
22			Togo		

Source: www.nationonline.org

The following observations can be made from the table:

- a) Some countries have more than one official language, as we can see in countries featuring in more than one column; examples include Rwanda and Cameroun;
- b) Most of the countries which adopt indigenous languages are from East and Southern Africa;
- c) Francophone countries resist adopting indigenous languages due to the assimilation policy of their colonial masters.
- d) A few of the countries that have adopted indigenous languages retain the foreign languages, as in the examples of Kenya and Tanzania;
- e) Arabic remains the mother tongue and official language of North African countries even though some retain the Colonial Masters' language as a second language.

The use of the English language or French as the medium of instruction in the school may have their advantages, as argued by Moijue Kiakia (2014) and Chiamaka L. James (2015), but more fundamental is the need to protect the indigenous languages from going into extinction. Writing on the role of language in preserving culture, Dorothy Smoking (1999) cites examples of tribal communities, including the Blackfeet Community in the United States, as communities facing the danger of extinction. If there is any Nigerian language that faces the threat of death, it is the Yoruba language. Of all the tribes in Nigeria, it is the Yoruba who speak English where they should speak their mother tongue. They speak English at their town hall meetings; you find them speaking

English at the family meeting. Worse still, their children are least encouraged to communicate using their mother tongue at home or school.

An attempt was made some time ago in Nigeria to adopt one of the three national languages (Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba) as lingua franca, but this was aborted. The reason why the attempt failed could not be farfetched; no ethnic group was willing to sacrifice its language in favour of another as lingua franca. Given the benefits inherent in the use of indigenous languages, the solution to the problem, in our view, is to allow each region to develop its language for use as an official language, following the example of South Africa, where more than ten languages are used as national and official languages. The example of India is also relevant. As observed by Nisha B. Navarre (nd), India, a multilingual country with diverse cultures, has 22 languages, with Hindi as the official language for Union territories and English as 2nd official language. Therefore, English can remain the language of international engagements as it is practiced in countries like China, Japan, and Germany.

In research carried out at the University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University) undertaken by Professor Aliu Babatunde Fafunwa (1970) and his team proved that the use of the mother tongue for teaching is more effective than the use of English. The tagged 6-year primary school project, sponsored by the Ford Foundation, was carried out between 1970 and 1976 and was a tremendous success, as the study report revealed.

Considering this, the non-use of indigenous languages as language of instruction in the school system has negative consequences for the development of Africa in general and Nigeria in particular. Since experience has shown that the indigenous languages foster development in the countries in which they are used as official languages and languages of instruction in the school system, one can conclude that the poor state of development in Africa and Nigeria inclusive is largely attached to de-emphasis of indigenous languages. Whereas English has merit in the internationalisation of communication, its emphasis at the expense of the indigenous language alienates too many Africans from various forms of technical/ technological knowledge. This makes it impossible for many Africans to contribute to the discourse of technologisation of Africa. It is noteworthy that such a loss is not only national but also individual. While the nation loses indigenous knowledge that may make her develop, such individuals that are cut off since they need to gain competence in the English language lose opportunities to develop professionally and financially, among others. Most of the countries that have developed and are developing made their indigenous languages their official languages, in this regard countries like Japan, China and Germany readily come to mind. It is easy for such countries to develop their own technology in ways their indigenous languages are crucially utilised in the process. The result is the rising prosperity of those countries. Considering this, the importance of

language as an expression of culture and vehicle for development, according to Verna Kirkness (nd) should be upheld by each individual, each family, each community and each nation.

Reverting to adopting an indigenous language as the official language will no doubt be a herculean task as it will require a lot of effort to achieve the feat in view of the inherent challenges identified by Benson V.O. et al. (2017). The challenges include multiplicity of indigenous languages, non-proficiency in indigenous languages, and non-documentation of indigenous languages. Some of the solutions proffered are in tandem with well-articulated views of Awobuluyi (2014), who argued that no human language was ever expressly created for discussing any discipline or set of disciplines. Any language found suitable for discussing specific discipline today became so only through the collective and conscious efforts of its speaker/users and English is not an exception. For Yoruba (and any other indigenous language for that matter) to attain this status, according to Awobuluyi, it would involve creating new words and expressions for ease of its use as the language of instruction, getting sets of computers reserved for dictionary compilation, writing Yoruba-medium textbooks covering all subjects, translating books written in other languages especially English and French into Yoruba among others.

Conclusion

Cultural security in relation to Africa's growing population discussed in this study presupposes that African culture faces several threats. Hence, the first part of the paper discusses factors constituting threats including Islamo-Christian and the Western culture's incursion into Africa. The second section examines the role of the Government and those agencies of socialisation in securing the indigenous culture against perceived threats. The third and fourth sections examine cultural tourism and indigenous languages as other means of securing culture. Regarding cultural tourism, the paper not only sees it as having the capacity to secure and project culture but also to create wealth for the growing population with a view to making it an asset rather than a liability. Lastly, with reference to language, it is argued that indigenous language apart from its capacity to preserve and project culture effectively, has the potential to facilitate growth and development faster than when foreign language is used as a medium of instruction in Schools., taking a cue from the experience of the identified developed countries. Since the overall objective of this paper is to examine how cultural security contributes to sustainable development that makes the African population an asset, I consider the following recommendations germane:

- 1) Governments in African continent have documented lofty policies on culture many of which are unimplemented. Therefore, practical steps should be taken by the governments toward concrete implementation.

- 2) Arising from 1 above, indigenous language should be made the official language in the different regions of the continent/country and consequently should become the language of instruction in schools and language of communication in the parliaments. In the case of Nigeria, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba should be adopted as official languages in their different regions with English as the 2nd official language.
- 3) Since English cannot be wished away, it should continue to be taught to retain it as the language for international engagement.
- 4) Neglect of cultural tourism is not doing any of the African countries any good; therefore, African nations should invest heavily in that sector of the economy to ensure the much-needed diversification for economic growth.
- 5) The establishment of the Centre for Black Culture and International Understanding in Osogbo, South-West Nigeria, should be considered an asset for the entire continent. The Centre has what it takes to help promote and project African culture. Therefore, collaborating with it (and other similar centers around the continent) has a lot of benefits.
- 6) In Nigeria's situation, implementing some of the recommendations may be difficult if the much-talked-about restructuring does not take place; it is therefore strongly recommended that the country returns to true federalism.

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UNEMPLOYMENT: A MENACE TO PEACE AND STABILITY IN NIGERIA, 1999 - 2020

Fayigbe, Bimpe Omolola

*Department of General Studies,
Federal Polytechnic Ukana, Akwa Ibom State
bimpefayigbe@gmail.com
08068700994*

&

Adesote Samson Adesola, PhD

*Department of History & International Studies
Osun State University, Osogbo
solaade2007@ymail.com*

Abstract

The paper discusses the concussion of unemployment on peace and security in Nigeria between 1999 and 2020. Unemployment as a concept became a menace because of the deteriorating Nigerian economy since 1999. Over 38.5% of the population is unemployed and the ripple effect over the years has led to hike in crime rate, such as banditry, drug abuse, internet fraud, kidnapping, etc. The paper employs secondary sources that include published books, journals, and internet sources to explain the ethical impacts of unemployment in Nigeria. The paper analyses the causes and effects of economic downturn on unemployment, including leadership problem, monoculture economy, and labour immobility, among others. The paper also suggests boosting human capital through education and training can reduce unemployment. Implementing economic policies that will enhance economic growth and reduce unemployment is crucial to curbing insecurity.

Keywords: Insecurity, Government, Unemployment, Economic Downturn.

Introduction

The term “unemployment” could be a situation whereby sturdy men and women are unable to get jobs that give living wages. It could also relate to idleness that signals economic distress or loss of human capital due to failure of the labour market within a geopolitical space. It is when a number of the economically active individuals, as well as those who have lost their jobs or have voluntarily left work are willing to work but were unable to secure one. Youth unemployment, therefore, could be portrayed as a composite of young persons who possess distinct capacity to work but could not secure any¹.

¹ Adesina, O. S. (2013). Unemployment and Security Challenges in Nigeria. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*. Vol.3 No. 7.

Unemployment is an all-encompassing occurrence whereby qualified manpower within a geopolitical space remains unengaged with suitable jobs. It is not just a serious economic matter of contention; it has degenerated into a social menace affecting almost all countries within the international community, directly or indirectly. Unemployment has rendered many societies to a domain for criminal acts as the aftermath of the unstable socio-economic framework². Unemployment has become a phenomenon ravaging most states within the global village and Nigeria is no exception. The alarming unemployment rate in Nigeria has created developmental and security challenges due to widespread poverty, high social vices and criminal activities that have become inherent among the youth of the country.

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), over 900 million persons existed beneath the \$2 a-day poverty index level, with approximately 456 million wage earners across the globe in abject poverty. In addition to this, ILO in 2012 also explained that unemployment possesses a longitudinal effect that is likely to deteriorate in Africa and parts of Asia unless they address leadership predicament bedeviling them by forcing an alliance to fight the “planetary hazard”. Over 400 million new jobs are assumed to be required in the next ten years to circumvent a further escalation in unemployment. Therefore, the time has come for the government to devote itself to dynamics of productive job creation. The magnitude of unemployment within the global economic hemisphere can be perceived through the steady yearly increment which has over time constituted a form of jeopardy to national security, as many of these youths have resorted to criminal acts to make ends meet³.

The penurious status of Nigeria, no doubt, has developed a society filled with frustrated, expectant youths, especially those who have found it difficult to wriggle their way out of their hopeless poverty situation. Amateurish poverty extermination programmes and sneaky delinquency by the Nigerian government worsen the condition of despair. Notably, individuals and groups respond differently depending on situational factors and capacity to the menace. These responses are expressed in several anti-social behaviour including armed robbery, assassination, ethnic crisis, fraud, insurgency, kidnapping, militancy, and terrorism, among others. These anti-social activities have posed a challenge to Nigeria as most of these activities are mostly perpetrated by the youths⁴.

² International Labour Organization. (2012). Global Employment Trends for Youths. Retrieved from <http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/gropus/public/...dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms-180976.pdf>. Last assessed: 2nd February, 2022.

³ Adesina, O. S. (2013). Unemployment and Security Challenges in Nigeria. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*. Vol.3 No. 7.

⁴ Aminu, U., Hamza, A. P. & Ali, D. H. (2015). The Impact of Insecurity and Poverty on Sustainable Economic Development in Nigeria. *International Journal of Humanities Social Studies and Education*. Vol. 2(2). Pp. 32- 48.

Over the years, the increment in the statistics of the unemployed poses a serious threat to national security as the crime rate continues to increase. As described by Obasanjo, national security is the aggregate of security interests of all individuals, communities, ethnic groups, and the entire political entity⁵. Security is the degree of resistance to or protection from harm. This applies to any vulnerable and asset, such as a person, dwelling, community, nation, or organisation and the state of being free from danger or threats. In other words, security can be described as a situation whereby an individual can exist within a geopolitical space without any threat to lives and properties.

Conceptual Clarifications

UNEMPLOYMENT: Unemployment as a concept is described by Ibikunle (*et al.*) as an endemic catastrophe characterised by its ability to create a serious multiplier of poverty impediments to high living standards. It has represented a scenario whereby a country's manpower resources are enormously wasted by enabling a kind of welfare loss in terms of lower output of active youths, thereby leading to lower income and well-being⁶. He further reiterated that the altitudinal increment of unemployment rate has culminated in overwhelming criminal activities and social vices in Nigeria. It has become so challenging for her development, security, and peaceful co-existence. This has donned Nigeria with an emblem of poverty as most of her citizenry have become impoverished to the extent that most families are finding it difficult to feed properly due to the hike in the cost of basic staples such as *garri*, rice, yam, beans, etc. Most people can no longer afford meat like beef and poultry products or food that can supply the body with minerals and vitamins. The situation worsened so much that individuals from most households became vulnerable to sicknesses and diseases. A lot of Nigerian youths have become so retarded both physically and mentally because of the high inflation of goods and services even in their jobless state. This has therefore led to difficulty in making ends meet⁷. However, Adesina categorises unemployment as a concept into seven types. They include:

- ❖ **Structural Unemployment:** The diversity in the composition of enterprises or production activities within a geopolitical space often results in structural unemployment. According to Adesina, this occurs mostly when an individual's taste has switched, mostly because of the changes in technology or the demand for such goods and services declined. This has occurred in most developing countries of Asia and Africa that keep evolving based on the dynamics of globalisation and

⁵ Obasanjo, O. (1999). *Grand Strategy for National Security*. Abuja: Federal Ministry of Information

⁶ Ibikunle, G. A., Orefuwa, E. R. & Mafo, A.B. (2019). Analysis of the Causes and Effects of Unemployment in Nigeria towards a Solution for Graduate Idleness and Poverty Alleviation. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*. Vol. 24, Issue 2, Ser. 2. Pp. 36-44.

Nigeria is no exception. However, unemployment becomes a challenge in these societies because of the insufficiency of capital resources that tally with their demand. This same challenge can also happen when there are discrepancies between manufacturers and employment opportunities within a geopolitical space. Other causative factors of structural unemployment include difficulty in relocation to a new work location, difficulty in learning a new skill and introducing new techniques and technologies that need less labour force,⁸ etc.

- ❖ **Frictional Unemployment:** Frictional unemployment involves an individual becoming unemployed by leaving a job voluntarily or involuntarily and being on the lookout for another position. This involves a period for an individual to switch between two jobs. Frictional unemployment can also occur because of industrial friction whereby employment exists, but it becomes so difficult to fill up these spaces mostly as a result of lack of essential skills to take up the jobs. There are other situations whereby active able bodies have no knowledge that these jobs exist, therefore creating a scenario whereby the employable may remain unemployed. Deficiencies in raw materials or worn equipment can also lead to frictional unemployment and many more⁹.
- ❖ **Seasonal Unemployment:** The variation in the activities of industries can lead to unemployment. Changes in the climate, fashion, or the nature of such industries mostly precipitate this occurrence. Examples of where seasonal industries are found are in tropical region ice factories where demand for goods and services are predestined by the climatic condition of the area. Examples are hospitality industries, tourism industries, fruit-picking industries, catering services, etc. These situations often create seasonal-oriented unemployment in these kinds of industries.
- ❖ **Cyclical Unemployment:** This is otherwise described as Keynesian unemployment because it is a kind of unemployment that occurs as a product of economic recession. The decline in the economic prowess of a society creates a dwindling effect on the demand for goods and services. In Nigeria, Keynesian unemployment can be attributed to adopting Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). This has also affected other third-world states and Nigeria has since not recovered with the devaluation of her currencies ever since the implementation of the policies. It has resulted in several moments of recessions, poverty, unskilled and surplus labourers becoming unemployed, etc. People have been thrown out of jobs because the economy of their society becomes unfavourable, especially when industries can no longer pay their workers. There have been cases of people being under-employed or only being

⁸ Adesina, O. S. (2013). Unemployment and Security Challenges in Nigeria. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*. Vol.3 No. 7.

⁹ Ibid. P. 148

partially employed due to the economic downturn of these third-world states. When the total effective demand within a society is lower than the quantity of goods produced within the available capital stock, unemployment becomes inevitable. Businesses begin to crumble because of the economic decline; hence, it creates the need for entrepreneurs to reduce their output as well as their manpower.

- ❖ **Residual Unemployment:** The causative factors of residual unemployment are personal factors. The variety of people who belong to this class includes the old, incapacitated, vulnerable, illiterate, and ill-trained, etc.
- ❖ **Voluntary Unemployment:** This occurs when an individual chooses not to be gainfully occupied with a job. This is common among women who, out of their own volition, decide to become “full housewife” or are being forced to become one by their spouses. Other cases of voluntary unemployment usually occur when individuals are bent on getting professional jobs that soothe their course of study, as well as individuals who also decided not to work for either government or private organizations and at the same time cannot afford to start up a personal business and so many more¹⁰.
- ❖ **Disguised Unemployment:** Adesina explains that disguised unemployment is a form of underemployment whereby an employee takes up a job that does not fully use his skills and abilities. This kind of employment is mostly accompanied by less pay for labour rendered. This is mostly common among Nigerian graduates. Majority are forced to be underemployed because of the scarcity of jobs that measure up to their standard. However, such jobs become frustrating because in most cases, the pay for these jobs cannot cater for the basic needs of such underemployed individuals. Another instance is when there is non-availability of work among those who are gainfully employed to the extent that jobs are often rationed among blue-collar workers. An example is the Local Government Secretariats in Nigeria¹¹.

INSECURITY: As conceptualised by Oche, security involves protection and safety from the danger or threat of people occupying a particular geographical location. This, most times, has to do with the ability of the government of a geopolitical space to be able to preserve, protect, promote, and reverence the value, legitimate interest and welfare of its people. Security could also be described as the immunity from forces that could sabotage the constitutional rights of individuals without the government losing its relevance and core values. This explains that when the substantive rights of individuals are inviolate, peace

¹⁰ Ibid. P. 148

¹¹ Ibid

and security become non-negotiable¹². There exist various types of insecurity. They include food insecurity, social insecurity, political insecurity, insecurity of basic needs, etc. All these can only cumulate into a form of insecurity and a state of instability.

ECONOMIC DOWNTURN: Deceleration in economic activities over a certain period within a specific geopolitical space can be explained as economic downturn. Several features of economic downturn include high rate of inflation, rising unemployment, food insecurity, declining investment, terrorism, foreign debt, hike in the prices of goods and services, etc. Over the years, the global economic crisis has continued to be a global menace that has over time generated questions as to how it could be managed since all the countries of the world have had their fair share of this challenge.

According to Omotor, the global economic crisis has continued to stay. It is assumed to be orchestrated by the United States of America through the instrumentality of the Bretton Wood institution. Despite the challenges posed by the Bretton Wood institutions, African states are also bedeviled by other internal crises that have posed a challenge to economic stability to these states and Nigeria is no exception¹³. Nigeria as an African state is famous for its rich human and natural resources but is bedeviled with bad governance, corruption, nepotism, weak institutions, and leadership problems. The country has been thrown into economic crisis for a period and has become a victim of the global economic situation. Nigeria's economic crisis over the years has become so deep that the country has witnessed a couple of economic recessions that have negatively affected trade and industrial activities. The adverse effect became visible on the country's economic indices, including the Gross Domestic Product (GNP), Gross National Product (GNP) and Per Capita Income. The aftermath of this is visible in the state of well-being among the citizens.

Economic Downturn and its effect on Unemployment since 1999

Unemployment as a concept is not peculiar to Nigeria. Within the global hemisphere, unemployment has become a menace to the security networks of most countries of the world. Unemployment has led to a form of social exasperation among youths that has in a way, become a propellant to crime rate, youth unrest and insecurity that have led to the diversion of funds for developmental projects into the maintenance of peace and stability. According to Cullen, unemployment in New Zealand has remained a topical component of life linked to scarcity of basic needs, dilapidated social amenities, social injustice,

¹² Oche, O. (2001). Democratization and the Management of African Security. *Nigeria Journal of International Affairs*. Vol. 13 No. 1. Pp. 21-31

¹³ Omotor, D. G. (2011). Nigeria and the Global Economic Crisis. *Ekonomiska misao i praksa*, (1), 59-80.

loss of hope for a better future and so many more¹⁴. In Sri Lanka, unemployment as a problem emerged in the 1950s, peaked at 24 percent in 1973, and fell to a single digit only in 1998. Unemployment has since reduced to 7.7 percent in 2000¹⁵. Another instance was national instability witnessed in the Middle East created by the amplified unemployment rate in the region named Arab Spring¹⁶.

However, unemployment has also posed a challenge to many of the world's developed countries. In 2011, the United Kingdom experienced a mass riot in which many shops were looted. It is believed that the looting was a ripple effect of the increasing rate of unemployed youths in the country. However, the growing number of young people entering the labour market cannot be over-emphasised. The spate at which graduates continue to go into the labour market annually is assumed to be one of the causes of unemployment all over the world. Nigerian higher institutions have continued to produce thousands of graduates every year with no hope for the future in terms of being gainfully employed. Unemployment is, however considered common in third-world states and post-conflict states¹⁷.

Nigerian economic downturn as a case study could be described as a product of its economic history especially from the colonial period that is monocultural in nature. It was agrarian at some point because the economic policies of the colonial administration were geared towards encouraging farming. Still, since the discovery of crude oil, it has become more of a menace than miracle as Nigeria solely depends on it, leaving out other sources of economic development moribund. The increasing population invariably poses a tremendous economic challenge to her citizens.

As described by some scholars, the economic demur we face in Nigeria today cumulated from the crisis of the mid-1980s and we are yet to recover from it but in the morning of May 1999, we witnessed a turning point¹⁸. This explains that the economic crisis over time rolled into the fourth republic that had President Olusegun Obasanjo as the first president. As explained by Okonjo-Iweala and Osafo-Kwaako, the volatility of the Nigerian macro economy, driven by the international market and its dependency on crude oil, has continued to aid unemployment within the geopolitical space¹⁹.

¹⁴ Cullen, A. M. (1999). *Unemployment: its meaning and impact in contemporary society: a thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology at Massey University* (Doctoral dissertation, Massey University).

¹⁵ Amarasekara, C. Productivity Shocks, Marginal Cost and the New Keynesian Phillips Curve with Unemployment: An Experiment with Different Utility Specifications.

¹⁶ Ejo-Orusa, D. (2020). Unemployment and Insecurity in Rivers State. *International Journal of Innovative Legal & Political Studies*. Vol. 8(3). Pp. 74- 87.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Orukpe, W. E. & Omoruyi, B. O. (2017). Nigerian Economy and the Dilemma of Development in Historical Perspective. *International Journal of Social Science and Humanities Research*. Vol. 5 (3). Pp. 350- 363.

¹⁹ Okonjo-Iweala, N. & Osafo-Kwaako, P. (2007). *Nigeria's Economic Reforms; Progress and Challenges*. Washington DC: The Brookings Institutions. P.7.

This is further corroborated by the World Bank, who in its ranking, declared Nigeria as a state with unstable economy from the period 1960 to 2000 due to its over-reliance on oil proceeds²⁰. The ripple effect of the instability has been transferred into the economy, creating a kind of close gap between public expenditure and the revenue, as showcased by the inability to have a society where there is equitable distribution of goods and services orchestrated by weak fiscal discipline of the Nigerian government. Barnett and Rolando further explain that volatile fiscal spending also tended to cause actual exchange rate volatility. Fiscal expansions financed by oil revenues often resulted in domestic currency appreciation, creating Dutch-disease concerns and reducing competitiveness of the non-oil economy²¹.

The Obasanjo administration introduced decisive policies for democracy to blossom, with efforts to maintain international recognition towards sustainable growth and development. The efforts made by the Obasanjo administration birthed economic reform programmes like National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies (NEEDS) at the federal level and the State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies at the state level to ensure that economic instability is reduced to the barest minimum. However, these measures were frustrated and economic hardship continued to fester within Nigeria²².

Insecurity in the South-southern part of Nigeria became a challenge with the emergence of Niger Delta militants. It is of note that most of these militants are unemployed youths who resorted to carrying arms and ammunition to make ends meet. The Obasanjo administration established the Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta to curb this menace. Notably, the unemployment situation could not be managed via the emancipation project put in place. Nigeria continued to battle high inflation, external debt, naira devaluation, poverty, insecurity, kidnapping and other social vices.

The challenges of the economic downturn cumulated in the administration of President Goodluck Jonathan and birthed the monstrous Boko-Haram menace. It began as a peaceful group in 2002 formed by Mohammed Yusuf but became violent around 2007 after the death of its founder. Besides the fact that it has a religious undertone, the economic downturn, and the idleness of many youths from the northern part of Nigeria contributed to crime and insurgency within the geopolitical zone²³.

²⁰ World Bank, (2003), *Nigeria Policy Options for Growth and Stability*. Report No. 26215-NGA, Washington DC: The World Bank

²¹ Barnett, Steven and Rolando Ossowski, (2002), *Operational Aspects of Fiscal Policy in Oil-Producing Countries*. Working Paper No. WP/02/177, Washington DC: International Monetary Fund

²² Mudasiru, S. & Adabonyon, O. (2001). The Nigerian Economy Under Obasanjo. *Development Policy Management Network Bulletin*. Vol.8 (3). Pp. 10- 130

²³ Okeke, R. C. (2017). The Jonathan Administration in Nigeria: A Postmortem Study and Lessons for Dictators in Africa. *World Scientific News*. Vol. 70(2). Pp. 285- 303.

The situation has continued to degenerate from administration to administration. In 2018, the World Bank recorded that 40% of Nigerians (82 million people) lived below the poverty line. Cumulatively, over 25% (53million) were vulnerable²⁴. In 2020, the situation worsened, and Nigeria went into its deepest economic meltdown due to the pandemic that also affected oil sales at the international market. As a matter of fact, during this period, there was a decline in oil prices across the world. The situation got to its peak during this period and led to a new phase of criminal activities among the idle youths. The social media and its quick money syndrome also inspired the youth to commit crimes. Examples include a shift in cybercrime from “Yahoo Yahoo” to “Yahoo plus” hike in ritual killings, kidnapping, banditry, herdsmen crisis, armed robbery, and Ponzi schemes.

The more stiffened the Nigerian economy became, the more the security challenges were assumed to be perpetrated by the increasing population of the unemployed youths. This explains the popular saying, “a hungry man is an angry man.” This is further explained by Adesina when he explained that there is a tendency for high insecurity when many non-disabled individuals are without jobs. The society is further challenged where gross abuse and under-utilisation of human resources directly impact national productivity and competitiveness, especially when a handful gets employed despite advertisement²⁵.

The reality of underemployment cannot be over-emphasised as it could be described as a byproduct of the economic downturn experienced among Nigerian youths. In fact, its effect could be described as worse compared to open unemployment as it reflects the extent to which the economic downturn has created challenges to professionals that are being underpaid on their jobs or sometimes rendered potentially idle²⁶. It is believed to be predominant among the female folks that formed the larger proportion of unpaid family workers.

Causes of Unemployment:

According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), unemployment remains one of the threats to peace and social stability in many countries, especially those of African descent²⁷ and Nigeria’s situation has become critical, especially with the advent of democratic governance in 1999 and up to date, it

²⁴ World Bank Group (2021). *The World Bank in Nigeria*. Washington.

²⁵ Adesina, O. S. (2013). Unemployment and Security Challenges in Nigeria. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*. Vol.3 No. 7.

²⁶ Obadan, M., & Odusola, A. (2000). *Productivity and unemployment in Nigeria* (No. 2064-2020-1092).

²⁷ International Labour Organization. (2012). *Global Employment Trends for Youths*. Retrieved from <http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/gropus/public/...dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms-180976.pdf>. Last assessed: 2nd February, 2022.

keeps climbing the unfavorable ladder on account of internal economic fracas in Nigeria. The causes of employment include:

- **Leadership Problem:** This remains the foundation of every other challenge to economic development in Africa and Nigeria, as portrayed in political, social, and economic instability in Nigeria. The reverberated effects are visible and are felt across all sectors and segments of the Nigerian society. The instability across all the spheres of affairs degenerated into the hike in the number of unemployed youths in society, thus creating vacuum for insecurity to thrive²⁸.
- **Low Economic Growth Rate:** The decline in the economic prowess and investment rates has limited employment rate. The economic recession coupled with the high population growth rate continued to create job scarcity, hence the continuous struggle to be employed. This has created a situation whereby employment is based mainly on experience, capability of what you can offer to employers of labour and education. The educated have also become unemployed or underemployed and, in a way, this has increased the rate of insecurity within the country.
- **Monoculture Economy:** Over-reliance on crude oil as a source of income has challenged other sectors to thrive in Nigeria. The agricultural sector has been neglected and the attention on oil has created a little space for employment, leaving out over 70% of the active individuals potentially idle. This has led to insecurity for those employed in the oil sector as kidnapping and militancy became a means of making ends meet, especially in the oil region part of Nigeria.
- **Negative Attitude towards Entrepreneurial Education:** Little or no importance on technical and vocational education has contributed to the increasing unemployment rate in Nigeria. According to Bello, the discrimination against technical and vocational education has rendered a statistic of job seekers with limited knowledge to be self-employed. He further explained that Nigerian graduates have become dependent on the government, parents, and non-vibrant private sectors because they lack the skills to become providers of jobs for themselves and others. In a situation where the needs of these graduates cannot be met, they mostly retire into committing crimes²⁹.
- **Labour Immobility:** This is simply a case of impediment to the movement of active labour force in moving from one job to another. It occurs when there is a disparity between skilled workers and occupational vacancies in the labour market, resulting in structural unemployment. It can also happen due to resources being underused with an aftermath that

²⁸ Anekwe, R. I. (2020). Leadership Challenges and Nigeria Development. The Issues and Imperatives. *International Journal of Academic Accounting, Finance & Management Research*. Vol.4 (1). Pp. 1-5

²⁹ Bello, T. (2003). *Attacking Unemployment Hurdles in the Fragile Economies of the Sub-Saharan Africa: The Experience of Nigeria*. Paper presented at the - Economics for the Future – Conference; on the Occasion of the Celebration of 100 Years of Cambridge Economics; Cambridge, United Kingdom.

is detrimental to economic efficiency and market growth. Labour immobility also includes skill gaps, discrimination, restraints to be economically active, labour market discrimination resulting in unemployment.

- **Overpopulation:** Nigeria's population is becoming larger than the carrying capacity of its environment, economy, and space, leading to unemployment, especially among the active people. The Nigerian ecosystem must compete for energy, food, healthcare, housing, space, transportation, and resources, increasing the rate at which individuals seek employment. In a situation where the desirable becomes unavailable, a hike in crime rate leading to insecurity within the geopolitical space. The statistics of the active unemployed have exceeded the number of industries available, which has posed a serious challenge to unemployment in Nigeria.

Unemployment has continued to prove itself as a bane to peace and stability in Nigeria over several activities that many Nigerians have embarked upon which remain a threat to national security. There are several instances of graduates being involved in criminal activities and attributing such behaviour to Nigeria's economic downturn and unemployment crisis after being arrested. Thus, unemployment has therefore resulted in a hike in crime rates such as:

- ❖ Proliferation of Small and Light Weapons that have jeopardised security a number of times.
- ❖ Agitation, banditry, insurgency, terrorism, and other criminal acts that have caused loss of lives and properties.
- ❖ Armed robbery, fraud, rape, and other violent crimes.
- ❖ Drug possession and abuse and physical abuse
- ❖ Vandalism and disorderly conduct, etc.

Frustration has also driven many into drug addiction and in a way has contributed to crime rate in Nigeria. The widening gap between the bourgeoisie and the proletarians has created a form of social tension that has affected the entire country. The disintegration of basic amenities such as electricity supply, good road network, standard health facilities, etc., has continued to damage small and medium-scale businesses that could have provided employment opportunities for jobless people³⁰. Laying credence to the foregoing, the following suggestions are made to help reduce unemployment in Nigeria.

Suggestions

³⁰ Nwankwo, C. A. & Ifejiolor, A. P. (2014). Impact of Unemployment on Nigerian Economic Development: A Study of Selected Local Government Area in Anambra State, Nigeria. *European Journal of Business and Management*. Vol. 6, No. 35.

Addressing local challenges of Nigeria in terms of poor leadership, mismanagement of resources, corruption, nepotism, and stifled technological innovations will reduce unemployment. Other suggestions include:

- **Diversification of the Economy:** The continuous over-dependence on oil has been a setback in terms of Nigeria's economic buoyancy due to the inconsistency in the global oil price, hence the need for exploration of multiple sources of revenue for the nation. Nigeria is endowed with both human and mineral resources that are yet untapped. Therefore, it is encouraged that the Nigerian government and the citizens should re-strategise on how to put into use other sectors, e.g., agriculture, tourism, entertainment, fashion, etc. It is noteworthy that globalisation has created many job opportunities in the world of ICT. Other sectors can generate income, prospects and employment that will enhance economic stability in Nigeria³¹. In a way, this will end the quest for “quick money” and create jobs among the youth, thereby reducing insecurity and addressing unemployment in Nigeria.
- **Adoption of Governmental Policies that Encourage Economic Development:** The kind of economic policies initiated by the government determines the economic prowess of such a country. China as a country is fast becoming a developed state. It is at par with the United States of America because of adopting Confucius as a philosophy and an economic policy³². Brazil adopted participatory budgeting as a policy to fight economic instability³³. Therefore, it will be economically wise if the government can also implement policies that will reduce the economic downturn leading to insecurity in Nigeria.
- **Enabling Environment:** The environment in which a business is cited determines the thriving strength of such a business. As illustrated by Adesina, the business climate in Nigeria is too harsh and there is a need to create an enabling environment that will make business succeed³⁴. The debilitating state of basic infrastructures and shortage of power supply have led to the collapse of many companies to the extent that some corporations even had to relocate to other African states with adequate electricity supply. An example is how industries and firms are leaving Nigeria for Ghana and other neighbouring states due to the economic instability that has become a plague to the society. It is believed that once the electricity shortage is resolved, the tendency for the industrial sector

³¹ Adesina, O. S. (2013). Unemployment and Security Challenges in Nigeria. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*. Vol.3 No. 7.

³² Jun Li. (2009). Confucianism. *Encyclopedia of modern China*, 1, 347-351.

³³ Souza, C. (2001). Participatory Budgeting in Brazilian Cities: Limits and Possibilities in Building Democratic Institutions. *Environment & Urbanization* Vol.13 No 1. Pp. 159- 184.

³⁴ Adesina, O. S. (2013). Unemployment and Security Challenges in Nigeria. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*. Vol.3 No. 7.

to be resuscitated is high. This will enhance the growth of small and medium-scale enterprises, making job creation inevitable³⁵.

- **Emphasis on Technical, Vocational and Entrepreneurial Education to Boost Human Capital:** The need to accentuate technical and vocational education is suggested. This will enhance citizens to amass practical skills that will promote self-employment among the active citizens that could not get professional or executive jobs. Some schools have introduced entrepreneurship as a course into the academic curriculum, but more is to be done to see that the courses get to elementary schools and higher institutions. The earlier these courses are taught among Nigerian youths, the more they grow. An example of a country that this is working for is China. China has become one of the world's fastest-rising economies due to the emphasis on technical and vocational education.
- **Emphasis on Agriculture:** Before the oil boom, agriculture was the centre of the Nigerian economy, as it became important assistance to the sustenance of every society and a backbone for economic development, especially in providing adequate and nutritional food for human development and materials for industries. According to Yusuf et al., agriculture is critical to reducing national poverty and the most important productive sector that can take over from oil³⁶. The government has been able to put in place several initiatives to encourage agriculture in Nigeria, ranging from land reforms, tenancy reforms, regulation of higher rents, provision of credit facilities to farmers and so many more. However, sensitisation and orientation should be brought down to the grassroots, especially to elementary stages where young ones are encouraged to embrace agriculture from an early stage. Herdsmen and farmers' crisis can also be discouraged by creating ranches piloted in affected areas, thereby ending unemployment ravaging the country.

Conclusion

Insecurity remains a bane to peace and stability in Nigeria despite the burgeoning recurrent expenditure on the national budget to maintain peace both at state and federal levels. Individuals, organisations, etc., have also demonstrated a height of responsibility in maintaining peace and stability as well as security on both their lives and those of their family members as well as their properties but these efforts are either disappearing or not enough to curb the menace. Despite all these efforts, northern Nigeria is notable for ethnic conflicts, religious extremism of the Boko Haram, terrorism, etc. The south-southern and southwestern parts of Nigeria are also ravaged by militancy and pipeline vandalism, etc., and the dynamics of their operation change with the country's economic travails.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Yusuf, I. F. & Francis, J. T. (2019). Agricultural Programmes and Food Security in Nigeria (1960- 2016). A Historical Overview. *Humanity Jos Journal of General Studies*. Vol. 10(1).

Agitations for self-governance by IPOB (Indigenous People of Biafra) and MASSOB (Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra) in the Southeast have increased the crime rate in the region. Herdsmen's crisis in the North Central, ritual killings and so many more are the ripple effects of unemployment of active citizens, especially in these parts of Nigeria being highlighted³⁷.

It is as if the huge annual national allocation for internal security, military personnel and equipment, relocation of military personnel to troubled areas and so many more have not been impactful in fighting insecurity in Nigeria. Some states have also taken the initiative of signing into law the anti-kidnapping act, anti-terrorism act, etc., but despite these, insecurity remains a "national disease" in Nigeria. Through its annual budgets, the federal government continues to vote allocations to the recurrent internal security component, and military personnel and apparatus have been asked to relocate their bases to the troubled areas to curb crises. Also, some states have signed into law the anti-kidnapping act, anti-terrorism act, etc., in a bid to end insecurity in Nigeria.

It is also assumed that governmental efforts at reducing unemployment have been continually sabotaged. Therefore, it will be proactive to commence economic and political reforms that can nip in the bud the plague of insecurity in Nigeria. Policies and strategies that will target the agricultural sector by reducing communal conflicts, herdsmen's clashes and the destruction of farmlands and produce following these clashes should be implemented. Furthermore, the government is expected to target foreign investments that will enhance investment to thrive. This is further explained by Adesina when he emphasised that multinational corporations can only operate and create economic and job opportunities. Therefore, the government must provide the necessary infrastructure to attract new investments³⁸.

³⁷ Akpakan, M., Bariledum, K. & Barika, N. L. (2015). National Insecurity and Youth Unemployment in Nigeria: The Case of Niger-Delta Region. *British Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*. Vol. 13(1).

³⁸ Onime, B. E. (2018). Insecurity and Economic Growth in Nigeria: A Diagnostic Review. *European Scientific Journal*. Vol. 14, No.4.

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REPORTAGE OF SECURITY CHALLENGES IN *ALAROYE* NEWSPAPER

Olusanya Ezekiel Komolafe (Ph.D)

*Department of Linguistics and Communication Studies,
College of Humanities and Culture,
Osun State University Ikire Campus, Osun State.
olusanya.komolafe@uniosun.edu.ng
+234 803 077 2646*

Victor Oluwole Adefemi

*Department of Linguistics and Communication Studies,
College of Humanities and Culture,
Osun State University Ikire Campus, Osun State.
oluwolevadelemi@gmail.com, victor.adelemi@uniosun.edu.ng
+234 703 448 6101*

Aderogba Adeyemi (Ph.D)

*Department of Linguistics and Communication Studies,
College of Humanities and Culture,
Osun State University Ikire Campus, Osun State.
aderogba.adeyemi@uniosun.edu.ng
+234 706 955 0894*

Abstract

Security challenges ranging from activities of the Islamic sect – Boko Haram insurgency, banditry, kidnapping, ritual killings, the menace of Fulani herders, violent protests, to mention just a few, are the foremost security challenges to Nigerian citizens and government in recent times. These menaces have led to a massive loss of lives and properties in the country. Typically, the mass media exercises observation of the environment to inform their heterogeneous audiences, readers, viewers and listeners of the reality of their environment and put them on the awareness of necessary precautions and adjustments that need to be made. This paper examines the coverage of these menaces in *Alaroye*, a foremost Yoruba medium newspaper. The study, relying on agenda setting, media framing and corporate social responsibility theories, content analysed *Alaroye* from January 2021 to December 2021. The study found that indigenous newspapers do not give adequate attention to coverage of security challenges.

Keywords: *Banditry, Boko- Haram, Indigenous Newspaper, Kidnapping, Ritual Killings, Security Challenges.*

Introduction

Nigeria, in recent years has witnessed several security challenges ranging from violent crises between herders and farmers in various parts of the country to incessant kidnappings for ransom, killings, terrorism by Boko Haram Islamic sect,

and violent protests, to mention just a few. These activities have resulted in massive dislocation of the fabrics of our national lives. Talabi and Adefemi (2018:61-62) point out that Boko Haram's violent activities in the Northern zone have caused Fulani herders to move to other streets in most Nigerian cities, farmlands, and remote villages. They emphasised that Nigerian media occupies a vantage position in resolving/reducing security challenges through publications that help shape the minds of their readers while calling for the attention of those in positions of authority to such issues. In support of this, Munir (2013) suggests that media mediation is important in resolving crisis by promoting discussion through communication.

Review of Security and Insecurity in Nigeria

The concept of security foresees a situation where appropriate plans of action are put in place to protect the lives and properties of citizens and infrastructures of the state from aggressive tendencies. In other words, it is a situation that enables citizens to live normal lives in peace and safety without undue threat, harm and intimidation from any quarter. Security envisages protection from all forms of destruction concerning citizens' economic, physical, social and psychological well-being. Insecurity, on the other hand, refers to the absence of security. In the opinion of Ezemonye (2011), it is “a state of being not secure ...”. According to Ofomegbe and Orittesesan (2012), insecurity involves acts of violence to create trepidation in the society.

Security is a state doctrinal principle from ancient times that imposes the duty of protecting people from violence and harm to governments and enhancing their welfare. This principle is captured as *Salus Populi suprema lex* (the supreme law is the safety of people) in Latin dictum. The Nigerian 1999 constitution as amended captures this sacred principle in its Fundamental Objective Principle and Directive Principles of State Policy (S.14(2)(b)). The section states, "The security and welfare of the people is the primary purpose of government."

Insecurity in Nigeria

Insecurity has been a grave matter of concern for the Nigerian citizens and governmental authorities since Nigeria gained independence in 1960. Efforts of successive governments to prioritise and explore solutions to the menace have been to no avail. Expectedly, the challenge has increased in recent times. Williams (2015) sees insecurity not only as fear of every Nigerian but as a theme of discussion whenever and wherever two or more Nigerians converge.

Some of these activities include the wanton loss of lives and properties in nearly all the states in Northern Nigeria due to Boko Haram insurgency, banditry, bombing, ritual killings, stealing, sporadic shooting of unarmed and innocent

citizens, burning of churches, mosques, police stations, kidnapping of women and school children, rape, murder, armed robbery, political crises, Fulani herdsmen terror attacks in almost all parts of the country, destruction of oil facilities by Niger Delta militants, etc. Many families have lost their loved ones and properties and many citizens have been rendered homeless. These have had grave consequences on Nigeria's national image and development. Consequently, Nigeria has been listed among the most terrorised nations in the world.

Ujomu (2021), Onifade *et al.* (2013), Acholonu (2012) and Afowowe (2012) have all contributed to the discourse on insecurity in Nigeria. Ujomu (2021) analyses insecurity in reference to its unpleasant effects on economic and industrial development remarking that insecurity is an ethical and moral condition of the state and if the country is going to achieve a secure and flourishing society with a strong economy capable of realising its full developmental potentials, the state must redefine the ethical basis for social action. Onifade *et al.* (2013) agree with Ujomu. They opine that morals constitute the bedrock that breeds and fosters security and insecurity in the country. They affirm the country's insecurity has left her industrially stagnant and economically backward. Acholonu (2012) sees insecurity as a global affair. He argues that the incidence of insecurity across the globe is an indicator of worldwide risk. The incidences of insecurity indicate that today's world is growing more insecure for humans. According to Afowowe (2012), insecurity has persistently claimed lives of millions and destroyed material goods running into billions of naira.

The Place of Media in Securing the Nation

As a means of information dissemination, the mass media consistently surveys the environment and informs the community's people about the realities of their environment. More frequently, the media documents news about society's realities in mediated messages such as news, editorials, features, pictures, and letters to the editor, among other contents, to inform and keep its heterogeneous audience(s) aware of such realities. Olagunju (1992), as cited by Olayede (2011), posits that the mass media has helped create public awareness and campaigns against social menaces and vices.

The mass media plays an essential role in upholding proper functioning of the society by performing the Harold Lasswell ascribed functions of the media: transmission of socio-cultural heritage, correlation of parts and surveillance. All these functions and other functions of the media provide an opportunity to help secure the citizens and, by extension, the nation.

Every class of readers can find some significant, current, and interesting information in newspapers. Contemporary newspapers adopt design elements that

make information easily accessible to the readers. For example, lead stories have large and bold headlines, while graphics complement stories. A study on the dissemination of information concerning insecurity in rural communities in Nigeria established that newspapers are generally more effective than radio and television.

Newspapers are classified using multifarious templates such as coverage, language, content, etc. Indigenous newspapers are classified based on their coverage and the language of publication. The indigenous newspapers are not left out in performing these roles. Over the years, newspapers have performed a noteworthy role by disseminating varied information. Newspapers can reach large, far-flung, and heterogeneous audiences. They have the advantage of permanence and multi-exposure. They disseminate information daily, covering nearly every aspect of human endeavours ranging from religion, socio-economy, politics, entertainment, and education, among others. Igbeka and Ola (2010) opine that indigenous newspapers provide current information on local, state/provincial, national, and global issues. They are part of well-read periodicals that are available and accessible to most people of all ages and callings.

Alaroye as a Yoruba Indigenous Newspaper

Alaroye is a Yoruba medium newspaper published weekly by the World Information Agents, Lagos, Nigeria. The paper was first published in 1985 (Fasan, 2018). The newspaper's primary objective is to preserve Yoruba culture and literacy. The newspaper emphasis insightful, investigative and balanced journalism in contemporary issues, most especially politics.

Alaroye is an innovation in community journalism with strict adherence to the basic canons of professional journalism. These attributes, perhaps, earned it a call by the Federal Government for partnership for the publication of her policies at the grassroots tier of governance. Not only that, but those attributes have also made it survive the volatile and competitive newspaper market in the country. Salawu (2006:7) describes *Alaroye* as the prime local language newspaper with a circulation figure of about 150,000 per week. The paper is available in Nigeria and anywhere in the world where Yoruba speakers reside. In the opinion of Fasan (2018), *Alaroye* is currently the most successful indigenous-language newspaper of all time.

The Current Study

The current study aims to determine the coverage of security challenges in *Alaroye*, a Yoruba language newspaper. To achieve the aim of the study, the following specific objectives were set:

(a) Identify the volume of coverage by *Alaroye* in reporting insecurity issues in Nigeria.

- (b) Unravel the story types in which insecurity stories are presented in *Alaroye*.
- (c) Know the prominence given to insecurity reports by *Alaroye*.
- (d) Find out the direction of the stories on insecurity by *Alaroye*.

Research Questions

The study will interrogate the following:

- 1: What is the volume of coverage by *Alaroye* in reporting insecurity issues in Nigeria?
- 2: In which story types are insecurity stories presented in *Alaroye*?
- 3: What is the prominence given to insecurity news reports by *Alaroye*?
- 4: What is the direction of insecurity stories in *Alaroye*?

Theoretical framework

Theories are important to research work as they provide ground for understanding the phenomena of the study. Therefore, this study is driven by three theories: agenda-setting, framing and social responsibility theories.

Agenda Setting Theory

This theory is premised on the idea that the media determines what people think about while the media's audience is said to set their agenda on daily information for conversation based on what the media wants the public to talk about (Talabi & Adefemi, 2017). According to Aririguzoh (2014), the theory emanated from McCombs and Shaw in 1974 and established that the mass media influences the audience. The agenda-setting theory is premised on two basic assumptions. First, the media filters and shapes what we see rather than just reflecting stories. The second is that the more attention is given to an issue by media, the more the likelihood of the public considering such issue as important.

McCombs and Shaw (1974), cited in Aririguzoh (2014), view agenda setting as the impact of mass media on individuals in shaping their cognition about change by structuring their world. This makes McCombs and Shaw assert that there is an affirmative relationship between what the media emphasises and what the individuals see as significant. This implies that what the media sees as important is also seen by the members of the public as cogent. Thus, the media not only tells the people what to do but can and what to think about through the coverage the media gives or refuses to give to events. People's behaviour and attitudes can be affected by what the media feeds them (Aririgu, bold). Folarin (2002) identifies the following as elements involved in agenda setting:

- The quantity or frequency of reporting by the media
- Prominence given to the reporting.

- The degree of the conflict generated in the reports.
- Cumulative media-specific effects over time

Social Responsibility Theory

According to Baran and Davis (2010:11), as cited in Talabi and Adefemi (2017:65), social responsibility theory calls on the media to be responsible for fostering productive and creative communities. The theory suggests that media should engage in prioritising cultural pluralism - by becoming the voice of the people not just the elite groups or dominant groups in the society. The theory is premised on a system of ethics that emphasises that decisions and actions must be ethically validated. In a situation where the actions or decisions of the media cause harm to society or the environment, then the media would be considered socially irresponsible. Moral values that are intrinsic in society produce a distinction between what is right and what is wrong. In this way, social fairness is believed (by most) to be in the “right,” but more frequently than not, this “fairness” is absent. Every individual has a responsibility to act in a way that is positive to society and not exclusively to the individual.

Indigenous newspapers have developed a system of social responsibility that is modified to their immediate environment. If social responsibility is maintained within an organisation, the employees and the environment are held equal to the company’s economy. Maintaining social responsibility within a company ensures the integrity of the society and the environment are protected. Often, the ethical implications of a decision/action are overlooked for personal gain and the benefits are usually material. This frequently manifests itself in companies that attempt to cheat environmental regulations. When this happens, government interference is necessary.

Framing Theory

Kalu (2010) notes that the fundamental principle of framing theory is that the media focuses on certain events and then places them within a field of meaning. The media organises and presents events and issues in the way audiences interpret what they imply. In this case, how an issue is presented (the frame) influences people's choices. This affects people’s attitudes, beliefs, and behaviour because it connects a particular meaning or interpretation to an issue.

Research Methodology

This study adopted content analysis as research method. Wimmer and Dominick (2012) posit that the choice of content analysis as a research design rests on its systematic, objective, and quantitative nature. It is also favoured for its unbiased and heuristic tendencies in describing communication contents. The population of

the study is the entire newspaper issue for one year, from January 2021 to December 2021. The rationale for selecting *Alaroye* is because it is the most famous indigenous newspaper circulated in the Southwest. It is also the most frequently published newspaper available on the stand. According to Fasan (2018), *Alaroye* is currently the most successful indigenous-language newspaper ever. On this background, the *Alaroye Newspaper* is the choice for this study. *Alaroye* is published weekly; hence, the total population of the study is 48 editions published in the year. The entire population was sampled.

Content Category and Unit of Analysis

The content categories of this study are prominence and frame. The units of analysis for the study are news stories, features, pictures, and editorials.

Inter-coder Reliability

For validity and reliability, the researchers employed two coders to independently code the newspapers' contents using the same coding sheet. This is to ensure the legitimacy of the findings and curtail errors. This aligns with Bello's (2019) view while citing Wimmer (2003). He suggests that reliability and validity will be ensured if coders use the same coding, evaluation, and analysis procedure. Bello (2019), citing Hosti (1969), observes that inter-coder reliability can be calculated using different methods.

This study adopted Hosti's formula in determining the percentage between two coders.

$$ICR = \frac{2M}{N1+N2}$$

Therefore, M = Number of coding decisions on which both coders agree N1&N2 = total number of coding decision by first and second coders.

Table 1: Weekly Sample of *Alaroye Newspaper* for the year 2021

	Week 1-16	Week 17-32	Week 33-48	Total
Story type	46	48	53	147
Theme	37	25	31	93
Prominence	31	24	29	84
Geographical locations	2	1	1	4
Total	116	98	114	328

Source: *Content Analysis 2022*

Table 1 shows that 328 news stories were published on security and insecurity between January and December 2021.

Table 2: Geographical Coverage of Insecurity News Reported from January to December 2021 by *Alaroye Newspaper*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
South	3	1	7	2	3	3	1	4	2	1	4	2	33(10.1%)
South west	22	14	10	7	26	15	18	16	11	6	9	18	172(26.2%)
South east	5	1	3	4	2	3	2	1	1	3	7	3	35(10.7%)
North	3	1	9	3	5	2	2	4	3	2	1	5	40(12.2%)
North central	2	-	1	2	-	2	5	3	2	-	-	2	19(5.8%)
North west	2	-	-	5		1	1	2	2	-	-	5	18(5.5%)
North east	1	1	2	2		1	-	1	1	-	-	2	11(3.4%)
Total	22 (6.7%)	18 (5.5%)	32 (9.8%)	25 (7.6%)	36 (10.9%)	27 (8.2%)	29 (8.8%)	31 (9.4%)	38 (11.6%)	12 (3.6%)	21 (6.4%)	37 (11.2%)	328 (100%)

Source: *Content Analysis 2022*

Table 2 shows the geographical coverage of *Alaroye Newspaper* report from January to December 2020, where 6.7% of insecurity-related news were reported in January, with 5.5% reported in February, 9.8% in March, 7.6% in April, 10.9% in May, 8.2% in June, 5.4% in July, 9.4% in August, 11.6% in September, 3.6% in October, 6.4% in November, 11.2% coverage in December, respectively. However, the table revealed that the highest coverage of insecurity was presented in September with 11.6%, with news focusing on southwest which constitutes 26.2% of the entire coverage, followed by North which constitutes 12.2%.

Table 3: Volume of Monthly Coverage by *Alaroye Newspaper* on Insecurity News

Volume of coverage	January-April	May-August	September-December	Total
Lead story	18	22	30	70(21.3%)
Features	27	11	4	42(12.8%)
Straight news	51	66	53	170(51.8%)
Picture stories	11	14	7	32(9.7%)
Center spread	3	9	2	14(4.3%)
Total	110	122	96	328(100%)

Source: *Content Analysis 2022*

Table 3 shows the volume of coverage given to insecurity news in Nigeria. From the analysis presented in the table, out of 328 news gathered, 21.3% of the coverage was reported through the lead stories, 12.8% was reported as features

stories, 51.8% of the news report were straight news, 9.7% were covered with picture stories while 4.3% were presented in the centre spread of the newspapers.

Table 4: The Types of Story in which *Insecurity* Activities are Presented in *Alaroye Newspaper*

Story types	January-April	May-August	September-December	Total
Straight News	45	29	52	126(38.4%)
Features	29	15	32	76(23.1%)
Picture Stories	23	31	41	95(28.9%)
Editorials	9	14	8	31(9.4%)
Total	106	89	133	328

Source: *Content Analysis 2022*

Table 4 indicates that 38.4% of straight news reports were recorded, 23.1% were feature news stories, 28.9% were picture stories, while 9.4% were recorded in editorials. The table suggests that a higher percentage of news on insecurity was reported as straight news, representing 38.4%.

Table 5: Prominence Given to Insecurity News Report by *Alaroye Newspaper*

	January-April	May-August	September-December	Total
Frontpage	72	36	55	163(49.6%)
Inside page	31	47	49	127(38.7%)
Back page	13	15	10	38(11.5%)
Total	116	98	114	328(100%)

Source: *Content Analysis 2022*

Table 5 shows that out of the 328 (100%) insecurity news reported, 49.6% were found on the front pages of the newspapers, 38.7% were recorded on the inside pages, while 11.5 % were placed on the back pages. Since prominence is the function of placement of news on front pages, inside pages, or back pages, insecurity issues were given adequate prominence by *Alaroye Newspaper* with 61.1% of the coverage.

Table 6: The Direction of Insecurity Stories in *Alaroye*

Direction	January-April	May-August	September-December	Total
Positive	6	11	4	21 (6.4%)
Negative	77	81	72	230 (70.1%)
Neutral	21	30	16	67 (20.4%)
Total	104	132	92	328 (100%)

Source: *Content Analysis 2022*

Table 6 presents the direction of insecurity stories in Nigeria. The table shows that 6.4% of the reportage was positive, 70.1% negative, while 20.4% of the report constituted neutral news.

Discussion of Findings

In this section, the researchers discussed the findings of the study in relation to the following research questions:

Research Question 1: What is the volume of coverage by *Alaroye Newspaper* in reporting insecurity issues in Nigeria?

The analysis made from tables 2, 3 and 4 above described the volume of coverage on insecurity-related news by *Alaroye Newspaper* whereby table 2 shows the geographical coverage of insecurity in *Alaroye Newspaper* and indicates that the highest coverage was made within the southwest region with 26.2% of the total news reported in 2021, followed by the North with 12.2%. Table 5 analysed the frequency at which *Alaroye Newspaper* reported insecurity-related issues in accordance with the selected weeks of publication of the news. However, it was revealed from the table that the highest coverage of insecurity news was reported within the 1st and 16th, i.e., January -April 2020 with the highest frequency of 35.4%. Table 4 shows the volume of coverage given to insecurity news in Nigeria. From the analysis presented in the table, out of 328 (100%) news gathered, 21.3% of the coverage was reported through the lead stories which was the highest recorded volume of the analysis.

The volume of coverage of insecurity news by *Alaroye Newspaper* was praiseworthy. All stories in the volumes got consideration in the newspapers. This aligns with the position of Griffin (1991) in Ngoan (2002:2), which suggests that media coverage may reflect existing public concern. However, the rate at which *Alaroye* covers matters of insecurity is very high and alarming.

Research question 2: In which story types are insecurity stories presented in *Alaroye*?

This research question was answered with table 4 of the above analysis on story types in which *insecurity* activities were reported in *Alaroye Newspaper*. The table revealed that 38.4% of the reports on the subject matter 'insecurity' were presented as straight news, 23.1% were of feature news stories, 28.9% were picture stories, while 9.4% were recorded in editorials. The table suggested a higher percentage of news on insecurity was reported as straight news, representing 38.4% having more stories than other story types.

Nwabueze (2009:32) opines that, unlike feature stories, straight news reports do not contain interpretations, forecasts, or any information outside what has happened, except the views of people interviewed while gathering facts for the

story. Feature stories on insecurity in Nigeria were not many in the selected newspapers. Nwanze (1999:48) in Ofor and Obiorah (2012:41) states that feature stories extended the horizon of news through explanations and other attractions that might have slipped the thoughts and pens of reporters. Feature stories contain background information and news behind the news. Editorials on insecurity were very few.

Research question 3: What is the prominence given to insecurity news reports by *Alaroye*?

This research question was answered with table 5, which shows that out of the 328 (100%) insecurity news reported, 49.6% were found on the front pages of the newspapers, 38.7% were recorded on the inside pages, while 11.5 % were placed on the back pages. Therefore, the highest level of prominence of insecurity news can be found in the front pages of all the *Alaroye* newspapers published during the period studied. This is in support of social responsibility theory of the press.

Research question 4: What is the direction of insecurity stories in *Alaroye*?

The direction of stories about insecurity news reportage in *Alaroye Newspaper* was classified as positive, negative and neutral stories. Neutral stories cannot be used to ascertain an actual state of insecurity. Hence, there were more negative stories than positive stories. Although most stories on insecurity were reported on the front pages, *Alaroye Newspaper* gave prominence to insecurity news regarding the coverage volume. This shows why McCombs and Shaw (1972) in Ngoa (2012:5) insist that for newspapers, the emphasis is on front page lead or headline stories. To a reasonable extent, the above presentation and data analysis have answered the research questions and satisfied the objectives stated at the study's inception. However, the research questions that have been serving as a guide in directing this study served as a good platform for the discussion.

The findings indicate that *Alaroye Newspaper*, as an indigenous newspaper has given relatively significant attention to coverage of security issues in Nigeria. Do other indigenous newspapers give prominence to the issue of insecurity in Nigeria? The answer to this question can be the focus of another paper.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The essence of this study is to ascertain coverage of security and insecurity in the Nigerian indigenous newspaper. It is a content analysis of *Alaroye* news reports from January to December 2021. To elicit the relevant data, the quantitative research method (content analysis) was deployed using coding sheet as the data gathering instrument. The result showed that *Alaroye Newspaper* substantially covered insecurity news, especially in the southwest region and some other regions in Nigeria, supported by 172 (26.2%) coverage of the total analysis. The

results of this study show that insecurity news coverage in Nigeria is a serious topic of interest to *Alaroye* indigenous newspaper, and it has been proven that the newspaper gave matters of insecurity wide coverage and the direction of reports of insecurity is negative. This is a pointer to the commitment of the medium to discouraging vices in society.

According to Udoudo and Diriyai (2012:91), mass media use in revealing rising insecurity in Nigeria is a way of exploring one of the trending issues of the country. However, it is pertinent to note that most crimes that breed insecurity have been classified into one form of terrorism or the other.

What this study shows so far is that the reporting of insecurity in *Alaroye Newspaper* is viral and estimable. From the findings of the study, the following recommendations are considered pertinent:

1. *Alaroye Newspaper*'s coverage of other critical issues should be reported.
2. *Alaroye Newspaper* should attach more value to insecurity issues by giving prominence to them.
3. Newspapers' coverage of insecurity issues should be balanced, and such security issues should be frequently reported.
4. Other indigenous newspapers should also cover insecurity issues in Nigeria.
5. The Nigerian government should pay more attention to the reportage of insecurity in the country.

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“NO, NO, NO! THERE IS NO CONFLICT”: ENGENDERING PEACE AND SECURITY THROUGH POLITE RESPONSES IN SELECTED NIGERIAN NEWSPAPER POLITICAL INTERVIEWS

Afolabi, A.A.¹; Adegboyega, D.F.²; Oyelakin, G.S³; Olaniyan, O.R.¹

¹ Department of English and Literary Studies,
Osun State University, Ikire Campus,
Osun State, Nigeria.

² Department of English and Literary Studies,
Federal University, Oye-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria.

³Department of English, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria.

Abstract

This study looks at how peace and security are engendered through polite responses in communication, looking at political interviews from selected Nigerian newspapers. Previous studies on politeness in communication have not explored newspaper interviews as a source of data but have mostly used questionnaires, which may not be reliable sources of data for actual speech situations. Thus, this study draws data from political interview discourse in the Nigeria print medium, which is a valid source of examples of spontaneous speech situations. Two political interviews each were selected from five randomly selected Nigerian newspapers (This Day, Punch, Leadership Newspapers, Business Day and The Nation) between August and December 2021 to make a total of ten interviews considered in this study. The newspapers were selected based on the availability of their online versions and wide circulation across the country for easy access to readers, while the choice of the time frame is because it is the period when the political space was warming up for the next electioneering activities. Therefore, the different political interviews being churned out in print and broadcast media are bound to yield rich data for this study. The selected interviews were analysed using Brown and Levinson’s (1987) model of Politeness and “face” theory as well as Leech’s (1983) politeness maxims. The analysis shows that respondents in Nigerian newspaper political interviews usually use both positive and negative politeness in their responses to questions posed to them by the interviewer. The reason is that the interviewees are conscious of the fact that they are expressing their views on the matters raised by the interviewers to a wider audience (the public) and not just to the interviewer alone. This, the interviewees do, to avoid imposing their views on the reading audience while at the same time subtly rejecting imposition from the interviewer. Thus, the interviewees make use of linguistic face-saving choices, which will at the same time help them to achieve solidarity, intimacy, and oneness with Nigerians. The study concludes that politeness is a key element in mitigating conflict and engendering peace and security in any communication context, especially within the genre of political interviews.

Keywords: politeness, negative and positive face, peace and security, Nigerian newspapers, political interviews

1. Introduction

It is no longer news that there is insecurity around the world today. There seems to be no part of the world that is not under one security threat or the other, the chief of which is terrorism. For instance, incidents of misuse of firearms abound in the US and other parts of Europe, ISIS and Al Qaeda in the Arab world, among other security issues around the world. Nigeria is not left out in this issue of insecurity. For instance, the *Boko Haram* crisis in northern Nigeria is shaking the entire country, and its socio-political and economic life is seriously threatened (Kareem, 2018). Kidnappings, banditry and ritual killings, religious riots and even political fights and killings have also increased. Most of these crises may have resulted from language use in our day-to-day activities. Language is a unique characteristic through which man communicate with one another (Ativie, 2020). With language, man can interact with others and maintain such to the desired level. However, to maintain such interactions, one must follow some important strategies. Apart from the **Cooperative Principle** postulated by Grice (1978), people observe one other principle in their communication. It is called the **Politeness Principle**. This principle has been developed by several language scholars, which include Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson, Geoffrey Leech, and Richard Watts, among other scholars. This principle does not just consider the information or message in a communication activity but also the effect that what is said has on the hearer. This principle is developed to sustain the social balance and cordial relations, which make us believe that other participants in a conversation are cooperative (Leech 1982, cited in Kareem, 2018).

Pragmaticists describe ‘politeness’ as the connection between how we say something to another participant in a conversation and how that person perceives it to have been said (Grundy, 2000). Ativie (2020) sees politeness as a culturally defined phenomenon. He describes it as the application of good manners in social interaction. Thus, it means that politeness considers the feelings of others in any communication encounter in order not to hurt the other person’s feelings. It can be said that language is the only weapon that can be used in communication to perform several functions by human beings in the society. These include being polite to institute unity and reduce discord. According to Ambuyo, Indede and Karanja (2011), people can use language to institute or promote good communication. They believe that people can also use language to prevent or bring about quarrel between participants in a conversation. Therefore, people need to be polite in their use of language to have a successful communication. This is in line with Leech’s (1983) view that the principle of

politeness is developed to sustain the social balance and the amicable interactions, which make it possible for us to believe that other participants in a conversation are being cooperative. Leech further emphasizes the extent to which politeness is important in language when he says that if people are not polite to those around them, it will destroy the communication link between them, which will prevent cordial interactions.

It then means that to have a successful cordial relationship, if any leader and his followers or the members of a family will relate successfully with one other, and if the people in a community or country at large will co-exist in harmony and tranquility, everyone must be polite in the way they use language to interact with one another. Li (2008) also writes that politeness and cooperation are embedded in each other. Every organisation and society recognises the importance of using polite language; hence, politeness is an all-inclusive way of using language correctly. We can say that politeness is when a speaker pays careful attention to the other person when they are having a conversation. In the view of Babatunde & Adedimeji (2008), politeness makes one to consider the “face” of the other person or how we consider the personality of an individual in public. Brown & Levinson (1987) define politeness as a deliberate effort to save "face" and "face" as that image which everyone seeks to showcase and protect in public. If politeness is employed wrongly in social interaction, it could negatively destroy communication. Therefore, we must be polite if we want to pass our intended message across successfully.

The opposite of politeness is impoliteness. Impoliteness is the overall term used to refer to the way people deliberately employ face threatening acts (FTA) to injure the face of the person listening to them (Dynel, 2015; Bousfield, 2008; Culpeper, 2005). Sometimes, people display face threatening acts even when they do not mean to. That is, in some cases, a speaker may exhibit impoliteness when they do not mean to, which may lead to apprehension and bad feelings. This implies that impoliteness is not always deliberate. Nowadays, the reason why people disagree and argue with one another is because they address the other person in a way that makes them appear as if they do not want another to check what they do or say. These people believe that they should not be checked may be, because they occupy a very high position or because they think of themselves too highly than they should, making them feel that everyone else must respect them.

Denham & Lobeck (2013) explain that politeness shows reference for the other person and expects to be referenced in return. Social class does not limit politeness because adults could as well be polite to people younger than they are, the way young people are expected to be polite to adults. Political leaders are expected to be polite to the commonest of their country people anywhere and

anytime they (the political leaders) encounter them (the common citizens), not minding the obvious gap in social class and status. From the foregoing, we can deduce that the use of polite language among interactants in a social situation should be because of reciprocity (Adekunle & Adebayo, 2017). It is on this premise that this paper investigates the effect of polite responses in engendering peace and security in selected Nigerian newspaper political interviews. This is based on the belief that this area has not enjoyed much research even though scholars have investigated politeness in different domains of language use.

2. Previous works on politeness in Nigerian context

Odebunmi (2009) looks at the manifestation of tact maxim in hospital interactions, specifically between doctors and their patients. He discovered that a lot of doctors' utterances showed that doctors are usually polite to their patients, giving their patients maximum freedom of expression while reducing FTA in hospital interaction. We can say that doctors do this because they need their patients to bear out their problems to them for them to be able to diagnose their patients correctly, which will help them prescribe the right and best treatment for such patients. Therefore, they are expected to tactfully elicit information from their patients, including the family, social and religious backgrounds of the patient, as well as the history of the sickness the patient is suffering from. On the other hand, the patient would want to be as polite as possible because they, at that time, see the doctor as the ultimate solution to their health problem. Thus, politeness is expected to be put to play in this context.

Okoro (2011) looked at how the non-teaching staff of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka express politeness to show that everyday communication in the English language is to be peppered with linguistic politeness, to demonstrate different ways in which communication could be face-threatening and to suggest how one could couch speeches and compositions with politeness strategies in order to sustain cooperative communication. The data were analysed based on the age, gender, educational qualifications, years of service, department and nationality of the secretaries who were used as respondents. The study showed that the secretaries used in the said research work did not have enough understanding of what politeness means. In agreement with the researcher, it should be noted that respect is an important characteristic of ethical communication in every culture. This means that secretaries should be polite in the discharge of their duties knowing that their being polite to customers will make the customers leave with a good impression about them and the institution.

Obins (2015) reviewed how Nigerians express politeness, using instances from real-life speech situations of some Nigerians who speak popular Nigerian English in social communications. He discovers that Nigerians are popular with the use of both verbal and non-verbal language for social communication, so it is

very common for Nigerians to express admiration as a mark of polite behavior. This is because they believe that not responding in a conversation is impolite and can lead to a collapse of the communication activity. In his view, most Nigerians are careful about when to talk, when to keep quiet, what to talk about, who to say it to and how to say it to them, especially when it comes to showing politeness. Apart from this, Nigerian cultures demand that older people should be respected. Therefore, Nigerians are usually careful not to flout the dictates of smooth communication. They usually do not want to be seen as confrontational, abusive, blunt, or rude. Though the research is a bit encompassing because it studies how Nigerians express politeness generally in their day-to-day conversations across cultures, its shortcoming is that it did not look at the semi-formal context of communication, especially the political interview context, where the issues concerning the nation is discussed in the question-response format.

Kareem (2018) investigated the use of im/politeness in Muslim sermons or *Khutbahs*. The study attempts to show that the Muslim sermon, in its aim to impart various types of religious information to the congregation, is a communicative event that can generate ill-feelings among its various audiences. The Imam is thus expected to make strategic use of politeness elements in his delivery or risk compromising the efficacy of the sermon. He discovers that the Imams used the traditional Face Threatening Acts (FTAs), and these largely amount to conventional aggression (Harris, 2001) or unmarked FTAs (Dynel, 2015). The study concluded that the Imams were characteristically polite in their delivery and that politeness is an important feature in this religious discourse, such as the Friday sermon. Nevertheless, it is pertinent for us to note that since the September 2011 incident, the Muslims' lives and religion have come under serious threats largely because bad images of the Muslims and Islam have been painted in the minds of everyone who reads newspapers or watches the television. Given these situations, there is a special focus on the Muslim scholars and their sermons because they are already being accused of various kinds of impoliteness. Thus, since the Friday *Khutbah* or sermon is an important rite in the Muslim community, and its purpose is the purification of the individual and societal lives, it is expected that politeness will be displayed, particularly in Nigeria.

Dozie and Otagburuagu (2019) explore the conversational English politeness strategies used by Igbo learners of English in Nigeria. Their findings demonstrated that politeness strategies are very significantly used in apology discourse. Also, the study revealed that apologies are conversational habits of Igbo bilinguals as the offenders willingly made an apology regardless of social differences and context, which were also reflected in their choice of strategies as there was obvious transfer of the nuances of the first/native language/mother tongue to their target language production. The study established that apology realisation in an interlanguage context, i.e., Igbo-speaking learners of English

necessarily bear the burden of native language transfer into target language. In conclusion, the study showed that because of the Igbo understanding that there are possibilities of instances of affront or outrage in human interactions, Igbo bilinguals adopted mainly the positive and negative forms of politeness strategies in apology discourse to accomplish a conversational demand. The study found evidence to dispute the universality of politeness further and argued that politeness is culture specific. However, the researcher gathered his data from questionnaire in the form of Discourse Completion Task (DCT) consisting of 10 different apology discourse situations among undergraduates of Igbo extraction at seven universities systematically selected from the South-East and South-South zones in Nigeria. In the first instance, the method of data collection is not a representation of actual language use. Secondly, the responses are premeditated and not spontaneous, meaning that people may not be sincere enough in their responses to the questions raised in the questionnaires. Also, the data are only drawn from a small part of the country; therefore, the claim that politeness is culture-specific may not be representative enough.

In another research, Ativie (2020) identifies and describes politeness strategies in Nigerian Pidgin service encounter settings: restaurants, hair dressing saloons, fuel stations, boutiques, market stalls and supermarkets. The study shows that the most frequently used strategy is the positive politeness strategy of greeting while the least used are seeking agreement and promises. For negative politeness, it is shown that deference strategies constitute the most used strategies while apologies are the least used. However, while we can say that the research made use of actual speech communication, the result is specific to informal situations and the case of one person (service provider) seeking the patronage and approval of the other (customer). Also, data collection was restricted to Warri, a cosmopolitan city in Delta State, Southern Nigeria. Thus, the result may not be the same as the case of the context and data used in this study.

The previous research reviewed in this study reveals politeness as an integral part of communication. All of them show that politeness is used by Nigerians except one – Okoro (2011) – which shows that the subjects from whom the data used for the research are drawn have inadequate knowledge of the concept of politeness, indicating that they use impoliteness in communication. However, it should be noted that focus of this study is not only to look at the use of politeness in discourse but to explore how politeness can be used to engender peace and security among the people in a community and the nation at large, considering the rising spate of insecurity and unrest in the society. Politics and political leaders are at the centre of the security situation in any society; hence, the choice of political interviews. The journalist (the interviewer) in this context represents themselves, their newspaper outfit, and the public, and therefore, poses questions relating to the Nigerian people at large to the political interviewee. In this case,

the respondent, the political interviewee, is also expected to represent themselves first as a citizen of the country, then as a leader. They are also expected to represent their political party and the country at large. This means that the journalist asks questions on their behalf and the public, while the political interviewee also responds on behalf of themselves, their political party and the general public. Thus, both the interviewer and the interviewee are expected to put on different roles at the same time, which will obviously affect the degree or type of politeness to be displayed in this context. This further justifies the essence of looking at polite responses in political interviews in Nigerian newspapers as a medium of peace and security.

3. Methodology

3.1 Analytical Framework

Brown & Levinson's (1987) model of politeness is the most encompassing theoretical and experimental motivation for research in the fields of linguistics, pragmatics, sociolinguistics, socio-pragmatics, etc. (Odebunmi, 2009; Jansen & Janssen, 2010). It especially provides a solid substructure for theoretical and experimental research in politeness because it is very inclusive (Locher & Watts, 2005). According to Schlund (2014), as cited in Kareem (2018), Brown & Levinson's (1987) model of politeness is the best known and so it is the most used model of politeness. As a result, it is about the most cited in scholarly works on im/politeness (Culpeper, 2011b).

In Brown & Levinson's (1987) model of politeness, there are two co-interlocutors whom he referred to as Model Persons (MP). These two are the speaker (S) and the hearer (H). The model incorporates Grice's (1978) Cooperative Principle and the concept of "face" (Goffman, 1967, cited in Kareem, 2018). Brown & Levinson (1987:61) explain "face" to be the public self-esteem and self-image of a person, which could be "enhanced, maintained or lost." The model believes that each of the MPs desires that their face is maintained and that co-interlocutors cooperate to maintain each other's face in the communication activity.

Brown & Levinson (1987) postulate two types of face: the positive face, which represents a person's wish to be appreciated and accepted by people, and the negative face, which represents a person's wish to be free from domination and violation of their personality. They explain further that there is a threat to the face whenever there is an expression that contravenes the face-want of either the speaker and/or the hearer. This, Brown & Levinson called Face-Threatening Act (FTA). Brown and Levinson further propose five ways of performing FTA: (a) Do the FTA off-record; (b) Do the FTA on-record, baldly unmitigated with any politeness strategy; (c) Do the FTA on-record, mitigated with negative politeness.

(d) Do the FTA on-record, mitigated with positive politeness (e) Do not do the FTA (1987:316).

Brown & Levinson (1987:101-210) postulated that the positive face can be accentuated using positive politeness strategies, such as Exaggeration (i.e., endorsement of H, interest and sympathy with H), Notice (i.e., attend to the needs, wants, interests, and goods of H), etc.; the negative face can be accentuated using negative politeness strategies, such as: edges, indirect statements, questions, pessimism, etc. In addition, Brown & Levinson (1987) claim that going against any of Grice's (1975) conversational maxims which demands that the hearer (H) infers the message that the speaker is indirectly passing across gives rise to Brown and Levinson's off-record politeness strategies, which include: Give association clues, Understate, Give hints, Presuppose, etc. (1987:211-227).

Indeed, Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness model can sufficiently take care of the analysis of our data; however, some additions will help make it better. Therefore, the politeness maxims of Leech (1983) will be combined with Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness model to improve our data analysis. We believe that these two politeness models will be able to take care of the intricacies of the current research since the data to be analysed are interviews where the social status of both participants in the communicative activity and other related issues would have to be considered.

Leech (1983:131) explains that politeness concerns the connection between two co-participants in a conversation: the self (S) and the other (H). Leech (1983:132) identifies seven politeness maxims and their sub-maxims:

- | | | |
|------------------------|---|--|
| 1) Tact maxim: | a) Minimize cost to other | b) Maximize benefit to other |
| 2) Generosity maxim: | a) Minimize benefit to self | b) Maximize cost to self |
| 3) Approbation maxim: | a) Minimize dispraise of other | b) Maximize praise of other |
| 4) Modesty maxim: | a) Minimize praise of self | b) Maximize dispraise of self |
| 5) Agreement maxim: | a) Minimize disagreement between self and other | b) Maximize agreement between self and other |
| 6) Sympathy maxim: | a) Minimize antipathy between self and other | b) Maximize sympathy between self and other |
| 7) Pollyanna principle | | |

3.2 Collection of data

This study draws data from Nigerian print political interview discourse, which is a valid source of examples of actual speech situations. Two political interviews were selected from five randomly selected Nigerian newspapers (*This Day*, *Punch*, *Guardian*, *Business Day* and *The Nation*) collected between August and December 2021 to make a total of ten interviews considered in this study. The newspapers were selected based on the availability of their online versions and

wide circulation across the country for easy access to readers while the choice of the time frame is because it is the period when the political space was warming up for the next electioneering activities. Therefore, the different political interviews being churned out in print and broadcast media are bound to yield very rich data for this study.

3.3 Analytical procedure

The data for this study is analysed using Brown and Levinson's (1987) face theory and politeness model, as well as Leech's (1983) politeness maxims to see how they have been used to threaten or save the faces of their audiences. Generally, in any interview session, the interviewer's positive face is usually threatened because they will want their questions answered, and appropriately too, by the interviewee. Thus, if the interviewee refuses to answer the question, whether directly or indirectly, it constitutes a threat to the interviewer's positive face. On the other hand, the interviewee's negative face is threatened because no one wants to be imposed upon or impeded, and so will desire his freedom to choose whether to answer the interviewer's question or not; thus, if the interviewee has no choice than to respond to the interviewer's questions, whether directly or indirectly, their negative face has been threatened. Therefore, it behooves both parties to display politeness in posing and answering questions to mitigate the face-threatening acts (FTAs). It is on this background that expressions that further display FTAs are what we shall be considering in this paper.

This study focuses on the political interviewees' responses to the questions posed by the journalists (the interviewers). Where the response is very lengthy, only the first three to five sentences in the response to the questions are considered. However, the journalist's question, which prompts the response in the first place, is first written out to determine the FTA to the political interviewee. The politeness strategies used in the questions posed by the interviewers and the responses given by the interviewees are then identified and categorised accordingly to see how they have been used to threaten or save the other person's face and the face of the reading public at large. The sociological factors that may likely affect the choice of politeness strategy and the seriousness of the face-threatening acts are identified. Finally, the effects of the politeness strategy used are explained in terms of engendering peace and security in the nation.

4. Findings

In this section, we shall look at the various ways in which politeness have been used in the questions posed by the interviewers and the responses given by the interviewees, although our focus is on the responses of the interviewees.

4.1. Politeness Strategies in the responses of the interviewees

The data shows the politeness strategies used by the political interviewees because of the preceding FTA. These have been analysed and explained below:

(i) Journalist: *Sir, there is crisis in the various political parties ahead of the 2023 general elections in Nigeria. What is really the problem?*

Politician: It is 2023 now! The quest for power. It is always like that any time it is getting close, everybody... different forces want to take control of the party,

and in doing that, it becomes very vicious. It has always been so. (*Sunday Independent*, 2021, August 15, pp.2)

In extract (i) above, the politician makes use of tact to minimize threat to the positive faces of the perceived people (politicians) causing the crises in the various political parties. Therefore, he uses indefinite pronoun *everybody* instead of mentioning particular names. He also indicates that the problem did not just start with the crop of politicians presently in the party when he says *It has always been so* so that the Nigerian people will not blame them. This is done to make the perceived political actors believe that he is protecting their interest and at the same time advising them on the better way to go about the current situation in order to put an end to the crises. He also does it to prevent the Nigerian populace from taking sides with any politician and shifting the blame on the other, thereby worsening the crises. This is the use of negative politeness enhanced by tact maxim to mitigate threat to the positive face of the supposed political actors in order to engender peace among them and the Nigerian people.

(ii)Journalist: *What is the way out of these various crises in the parties?*

Politician: The way out is to continue to be vigilant about the rules. There is nothing wrong with ambition or aspiration. What we don't want is cutting corners and violating rules that we all set for ourselves. One of the biggest problems that the Nigerian political class has is to obey rules, even their own rules. Obeying even their own rules is a difficulty. (*Sunday Independent*, 2021, August 15, pp.2)

In extract (ii) above, the politician makes use of tact maxim to reduce threat to the negative face of the people (politicians) causing the crises. Therefore, he uses plural nouns to minimize the imposition of his views on the perceived political actors in each political party and the Nigerian people at large. *What we don't want ... rules that we all set for ourselves*. His use of inclusive plural pronouns *we* and *ourselves* indicates that the politician is speaking on behalf of everybody and not just expressing his own view, reminding them of the agreement they all had earlier about how to avoid crises like the present situation in each political party. This is negative politeness enhanced by tact and agreement maxims. This is also done in order to engender peace among the politicians and the Nigerian people.

(iii)Journalist: *Will this crisis (sic) not negatively affect the country's democratic process?*

Politician: No, no, no! There is no crisis. What is the crisis? There is no crisis! As a matter of fact, you can see that the democratic process is now even more stable than it was previously. (*Sunday Independent*. 2021, August 15, pp.2)

In extract (iii) above, the politician makes use of tact maxim to enhance threat to the negative face, this time, of the journalist, the actors in each political party and even every Nigerian at large. He has little or no desire to maintain their faces because the political interviewer is desperate to make the journalist and

everything, he represents realise that the crisis in the political parties will not negatively affect the country's democratic process. Thus, he makes use of exclamatory expressions: *No, no, no! There is no crisis!* rhetorical question *What is the crisis?* and obviating structure. *As a matter of fact*, to drive home his point. This is bald on-record politeness enhanced with tact and agreement maxims.

(iv) Journalist: *What inspired you to aspire for the National Chairman of APC?*

Politician: I have been going around the country, making consultations and discussing with leaders of the party before I will come formally to tell the world my intention and aspiration to the office of the National Chairman. You know you cannot do that without the Press Corps of our own party because whatever you decide to do will go a long way to making decisions for the party men and women because you are the first bus stop of our party. (*Business Day*. 2021, October 3, p 10)

In extract (iv) above, the politician makes use of tact to enhance his own negative face already threatened by the Journalist's question. He indirectly circumvents giving the Journalist his expected response, meaning that he is trying to avoid imposition from the Journalist. Instead, he begins to explain the efforts he has been making so far to make his political aspiration known to members of his party: *I have been going around the country, making consultations and discussing with leaders of the party*. Thus, he has implicitly told A that he is impolite. This is negative politeness enhanced by tact and Pollyanna maxims.

(v) Journalist: *It is taken for granted that every politics is local, meaning that you must have a strong base to push your aspirations. Your state is Borno and your geopolitical zone is the North-East. We know in APC the Governor is the leader of the party in the state. The Governor, Babagana Zulum is the creation of Kashim Shettima. Shettima by the grace of God you brought him to political limelight. The question now is you and Shettima are not in good terms, have you done consultations with your Governor and Shettima to sell your aspiration?*

Politician: Everybody in Borno State today without any contradiction is, apart from Zulum who is not my product because he was in the academic, he was not a politician, everybody in any position today in Borno in one way or the other, I am instrumental to what he or she is today. And I have no problem with anyone of them. Maybe it is just a perception. Everybody in Borno, including Shettima that you are talking about, I discussed with all of them about my ambition. I talk to them one on one. (*Business Day*. 2021, October 3, pp 10)

In extract (v) above, the politician uses tact to minimize the threat to his negative face because of the Journalist's question. His response shows that he dislikes some aspects of the Journalist's question, especially the part where the Journalist implies that the politician is no longer the political godfather of Shettima and must consult Shettima to get his approval to become the party Chairman. His response shows that he has little or no desire to maintain the negative faces of both the journalist and everyone the journalist thinks the politician should

consult. Thus, he is desperate to make the journalist and everything he represents realise that he is still a political godfather in his state. This is why he bluntly says: *...everybody in any position today in Borno in one way or the other, I'm instrumental to what he or she is today...* This is bald on-record politeness enhanced by Pollyanna maxim.

(vi) Journalist: *You said you have been visiting some states concerning your aspiration. What kind of response are you getting from those states?*

Politician: That is not for public consumption. Whatever any Governor decides to talk to the public on television, those statements you hear them but what I discussed with them is not for public consumption. (*Business Day*, 2021, October 3, pp 10)

In extract (vi) above, the politician uses tact to minimize the threat to his negative face because of the Journalist's question. He is expected to be able to give a reply since his failure might result in a loss of face. Therefore, he bluntly responds with "*That is not for public consumption*" to show that he is not under obligation to answer the Journalist's question. He could have revealed their discussions, but that may not be in the interest of the governors concerned. Thus, he declines to answer the Journalist's question in a bid to protect the negative face of the governors he has met with. This is bald on-record politeness enhanced with tact and generosity maxims.

(vii) Journalist: *How has it been running the affairs of Kwara State?*

Politician: I took an oath to serve the people of Kwara State. I am focused on service delivery to the greatest number. To serve well, you must be a good listener. And that is one of my strongest attributes. I talk less and listen more. It takes a humble person to listen. We're not shouting about what we're doing. So, that's why it's like we're not doing anything, but the people are feeling the impact. I started with where we're coming from. (*The Nation*, 2021, November 4. Pp. 9)

In extract (vii) above, the politician uses tact to minimise threat to the negative face of Kwara people because of the Journalist's question. Thus, he circumvents the question by responding that he is focused on delivering on his oath to the people instead of saying how difficult to govern them. This response shows that he is taking responsibility for the people instead of painting them in a negative light, thereby saving their negative face. To further mitigate threat to the face of Kwara people, the politician switches from the first-person singular *I* to the inclusive plural pronoun *We*. The reply, however, did not provide any information pertinent to the question which demands a definite elaboration of how it has been so far governing the affairs of the people. This is negative politeness enhanced by tact maxim.

5. Discussion of findings

The politicians in the political interviews used as source of data for this study made use of tact politeness maxim in all their responses to the Journalists'

questions. This is because they are aware that the Journalist represents not just himself but also the newspaper outfit he works for as well as Nigerians – the reading populace. Therefore, they are aware that that the Journalist is asking the questions on behalf of not just himself but also on behalf of his newspaper outfit and the reading populace. On the other hand, the politician knows that they are expected to answer the questions not just on their behalf but also on behalf of their political parties and every Nigerian, something the politician knows that the Journalist is also aware of. Therefore, the politician will want to show a level of politeness even when they feel that their negative face is threatened. Since the politician is expected to put on different roles at the same time, it will obviously affect the degree or type of politeness strategy and maxim they will exhibit in their responses to endear the Nigerian people to their political leaders and also among Nigerian people themselves.

According to Obims (2015), Nigerians are known to use titles and honorifics at the beginning of statements and they repeat such throughout a communicative activity as an indication of politeness, explaining why people use expressions, such as Mr., Sir, Mrs., Ma, Uncle, Aunty, Oga, Your Royal Highness, Your Excellency, Honorable, Professor, Doctor, Engineer, among others, especially if the conversation involves people of unequal social status. The person with the lower social status is often the one repeating the titles of the one with the higher social status (supposedly, superiors and subordinates at work and other social situations) to show their respect for the person with the higher status. However, in this study, the political interviewee perceives himself as being the one with the higher social status than the Journalist and so is not expected to use honorifics and titles in his responses and this does not mean that he is being impolite. At the same time, the politician will want to present himself as acting or doing everything on behalf and in the interest of the Nigerian people. This explains why the political interviewees studied in this data used more of negative politeness and bald on-record politeness strategies mitigated by tact politeness maxim than they used other types of politeness to achieve their desired conversational outcome. We can explain this to mean that the politician wants Nigerians to see him as doing all he can to make life better for them in a bid to maintain peaceful coexistence among the citizens of the country and between the citizens and their political leaders.

Bavelas *et al.* (1990 cited in Li, 2008:32) argue that politicians in political interviews habitually equivocate and their utterance by nature is always ‘ambiguous,’ ‘vague,’ ‘wishy-washy,’ ‘indirect,’ and ‘obscure.’ Again, this is not the case in this study, as most of the responses of the political interviewees are unequivocal. Based on their responses, it is evident that the main objective of the politicians is to present the best possible face for themselves, for the party they represent and for the Nigerian people, even though at the expense of their

political opponents' face. In fact, in the political interviews used in this study, the politicians do not think of their individual face as important as that of the people they represent, especially when they are asked to comment on issues that concern the Nigerian people.

The complexity of the multi-ethnic situation of the country, as well as the complex relationship between the politician's political party and the other opposing political parties, contribute to the complication of politeness phenomena in Nigerian political interviews. The Nigerian politician is aware that failure to give a direct, explicit, and satisfactory response to the Journalist's questions would result in a loss of face of the political party the politician represents as well as the Nigerian people he claims to be serving rather than that of the politician's individual face; therefore, though they used indirect expressions to display, they were not ambiguous in their responses. Thus, Nigerian politicians use more of negative and bald on-record politeness strategies because those strategies provide good means and opportunities for them to distinguish themselves, maintain a positive image for their political parties, the country as well as the Nigerian people to avoid arguments, disagreements, fights, lack of collaborative and collective effort while improving social interaction between them and the Nigerian people and among Nigerians themselves.

Conclusion

This study has shown that contemporary Nigerian politicians seem to have learned that, in most cases, a speaker may exhibit impoliteness when they do not mean to, which may lead to apprehension and bad feelings. Therefore, they are not assertive in their communication. They may also have learned that if politeness is employed wrongly in social interaction, it could negatively destroy communication, and so they must be polite if they want to successfully pass their intended message across. Thus, to avoid disagreements, rejection and lack of cooperation from the masses, they do not speak in such a way that will make them appear as if they should not be checked because they occupy a very high position or as if they think themselves too highly than they should, and so, everyone else must respect them. They also do not want to be seen as being forceful, assertive, imposing, domineering, commandeering, aggressive, dictating and harsh. To make it very easy for them to mobilize and coordinate the people towards greater and common good, Nigerian politicians have resorted to using tact, agreement, and generosity maxims to enhance politeness in the selected interviews for this study.

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Appendix

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MENTAL HEALTH SECURITY CHALLENGES OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR NIGERIAN TERTIARY INSTITUTION EDUCATION SYSTEM BY

1. Beatrice Tayo Ajayi PhD

drtayocyajayi@yahoo.com

+234 8035727363

*Department of Educational Psychology and Counselling,
Adeyemi Federal University of Education,
Ondo, Ondo State, Nigeria.*

2. AJIBADE, Mobolaji Oyebisi PhD

Department of Arts and Social Science Education,

Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife,

Osun State, Nigeria

Email:bolajiajibade@yahoo.com

+2348067377584

Abstract

The negative impact of the Coronavirus 2019 pandemic on mental health problems has been reported by media globally. Mental health is a major health contributor to the overall global burden of diseases. The mounting pressure of COVID-19 upon mental health of students in all aspects of human endeavor, education inclusive has changed a myriad of life's aspects causing significant distress, depression, anxiety, panic disorders, insomnia, fear, frustration in high, middle, and low-income countries across the world. The adopted version of Depression Anxiety and Stress Scales (DAAS-21) and the Impact of Events Scale-Revised (IES-R) were used for data collection. This study examined the prevalent mental health issues resulting from COVID-19 experiences during lockdown and post-lockdown academic activities of Nigerian tertiary institution students, of which 286 students were sampled for this study. Results revealed anxiety as a significant COVID-19 pandemic security challenge to tertiary institution students in Nigeria. The result also revealed significant difference in the mean scores of respondents expressed mental health challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic based on gender, age, school type and course of study. The implication is on poor state of required technological tools for advancement of quality education at tertiary education levels in Nigeria.

Keywords: Mental, Health, Security Challenges, Covid-19 Pandemic, Nigerian Tertiary Institution System

Introduction

Pronounced mental health security challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic are still remarkably prevalent across the world of today. A lot of

worries and apprehension still linger as imminent extinction of the COVID-19 pandemic, also known as coronavirus, a severe and acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus-related illness is yet invisible; since the outbreak in February 2019, immunizations and numerous other preventive measures have been implemented to stop the virus's spread. The virus' continuous mutation in various forms ranging from Delta to Omicron and now BA.2 raises concerns about the rise of various versions and anxieties as to how long people will have to live and battle with its cumbersome and inconvenient restrictive measures. The fear and panic of perceiving oneself and family members as potential victims of COVID-19 pandemic infection or death following news of high incidences of death released by local media suggest that possible cure is not yet in view.

The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the COVID-19 pandemic to be a global emergency on January 30, 2020, because of the severe health risks it has caused. Governments implemented border closures, travel restrictions, and quarantines in response to the COVID-19 curve flattening, raising concerns about an approaching recession and economic crisis (Nicola et al., 2020). This was welcomed with panic buying in shops and markets and further complicated shortages (Crain's Chicago Business, 2020). To control the exponentially increasing spread of the pandemic, countries around the world have imposed some protective measures, including social distancing, ban on congregations, avoidance of unnecessary travels, nose masking, regular hand sanitizing and washing with soap in running water to mention but a few (Rubin & Wessely, 2020).

Advantages of Mental Health

Humanity recognizes the need for good mental health for successful and healthy existence. A person is said to be in optimal mental health when he is aware of his abilities, able to handle life's normal stresses, work productively and fruitfully, and able to give back to his own community (Australian Government Department of Health, 2021). Someone with optimal mental health can also function psychologically, emotionally, and socially (Plumptre, 2021; Canadian Mental Health Association, 2022). Individual overall well-being heavily depends on mental health state. However, "health without mental health is not simply a catchphrase." It also recognizes the significance of mental health in the effort to enhance general welfare and productive engagement in social and economic activities.

Stress, anxiety, and fear are common reactions to real or perceived threats that might be related to instances like death of a loved one, job loss, interpersonal issues, and challenging situation like the covid-19 pandemic. However, with sound mental health, the despair and rage brought on by such horrific occurrences eventually dissipate, allowing one to go on enjoying life (Plumptre,2021).

Undoubtedly, the COVID-19 pandemic has posed a lot of fear and panic worldwide. It has caused a 25% increase in the prevalence of anxiety, depression, emotional isolation, insecurity, and stigma among people everywhere and undermined the mental health of entire communities due to numerous stressors during and after the COVID-19 lockdown (World Health Organisation, 2022).

The major changes to everyday life brought on by the restrictions on transportation in favor of measures to contain and halt the spread of the virus are added to the fear of contacting the COVID-19 pandemic. The new realities of working from home, short-term unemployment, home-schooling children, and lack of physical contact with other family members, friends, and coworkers also signal danger threats to mental and physical health (Nabila et al., 2021; World Health Organization, 2022).

It is impossible to exaggerate the advantages of mental health for overall well-being. The ability to deal with difficulties in life and overcome obstacles is better when mental and emotional states are at their best. A stable mental state might support healthier coping techniques where alcohol, drugs, isolation, temper tantrums, or fighting may have been used to handle marital conflicts, money problems, work difficulties, or other life obstacles (Miller, 2019; World Health Organisation, 2022). Having good mental health has several advantages, including improved productivity, healthier relationships, and positive self-image (Miller, 2019). Personal sentiments about oneself are strongly correlated with mental health. A person whose mental health is in good shape is more likely to concentrate on their positive attributes and to have goals that aim for a long, happy life. Self-esteem is influenced by overall mental health. The presence of confidence is frequently a sign of mental wellness (Miller, 2019). High levels of mental health are linked to better learning, creativity, and productivity, as well as greater pro-social behavior and pleasant social interactions, as well as better physical health and life expectancy, according to research (Canadian Mental Health Association, 2022). Contrarily, mental health issues like depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, and others can be distressing, have an impact on daily life and relationships, and are linked to ill health and early death (World Health Organization, 2022).

Also, the inability to carry out daily duties with ease and experiencing unexplained perplexity, anger, guilt, or worry are risk factors for poor mental health that may have an impact on mental well-being and raise the possibility of developing psychiatric disorders (Miller, 2019). Although this role is not well understood in low- and middle-income countries, such circumstances may affect one's capacity to handle life's curveballs, disrupt daily activities, and manage changes like the detrimental effects of COVID-19 on mental health that have been reported by media outlets around the world (Plumptre, 2021).

To enjoy the benefits of strong mental fitness and to combat or prevent the mental health issues that are related to a chronic physical illness or the onset of physical or mental illness, there is a strong advocate for the need to nurture and sustain mental health (Canadian Mental Health Association, 2021). Exercise, a healthy diet, and stress management are three crucial steps to enhancing mental fitness. For instance, exercise offers numerous psychological advantages. It is seen as a crucial component in establishing and preserving mental fitness. Regular physical activity appears to be beneficial as psychotherapy in treating mild to moderate depression and can lessen anxiety, according to research. Additionally, therapists state that patients who routinely exercise feel better and are less likely to overeat or engage in drug and alcohol misuse (Canadian Mental Health Association, 2021). In line with its advocacy for mental health sustenance, WHO advises people who care for children, older people, people in isolation, and general public members to take care of their mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is done in collaboration with partners (Canadian Mental Health Association, 2021; Plumptre, 2021).

Prevalence of Mental Health Security Threatening Events of COVID-19

Global healthcare has suffered due to COVID-19, which has negatively impacted all facets of human life (Nicola et al., 2020). The pandemic caused a severe decline in population mental health, and depression frequency across the board rose significantly in 2020. The pandemic has destroyed jobs and jeopardized the livelihoods of millions of people. Millions of people have lost their jobs since the COVID-19 pandemic began, and the majority have seen considerable disturbances in the way their work is organized and experienced. Anxiety and sadness are also more common among France's unemployed since that time. Many workers continue to participate in job retention programs (OCED, 2021).

In 2020, there was a significant increase in the prevalence of depression, which led to job losses, illnesses, and deaths among family breadwinners as well as a threat to the nutrition of millions of people, especially those in low-income countries and the most marginalized groups, such as small-scale farmers and indigenous peoples (WHO, 2020). Worldwide, the coronavirus pandemic has resulted in a tremendous loss of human life. It has impacted every aspect of daily life and poses previously unheard-of difficulties for food systems, public health, and the workplace.

Security threatening events of the COVID-19 pandemic have been felt in all aspects of human livelihood, including commercial activities, manufacturing industries, and education programmes to mention a few. Regarding the pandemic's detrimental effects on business operations and the manufacturing sector during the lockdown, skeleton work increased the anxiety of a food shortage, sadness, and uncertainties that pervaded events and activities. Markets'

suspension of floor trading also affected the capacity to swap commodities, which led to panic purchasing and further compounded shortages outside of grocery store shelves (WHO, 2020). Due to disruptions in supply chains and self-isolation policies, importation problems and workforce shortages showed out as the top concerns for firms. Indeed, for many industrial workers, working from home is not a viable choice (WHO, 2020). The British Factory Federation (BPF) undertook a survey to determine how COVID-19 is affecting the UK manufacturing industry (UK). Over 80% of those polled predicted falling turnover over the following two quarters, and 98% expressed concern about how the epidemic would affect business operations (Plastic Trade Body, 2020).

Travelers' Emotional Trauma Experiences

COVID-19 restrictions have seriously taxed international travelers' mental health security in several regards through rigorous border checks, repeated COVID-19 testing, compulsory quarantine for at least 14 days regardless of whether PCR test results turn negative or not, continuous monitoring of foreign travelers and demand for daily report of health status by Public Health Department and so on. These personal experiences of the researcher during her December 2021 brief stay in Canada obviously apply to hundreds of foreign travelers whose mental security had been taxed by continuous tension and panic while fearing probable positive COVID-19 test results requiring repeated testing and disruption in return journey' dates to their respective countries.

Tourists expressed overwhelming negative feelings of despair and agony during the COVID-19 pandemic. The new coronavirus pandemic unleashed a previously unimaginable worldwide situation in the first half of 2020: thousands of grounded aircraft, closed hotels, and interruptions to mobility in more than 180 nations. In February 2020, a slow escalation of travel restrictions and bans started, initially targeting Chinese nationals (Qi and Hi, 2021). Most memories and bad sensations predominated during the journey. Fear and despair were the two emotions that were most frequently mentioned, followed by tension, panic, stress, crying, nervousness, agony, frustration, sadness, and paranoia. These emotions were especially prominent in descriptions of experiences with lockdowns, flight cancellations, customer service issues, concerns about the possibility of contamination, and situations upon returning home. In numerous accounts, phrases like "being stranded" and "I just wanted to go home" emerged at poignant points in the interview when participants recalled the anxiety and worry of being away from home and surrounded by uncertainty. There were reports of anxiety related to Covid-19 during the pre-trip (Mayer & Coelho, 2021).

In the post-trip memories, sentiments of relief and comfort were always connected to going home and the satisfaction of at last being in a location with a psychological sense of security. When participants talked about the end of the trip,

the culmination of attempts to "escape" from "being stuck" in new or foreign places, relief and delight were also mentioned. The accounts of the interviewees often contained expressions of gratitude for a "good ending" (Mayer & Coelho, 2021).

Experiences of travelers stranded abroad are reported to be characteristic of mental and financial distress. Between July and September 2021, a primary data analysis was gathered using an online poll directed at those stuck overseas and unable to travel back to their home countries because of international travel restrictions. Responses show that 550 of 1245 rep, representing 44% respondents had earlier left their country of residence to take up long-term employment. Also, 854 of 1341 representing 63.7% respondents were stranded abroad for more than five months, while 357 of 1245 representing 28.7% of the respondents either had a flight booked or awaiting flight availability (McDermid et al., 2022).

In the COVID-19 depression, anxiety, and stress categories, many people stranded overseas reported lack of access to crisis assistance or mental health services. Responses from 719 of 1133, representing 63% stranded respondents revealed lack of access to crisis assistance or mental health services. Only 157 of 414 respondents representing 37.9% accessed crisis services. In addition, 133 of 1112 respondents, representing 12%, spent some time homeless while trapped abroad, 30 of 94, representing 32%, reported sleeping on the couch or in a spare bedroom at a friend's or family member's house, while 30 of 94 respondents representing 32%, were staying in emergency housing including homeless shelters. Less frequent experience revealed in responses of 18 of 94, representing 20% of respondents concerned those who lived on trains, in automobiles, at airports, in tents, and on the streets. Two survey participants admitted to having been sexually assaulted while residing in a homeless shelter (McDermid et al., 2022). Also, 723 of 1127 respondents, representing 64.2% of the population, reported experiencing financial difficulties, while 433 of 1127 representing 38.4%, reported a change in work, a breakdown of the methods used by respondents to deal with their present financial condition, employment changes, and employment history (McDermid et al., 2022).

COVID-19 Mental Health Security Challenges and Tertiary Education Institution Education

Preschool to tertiary education have been affected by COVID-19. Different nations have implemented various measures, from total closure in Germany and Italy (Samuel, 2020) to selective closure in the UK for everyone but the children of employees in vital industries (20). Following the WHO's official declaration of COVID-19 as an epidemic on March 12, 2020, most educational institutions worldwide closed at the start of April 2020, when about 1.6 million pupils were impacted across 194 nations. Additionally, the government of more than 100

nations has ordered all educational institutions to close. According to UNESCO, the closure of educational institutions has impacted nearly 900 million students. All schools in Nigeria were ordered to close in March 2020, and they did not start to resume until October of that same year (Nicola et al., 2020).

The Nigerian higher education, being one other sector with devastated impact of COVID-19, has been drastically affected by school closure, which brought a halt to teaching and learning activities for a period of 8 months COVID 19. During the lockdown, tertiary Institutions switched from traditional face-to-face instruction to remote learning via online learning management systems, including Canvas, Zoom, Edmodo, Google Classroom, and Microsoft Teams. Although there was unequal access to educational opportunities on the part of the students, course materials and pre-recorded lectures were also sent to students' e-mails, uploaded learning software, and occasionally students' WhatsApp groups by lecturers (Ebohon et al., 2021). Therefore, school closure resulted into poor learning, poor skills poor achievement poor school health, challenges in school assessment and transitions.

As a result of the widespread mental health crisis brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic's security-threatening triggering events, there have been jarring socioeconomic and demographic shifts, food insecurity, commercial and industrial productions that have crippled public service budgets, forced migration, and displacement (WHO, 2021). Financial crises can disrupt public service budgets, healthcare, and educational systems. These crises compromise educational institutions and healthcare facilities, which are both known to be intimately tied to the insecurity of mental health care (WHO, 2020). These pressures could trigger the next global mental health crisis, which is potentially just as dangerous for long-term health security as infectious diseases (Adelakun, 2020).

The Problem

Like in other sectors of agriculture, commerce, industry and health, the Nigerian educational institution is one sector that has been worse hit by the security challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic worldwide. Consequent upon the prolonged eight (8) months closure of schools across the length and breadth of Nigeria, students of Nigerian tertiary institutions along with their respective family members continuously faced uncertainties and fear of the unknown about imminent end of school closure. This was a great concern and disturbance to parents, students, educationists, and parents. Despite the arrangements made by some tertiary institution management for virtual teaching and learning during school closure, students residing in rural areas or lacking in using electronic or mobile devices lacked access to such virtual teaching. This study investigates the mental health security challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic to students

of tertiary institutions during lockdown and post-lockdown teaching-learning experiences with implications of results for Nigerian tertiary institution education system.

Procedure

This study adopts a survey research design. A total of 368 male=186 and female=100 students from five different tertiary institutions were involved in this study to explore / investigate the mental health security challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic on tertiary institution students in Nigeria. The DASS21 (Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale) is the adapted instrument for data collection. DASS21 is a standardized instrument consisting of 21 items with 7 items per sub-scale of Depression, 7 items for Anxiety subscale and 7 items for Stress subscale. DASS21 scale has been shown to have high internal consistency and potential to yield meaningful discriminations in a variety of settings. DASS21 Scale was distributed to 6 institutions across the geopolitical zones of Nigeria through various social medium platforms in students’ departments. 286 retrieved responses from the 400 copies of the instrument distributed were used as samples for this study. One (1) research question and one (1) null hypothesis guided this study. Simple percentage, as well as descriptive statistics of mean score and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), were used to analyse results as presented below, firstly with the demographic data of respondents.

Results

Table 1: Demographic data of respondents: Gender, Age, School and Course types

1	Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
	Male	186	65.0	65.0	65.0
	Female	100	35.0	35.0	100.0
	Total	286	100.0	100.0	

1	Age	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
	18-22	9	3.1	3.1	3.1
	23-28	213	74.5	74.5	77.6
	Above 28	62	22.4	22.4	100.0
	Total	286	100.0	100.0	

3	School Type	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
	Ado Bayero University. Kano	45	15.7	15.7	15.7
	Kaduna Polytechnic	50	17.5	17.5	33.2
	Imo State University, Owerri	98	34.3	34.3	67.5
	Adeyemi College of Education	84	29.4	29.4	100.0
	University of Port Harcourt	9	3.1	3.1	
	Total	286	100.0	100.0	

4	Course Type	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
	Chemistry	9	3.1	3.1	3.1
	Mathematics	55	19.2	19.2	22.4
	English	120	42.0	42.0	64.3
	Social Sciences	93	3.1	32.5	96.9
	Physics	9	100.0	3.1	
	Total	286	100.0	100.0	

Table 1 above presents demographic representations of respondents according to gender, age, and institution and course types. The table shows 186 male respondents representing (65%) and 100 female respondents representing (35%) of the total 268 respondents. The table also shows that 9 (3.1%) respondents are of age 18-22, 213 (74.5%) of age 23-28 and 64(22.4%) of age above 28. Distribution of respondents' institutions shows 45(15.7%) are from Ado Bayero University of Kano, North-West geo-political Zone, 50 (17.5%) from Kaduna Polytechnic, North Central, 98 (34.5%) from Adeyemi College of Education of Ondo, South-West geo-political zone, 84(29.4%) from Imo State University of Southeast and 99 (3.1%) from University of Port Harcourt, South-south Geo-political zone. Respondents' distribution according to course types shows that 55

(19.2%) were Mathematics students, 120 (42.0%) Chemistry, 9 (3.1%), English, 93 (32.5%) and 9 (3.1%) students of social sciences and physics courses respectively.

Research Question One: What is the mean score rating of respondents’ expressed mental health security challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Table 2: Mean score rating of mental health security challenges of COVID-19 pandemic

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Means	Std.
I feel that I am using a lot of nervous energy	286	1.50	.591
I find myself getting upset rather easily	286	1.43	.700
I find myself getting impatient when I am delayed in any way (e.g., elevation, traffic, being kept waiting)	286	1.27	.890
I feel sad and depressed	286	1.19	.661
I feel that I have nothing to look forward to	286	1.18	.466
I find it difficult to relax.	286	1.14	.636
I find myself in situation that made me so anxious and relieved when ended.	286	.65	.784
Valid N (listwise)			

The mean score rating of mental health security challenges of COVID-19 pandemic shows highest responses to anxiety items over other mental health subscales of depression and stress. For example, mean rating to item ‘I felt that I was using a lot of nervous energy’s mean rating of 1.50 is the highest compared to items of depression and stress.

Research Question Two: Which mental health subscale is significant for respondents’ COVID-19 security challenges?

Table 3: Subscale of mental health that is significant of COVID-19 security challenge

		Frequency	percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Depression	10	3.5	3.5	3.5
	Anxiety	214	74.8	74.8	78.3
	Stress	62	21.7	21.7	100.0
	Total	218	100.0	100.0	

The table above shows descriptive statistics of the respondents. The result shows security challenge on depression on the average to be 3.5%, Anxiety at 74.8% and Stress at 21.7. Therefore, the study reveals that anxiety is a significant COVID-19 security challenge to tertiary education students of Nigeria.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of respondents expressed mental health security challenges of COVID-19 based on gender, age, institution, and course Types.

Table 4: Analysis of Variance of differences mean scores of respondents expressed mental health security challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic

R = .513 ^a					
R2 = .863					
Adj. R2 = .247					
Std Error of the Est =466.					
Model	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	21.587	6	3.599	16.598	.006 ^a
Residual	60.505	279	.217		
Total	82.101	285			

a. Dependent Variable: insecurity during lockdown

b. Predictors: (Constant), gender, age, school type and course Type

Results in table 4 indicate the one-way Analysis of Variance (ANNOVA) value of 16.598, DF 285. Since the calculated F-ratio is higher than critical F ratio .000 at .05 level significance, the hypothesis was rejected. The result shows a significant difference in the mean scores of respondents expressed mental health

security challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic based on gender, age, institution and course types.

The study shows there is fitness of model which indicates that 86.3 % of the variation can be explained by variability of gender, age, school type and course Type. The statistical decision rule of p-value states that the Null hypothesis should be accepted if p-value is greater than alpha value (i.e., level of significant, which is 0.05); otherwise, it should be rejected, and the Alternative hypothesis is adopted. From this, it is established that the P-value is 0.0, which is less than the alpha value (0.05). Hence, this indicates that the result is statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the study agrees that there is difference in respondent's mean scores of expressed security challenges of COVID-19 based on gender, age, institution, and course types.

Discussion

Result of this study reveals significant difference in mean scores of mental health challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic expressed by tertiary institution students based on gender, age, institution, and course type. The result also reveals anxiety as a significant COVID-19 pandemic challenge to students of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The result agrees with the general notion that insecurities negatively impact a person's mental health and that insecurities feed mental health issues like depression, anxiety, and stress (World Health Organisation, 2020). All the three aspects of mental health security challenges (Depression, Anxiety and Stress) examined in this study were attested as having been impacted by tertiary students during lockdown, only that anxiety was most prominent of the three.

Result of significant difference in tertiary institution students' mental health challenges of COVID-19 pandemic based on gender, age, institution, and course type also corroborates with the finding of Adelokun, 2020 on the quality and effectiveness of the type of virtual teaching through which the skills of tertiary science students that could not gain access to practical aspects of their work was not enhanced. The study, however, disagrees with Eboho et al. (2020) on the advantage of virtual teaching among higher-income populations who can access technology that can ensure education continues digitally during social isolation (Alquishi, 2020; Eboho et al., 2020). The mental insecurity experienced by the population that has knowledge of ongoing virtual learning, but which unfortunately was not available to them could be better imagined. While these disparities tend to increase incidences of more deepened mental insecurities, they also go a long way to influence negative consequences of poor educational achievement, dropout and undesirable acting out behaviours of social vices like banditry among students.

Conclusion

Everyday life is full of stressors that task human resilience to cope and adjust appropriately and in performance of required tasks. COVID-19 pandemic stressors have additionally aggravated previously prevalent mental health security challenges of students of tertiary education system in Nigeria that pose enormous challenges to effective mental stability and successful accomplishment of academic achievement. Anxiety as COVID-19 pandemic security challenge is highly prevalent among students of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Students of tertiary education in Nigeria differ in their expressed COVID-19 security challenges of depression, stress and anxiety based on gender, age, institution, and course types.

Implications for Nigerian Tertiary Institution Education System

The results of this study have a lot of implications for tertiary education educational system. Virtually in all public institutions in Nigeria, unfavorable learning environment stressors, overcrowding lecture halls, insufficient and poor sitting arrangement for lecture hours and examination sessions have been prevalent before the onset of COVID-19 with their resultant consequences on poor performances, examination malpractice, anti-social vices, and discipline problems among students. The prevalence of mental health security challenges of COVID-19 challenges among students of tertiary institutions in Nigeria revealed by this study as additional stressors indicate emergence of more frustrating psychological disturbances among students with tendency for increased poor academic results and discipline problems. This result implies that frantic efforts should be made by proprietors of tertiary institutions in Nigeria (Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education to put in place required educational resources in their various institutions in order that anxiety, stress, and depression are drastically reduced among students of tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

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MANIPULATION OF RELIGION IN NIGERIA: IMPLICATIONS ON SECURITY AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Ògúnàjò, Bùsáyò Oláníyì (Ph.D)

*Department of Religions, Osun State University
Ikire Campus, Nigeria*

+2348067393931 / +2347055094571

busayo.ogunajo@uniosun.edu.ng / boogunajo@gmail.com

&

Dada, Olorunfemi

*Department of Religion and Peace Studies,
McPherson University*

Seriki Sotayo, Ogun State

+2347032743414 / +2347089769801

dadaolorunfemi@gmail.com

&

Rapheal, Ojo Joseph (Ph.D)

*Department of Religion and African Culture,
Adekunle Ajasin University,*

Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria

+2348032458049 / degreatjoe@gmail.com / ojrapheal@st.ug.edu.gh

Abstract

The reality of religious practices in Nigeria has often triggered diverse reactions, and in many cases, some form of complexities that characterized religious interaction of adherents of the Abrahamic religions – Christianity and Islam in Nigeria. These adherents, in most times, have been overtly or covertly indoctrinated to view others as people heading toward the wrong path or people that are committed to spreading heretical teachings that negate their ‘absolute truth claim.’ Hence, the need to defend their religious ‘interest’ with every possible means arise. Therefore, this paper examines the implications of manipulation of religion on national security in Nigerian society. This work adopts the phenomenological research approach to understand religious manipulation in Nigeria better. The study discovered that Nigeria has continued to witness high-level inter and intra-religious conflicts occasioned by manipulation of religion. And such has resulted in insecurity which has and is still hindering Nigeria’s national development. This paper identified religious, political, and ethnic division and insecurity in Nigeria as consequences of manipulation or abuse of religion. This work presents that religion is a tool for societal development if properly handled, and religion can become helpful in addressing security challenges in Nigeria when proper religious education is secured.

Keywords: Development, Religion, Manipulation of Religion, Insecurity, Nigerian Peace

Introduction

Nigeria is regarded as the most populous nation in Africa, accounting for about one-sixth of the African population (Onmhawo 2011:28). The country is a multifaceted society with a varied plethora of opinions and views regarding the religious state of the people. Some have labelled it a secular state. This is so because Section 10, 1999 constitution of Nigeria, as amended in 2011 maintains that Nigeria will not adopt any religion or belief system as a state religion. Despite this constitutional provision, the reality of events in Nigeria today presents a picture that is at variance with the constitutional provisions on this matter. The religious demographic distribution of the country has made it possible also to have labelled it a multi-religious country by scholars (Imaekhai2010:171). This reality, no doubt, speaks of the fact that Nigeria houses different religious traditions but prominently the religions are traditional indigenous religions, Islam and Christianity. The arrangement here also reflects their growth sequence in Nigeria.

Idowu (1991) captures the conception of religion in contemporary society through the elements of Nigerian religious and cultural heritages that puzzle foreign investigators. As Idowu (1991:3) remarks that religion exists at all moments (morning, afternoon and evening) and stages (birth, childhood, adulthood, and death) of existence. It exists in the “innermost beings,” major and minor aspects of life, manifest in the mass media, social media, and peoples’ conversations at all levels. This position can be better understood within the context of what can be referred to as contemporary and everyday understanding of religion as it connects to the historicizing of religion (Bergunder, 2014: 255).

Defining religion has continued to remain a herculean task, especially for scholars of religion, and has also been a major work for scholars from the beginning, but without consensus results (Greil, 2009:135). This is so because there are diverse complexities that characterize different religious phenomena. Also, the concept ‘religion’ is a Western and an academic idea and construct involving changing perceptions that could hardly explain the complexity of Nigerian religiosity. The expression of religion as a variable separated from culture is not a suitable representation of the intrinsic and extrinsic attributes of religion in the Nigerian experience. Olupona (2021:46-47) affirms that African spirituality is holistic with belief system revolving and involving every area of human existence and remains inseparable from the mundane as it manifests in both the private and public spaces. He pontificated that the Western idea of religion acknowledges that there is disparity between religion and the secular or other societal variables such as culture and environment. However, Africans do not see, think, and acknowledge any existing disparity between religion and

everyday activities. In Africa, religion manifests in every aspect and space of human activities such as art, health, politics, marriage, and dress. Hence, the term religion is foreign to the Africans, making it difficult for them to align with the Western idea of religion.

Olupona further points out that African Traditional Religion is holistic but not a theocratic or totalitarian religion. Religion, in its totality is a phenomenon of ultimate concern and interest for human society. Religion in every society undoubtedly provides a template for moral, social, economic, psychological, and spiritual growth and development, leading to social, political, and economic transformation. However, this would be impossible if spirituality is not included in human religiosity, that is, obeying societal, divine, and religious rules and regulations. This is because human, societal, political, socio-economical, and technological development cannot be achieved through indiscipline and ungodliness. Religion is expected to assist people to possess and exhibit virtues and social justice in human relationships. It should encourage people to embrace harmonious relationships for a peaceful and well-secured society actively.

However, religion in contemporary society is used by some human beings as a tool for causing and spreading violence, deceit, terrorism and destruction of living and non-living beings. It is constantly accused for much exploitation and manipulation in Nigeria. People harm and kill one another by suppressing the truth, denying justice and equity, and the commodification and commercialisation of religious products. It is abused to create division, intolerance, fundamentalism, fanaticism, discrimination, violence, exclusivism, superiority and particularity, which are not the core value of religion. Based on the above background, this paper examines the implications of religious abuse on security in Nigerian society.

The Meaning and Purpose of Religion

It is uneasy to define religion in its holistic forms, but some scholars have attempted to define religion from different angles based on individual perceptions. In the words of (Zed, 2017), religion is defined as a sacred way of walking, but not a way one talks. Zeb focused on the practical aspect of religion rather than its abstract aspect. However, religion involves beliefs and practices or saying and doing. Emile Durkheim defines religion as “a unified system of beliefs and practices relating to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden, beliefs and practices which unite into a single moral community called a church—all those who adhere to them” (Alamu 2021:9-10). Durkheim described the functionality of religion and situated it within the institutionalised religion or Christianity; however, confining religion to the western religiosity makes the definition insufficient and cannot capture the oriental and primal religions.

The above reveals that religion has been defined segmentally or based on individuals' area of interest. Also, authors such as Aderibigbe (2016) and Alamu

(2021), amongst others, have presented various definitions of religion based on scholars' fields of interest and perspectives or approaches such as sociological, anthropological, psychological, and theological perspectives among others. The two authors cited religion to represent deeds individuals perform in his or her solitariness (Whitehead), attitude of human beings to sacred order in the society (Peter Berger), "the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world" (Karl Marx), "the awareness of an "awe" that instills a unique blend of fear and fascination of the divine" (Rudolf Otto), faith in Spirit Being(s) (Edward Taylor), "the phantasies of an infantile life, and the return of the repressed" (Sigmund Freud). It could be stated that each scholar picked section(s) of religion known to him or her or prevalent in his or her society or society understudied. Hence, religion becomes what human beings call it.

Religion is an institutionalised set of doctrines that mostly relate to the belief in and veneration of a powerful force, such as divinity, a supernatural being, or a living Being, who ordered, controlled, organised and maintained the universe. As stated earlier, religion means different things to different people; for instance, western understanding of religion is quite different from African understanding of religion. Religion is both a private and public phenomenon in Africa, while it is a private variable in the Western world. Also, in the Asian world, there are religions such as Taoism, Confucianism, Shintoism, and Buddhism without the concept of God as it is well pronounced in African religiosity. In every society, religion involves cultural patterns, sacred places, revelations, morals, trances, philosophy, symbols, and sacred texts loaded with meanings and teachings to direct adherents and useful during rituals, prayers, sermons, meditation, and festivals.

Religion in the individual or private space plays crucial role in shaping and improving individual's life, thinking process, experiences, health, and well-being. In addition, studies revealed that religion through its scriptural instructions assists people develop positive healthy culture, good behaviours, and morals (Aldwin 2014:15). Religion, as a social variable, functions at every level of human existence in Nigeria. It should be said that the foundational and fundamental purpose of the existence of religion is positive. This study observed that religion is a channel through which Nigerians are comforted during hard economic and provided guidance during pandemic, gave a template for moral uprightness and sense of belonging. Nigerians often turn to religion to confront mental, social, political, economic, and family issues. The question is not about whether could be used to solve or has solved these issues, but it is a matter of noting that religion exists to give answers to fundamental questions arising from human existence on earth and about the hereafter.

Religion also encourages people to become advocates of equality, discipline, patience, morality, social justice, equity, freedom, selflessness and diversity in the society. It serves as a means of orientating, re-orientating, and emancipating people from ignorance and mediocrity. Religion is expected to be a binding force that unifies people through the principle of diversity. It was said by religious scholars such as Dopamu that God, who is at the centre of religion in Nigeria, “loves variety and hates monotony” (Alamu 2010:1). This assertion affirms the existence of the theology of diversity in purpose for the existence of religion regardless of the prevalence of religious particularity and exclusivism in Nigeria. Religious diversity is also evident in the statement of E.J Sharpe that one who knows only one religion does not know religion deeply as he or she supposed to know (Alamu 2010). Hence, the theology of diversity paves way for religious knowledge and understanding in the society. Furthermore, religion served as a conscience-strengthening and motivating phenomenon used to checkmate materialism, discrimination, inequality, poverty, and injustice, encourage unity and concord, and make people think and act constructively in society. It discourages dissension, social unrest, violence, unhealthy competition and strife, and the absence of this will pave way for social, economic, and political growth and development and harmonious relationships in the society. Religion fosters communalism in human society; that is, everyone must seek the common good of the society.

Religion provides the template to combat greed, hate, ignorance, and injustice, but human beings control and dictate the tune of religion, and the implementation of the various religious instructions also rest on the shoulder of human beings. The discussions so far about what the true meaning of religion could mean bring to the fore some of the positions and reflections of some of these scholars as to what they think, observe, or interpret as to mean religious experience around them. While scholars find it difficult to come to term with a universally accepted definition, it is also important to focus our attention on the fact that:

If we asked just some rephrased questions, we would no longer be concerned with simply describing religions and their effects, searching for a better way of conceptualizing religion, or correcting the lamentable misconceptions of so-called secular people and godless culture. Instead, we would proceed on the assumption that there is no proper conception that is sadly veiled (just what criteria would we ever use to distinguish conception from misconception?). We would begin in earnest the effort at re-describing and thus historicizing the “rules and recipes” that enable certain of us to classify various forms of human praxis *as* religious or spiritual or devotional or authentic, and the practical outcomes of such classifications (McCutcheon 2003: 9).

The argument of McCutcheon, as stated above, suggests that many scholars are putting much effort in trying to understand what religion could mean within the context of their 'subjective' mind, while others are making frantic efforts in framing it within the context of their preconceived mind. But more importantly is the understanding of the whole idea about religion, its understanding within any given specific milieu and how it reflects the specific experience of people within their ontological and epistemological settings.

Manipulation and Abuse of Religion and National Security in Nigeria

The realities of events in Nigeria since her independence in 1960, and majorly in the late 1970s clearly show the prevalence of religious influence in the public spheres. In most cases, this has continued to remain a bane to national development, especially when religion is not allowed to be practiced within an ideal context. When religion, as a social institution meant to promote social order, is being manipulated or abused, the consequential effects continue to hunt such society, ultimately debar sustainable development. Such is the case when discussing religion and religious practices in the Nigerian society, which is a multi-faith society. Research reveals that many factors are responsible for the seemingly unending cases of violence in Nigeria. These are but not limited to politics, ethnicity, and religion. However, it was gathered in the 2015 Annual Report that politics and religion were implicated as major drivers of violence in Nigeria (NSRP 2016).

Fundamentally, religious abuse is any form of violence, crisis, harassment, humiliation, discrimination, hatred, exploitation, and manipulation perpetrated under the name of religion, leading to the violent destruction of lives and properties, psychological trauma, economic loss, and insecurity among others. Also, it includes the misuse of religion or clerical position for selfish, material, and personal gain (Wright 2001:10). The term religious abuse speaks of psychological manipulation of religious teachings to inflict pain, suffering and to cheat people, create division and social unrest in the society. It is most often inflicted on adults and children suffering the negative impact of the abuse. The abuse is intentional and malicious (Wright 11). Religious violence and extremism cover all phenomena, spaces and times in which religion appear to be the reason for violent and social uproar (Wellman; Tokuno 2004:10). Religions, Islam, and Christianity in particular, are used as a vehicle for crisis, violence, conflict, deceit, manipulation, and destruction of humans and properties. It is widely identified as being responsible and criticised for many exploitations, divisions, intolerance, and manipulations in Nigeria (Utensati 2020:65).

In Nigeria, religion has been negatively used, and it has not effectively checked the materialistic nature of Nigerian society. It has even been diversely compromised by modifying its strict spiritual principles, and in several areas adopted materialism and adapted to the world's materialistic ideology. Such has

now led to the commodification of religion and religious experience in Nigeria. In most cases, the observable reality is that of unwholesome rivalry and competition among and between different religious communities. Thus, leading to ‘pastorpreneur-ship’ and ‘imampreneur-ship’ in Nigeria, and with a high level of materialistic concentration in their focus and planned religious programmes. Williams (1971:328) corroborates this fact by saying that the various religious abuses, crisis, and manipulations contribute to the political and economic problems of Nigeria, and the incessant religious abuses also make the problems to persist in Nigeria. To him, spiritual reasons underlie human’s current moral and socio-political degeneracy.

Nigeria has continued to witness high-level inter-and-intra religious conflicts, which frustrate development. However, the propensity and intensity of religious conflicts are particularly worrisome in Nigeria now. These conflicts are predominantly between Christians and Muslims with ethnic and political colouration. The crises are caused by ethnic, political, and economic related factors such as poverty, unemployment, land disputes, struggle for power, resource control, materialism and superiority. The outcome of the crisis has always been unpalatable as thousands of people had been killed, valuable properties being destroyed, and friends turning to enemies.

The rate of religious crisis in Nigeria is disheartening and very disturbing. Indeed, the level of atrocities being perpetuated has justified the claim of some scholars who argue that ‘religion is inherently violent’ (Apenda 2011:337). The recent of such violence was the clash between Christians and Muslims on Friday, February 4th, 2022, over the use of *hijab* in Kwara State, Nigeria which left many injured and disruption of the community. The most recent of the abuse of religion is the killing of Deborah Yakubu in Sokoto, a female student in Shehu Shagari College of Education, on 12th May 2022. She was allegedly killed for blaspheming Islam. Also, on 5th June 2022, unknown gunmen killed not less than fifty Christians in a Catholic Church in Owo during the Sunday service.

It was reported that Pastor Nuah Abraham of the Christ High Commission Ministry collected 310 000 naira from members as fees to the Kingdom of God (<https://rovingnaija.com/2022/05/09/pastor-who-asked-members>), and Pastor Josiah Peter Asumosa also deceitfully kidnapped 77 members of his church under the pretense of preparing them for rapture (<https://www.withinnigeria.com/news/2022/07/02/how-ondo-pastor>). The Boko Haram insurgency, now tagged as religious terrorism, is another form of religious manipulation which has given religion a bad name in Nigeria. And by extension, the avoidable incident sent dangerous signals to the already-charged religious atmosphere in Nigeria. Religious strife has displaced and rendered many people homeless, fatherless, and sending several to their early graves in Nigeria.

Religious fanaticism and unguarded religious enthusiasm are tools of abuse causing religious violence obstructing national security and development in contemporary Nigerian society. Religious fanatics display abnormal zeal, create upheaval as defend for their religions or God and consequently act as conveners of religious conflict in the Nigerian society (Balogun 1988:23). The adherents of Islam and Christianity have demonstrated intolerance triggered by fanaticism and the end products are violent demonstrations, killings of human being and destruction of properties. Aggressive evangelism and coercive attempts at converting and propagating the gospel at the expense of another in a multi-religious entity like Nigeria is another form of religious abuse bedevilling the country. This occurs when a sect or religious specialist sets out to propagate and convert people of other religion whom they consider heathens, pagans, unsaved or uncivilized.

Religious abuse revolves around psychological abuse, emotional abuse, sexual immorality, and acts that diminish human dignity. The act of intimidating members and propelling them to submit to a religious leader with no right to dissenting is an abuse of religion and religious right of people. Irrational control of a person's fundamental right to use his or her free will in religious and secular matters. Repeated criticism and false accusations by labelling people as rebellious, disobedient, faithless, demonized as an enemy of a particular religious group, disenfranchisement, and separation from people due to religious beliefs, esotericism, enforced religious practices, financial exploitation and enslavement of adherents are all different forms of religious abuse in contemporary Nigerian society.

Lambert (1996) defines religious abuse as psychological and religious enslavement. He identified five features of a leader who often abuses religion in society:

- i. **Authority and Power:** This involves religious leaders that arrogate too much power to themselves. In this instance, the religious organisations led by these leaders will lack accountability, and members will always be naïve and fearful, irrationally submissive, and unable to challenge the existing order of the groups.
- ii. **Manipulation and Control:** This second attribute describes how abusive religious organisations operate. Such group leaders input fear, uses threat to make members feel guilty, and obey them and conform to their strict and dogmatic rules without asking questions. Religious leaders with this attribute take total control, always demand members' absolute support and loyalty, make decisions for members, and pay little or no attention to the right of members.

- iii. Elitism and Persecution: The groups showcase themselves as being unique with tendency of isolation and schism from other groups. Furthermore, they are independent of other groups and lack necessary mechanisms that give way for internal and external correction and criticism.
- iv. Lifestyle and Experience: The behavioural pattern of the groups is rigid, and members must rigidly adhere to the ideals of the organisation.
- v. Dissent and Discipline: This kind of organisation has effective pattern of suppressing any form of opposition from members and non-members.

It remains clear that certain criteria that characterize religious abuse comprise intimidation, anger, pride, charisma, fraud, greed, immorality, authoritarian enslaving structure, exclusivity, demanding absolute loyalty, honour and respect. The questions arising are: Does Muslim and Christian teachings support or encourage members to engage in violence, killing, and terrorism? What is the teaching of Muslim and Christian on love, intolerance, and hatred? Are there examples of religious killing or instruction to kill in the Qur'an and Bible, or done by Prophet Mohammed and Jesus Christ?

The Implications of Manipulation of Religion on National Security in Nigeria

The discussions so far can be seen as a major survey of how religion has been grossly abused and manipulated either overtly or covertly in the Nigerian society. This manipulation, as pointed out is not limited to religious leaders but also involves religious adherents arising from religious indoctrination in most cases. As a matter of fact, the menace of religious abuse has devastating and negative impact on national security in Nigeria. The destruction that religious abuse and manipulation caused the nation cannot be overemphasized. The incessant clashes erupted due to the abuse of religions always resulted in untold hardship, and innocent people are the victims of such abuse. In the last three decades, the violence has made many Nigerians homeless and refugees, especially in the North-Eastern part of Nigeria (Egwu 2001:32).

Religion was supposed to be a contributing factor to national security and development in Nigeria was manipulated to wreak destruction on Nigerians. Also, the abuse of religion further advanced the existing division, suspiciousness, and discrimination among religions in Nigeria. Religious abuse and disturbance victims frequently have psychological trauma that cannot be easily forgotten. Religious abuse, such as religious terrorism dents Nigeria's image internationally. The frequent spurting of religious abuse and its attendant effects has caused advanced countries to tag Nigeria as unsafe nation and to warn their citizens against travelling to Nigeria because of religious terrorism and banditry in the

nation (Sulaiman 2016:35). For example, as of 2003, the American State Department stated the dangers of travelling to Nigeria to the Americans (Abubakar 2003:6; Sulaiman & Ojo 2013:37). Also, in 2004, the United States of America and Britain advised their citizens to desist from travelling to Nigeria due to the religious tension between Muslims and Christians, and Boko Haram terrorism operations in Nigeria. (Egua & Makinde 2004:6; Avalos 2005:32). This does not speak well of Nigeria, hence the need for an absolute understanding of religious tenets to promote peace and create a well-secured country for national development. Also, this culture of religious abuse, manipulation and insincerity of some Nigerians has caused citizens of other nations to develop attitude of mistrust for Nigerians. Nigerians alone are subjected to thorough screening and checking in the airport.

Religious abuse gives rise to economic losses. The country is losing opportunities for economic development owing to the menace of religious terrorism, crisis, exploitation, and rivalry. It should be stated that Nigerians are also suspicious of one another. In 1984, for instance, some Nigerians kicked against the 2.5-billion-naira Saudi Arabia's interest-free loan because they were suspecting that Nigeria government then wanted to Islamise Nigeria by joining the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) (Ojie 2004:12). Countries such as Cameroon, Guinea Bissau, Gabon, Uganda, Sierra Leone, and Burkina Faso collected the loan and were not Islamised or became Islam States.

Concluding Remarks

A critical reflection on the discussions so far about manipulation and abuse of religion in Nigeria shows how such has continued to become a bane to sustainable development and a major factor responsible for some of the cases of insecurity being witnessed and still experiencing in Nigeria. Going by the aim of this work in assessing the implications of manipulation or abuse of religion in Nigeria, it becomes clearer in this work that othering of other people's religion especially in Nigeria are in some cases done deliberately, while in other cases are usually unintended. Moreover, in most cases, religious leaders are often instrumental to some of these manipulations. They often engage in religious polemics which are the seeds that often produce mutual distrust, mistrust, and suspicion.

The series of religious manipulation or abuse in contemporary Nigeria revolves around an unending quest for materialism, commercialization of religious activities, religious conflicts, exploitation, breakdown of law and order, disunity, injustice, moral decadence and bankruptcy, insecurity, political intolerance, and increased economic losses. The religious clashes which are products of religious abuse have inflicted serious hardship on individuals and the government. Apart from undermining national security and stability of the nation, manipulation of

religion tarnishes the image of Nigeria among the comity of nation. This study concluded that qualitative religious education, knowledge and exposure, sincere religious dialogue, and religious understanding should be used as panacea for religious violence and abuses in Nigeria. This will ensure national security in Nigeria and peaceful co-existence among adherents of religions. In conclusion, this paper recommends that:

- i. There should be enlightenment to showcase that the attempt by one religion to impose its tenets on another will continue to be resisted by at least a segment of the people.
- ii. Moral uprightness of religious adherents could showcase their integrity to attract people who are tired of the hypocrisy found in any religion. However, it is important to emphasise the need for most adherents to acquire Western education, which could help them to demystify all the gimmicks employed by leaders to abuse religion to their detriment.
- iii. To curb the feelings of one religion having a better lot over another, inquiries should be made about the place of origin of the two dominant religions in Nigeria, the first practitioner of the religion, and the primitive stage of the religion. Findings may show similarities to unite rather than differences that divide the adherents; it may equally show some cover-ups coupled with the fact that nearly all religions have gone through a transformation at various stages.
- iv. The future of religion in Nigeria, therefore, relies heavily on the knowledge of the general nature of religion. Knowing that every religion believes the supernatural being that is worshipped is real and that each of the religions of the world is acting according to its belief. The fact that one is performed by an Arabian, European, African, or Nigerian people has neither made one superior nor inferior to another.
- v. Religious fanaticism is the product of ethnocentricity and narrow-mindedness, which prevent a fanatic from seeing that there is no essential difference between what he is doing and what the other person is doing, no essential difference between his religion and that of the other person (Omoregbe 2006:10). He ridicules the religion of the other person and calls it derogatory names. Blindfolded by ethnocentricity, fundamentalism, and superiority, he thinks that his own beliefs are the “true” beliefs and his religion the “true” religion (Omoregbe 2006:11). To hope for the positive use of religion in Nigeria, all voices should be encouraged to join that of Omoregbe to denounce this Asian Minor’s exclusivism.
- vi. We implore the Government of Nigeria, both at the Local, State and Federal levels to steer clear of every religious activity. Religious holidays should be scrapped totally to give room for peace. If the government refuses to aid any religion above the other but allows all

religions to be limited to the home, heart, and houses of worship of the deities of adherents, all religions will thrive equally without one having an edge over another.

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THE MANY FACES OF SECURITY CHALLENGES IN NIGERIA: ANY SILVER LINING AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL?

Professor Patricia O. Donli

Department of Biological Sciences

University of Maiduguri

&

Gender Equality, Peace and Development Centre,

Maiduguri

Abstract

Ungoverned spaces foster the growth of violent extremism and crime. Good governance is crucial for addressing these challenges, but Nigeria lacks it. This paper sheds light on the causes of insecurity in Nigeria, measures taken to curb the challenge, and some ways to tackle the menace. After reviewing some concepts related to the study, the paper identifies weak security system, poverty, greater awareness of disparities in life chances, ethnicity, and ethnocentrism, religious divide, majority/minority divide, manipulation of diversities and consequences, youth unemployment/underemployment, displaced and out-of-school children, proliferation/influx of small arms and light weapons, impunity, inequity, and repentant terrorists as causes of Security Challenges in Nigeria. The article further documents some active security challenges in Nigeria, such as the Boko haram insurgency and other militancy activities, the farmer-herder conflicts in the north-central states, ethno-religious conflict, conflict over resources, the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) saga, banditry and criminality in the northwest, kidnapping, electoral violence, corruption, and gender-based violence. The paper concludes by suggesting the way forward to tackle insecurity, such as advocacy for the practice of politics of difference, recognition of diversities, peacebuilding measures, reform of the democratic system, and tapping the potential of African youth.

Keywords: Security, insecurity menace, faces of security challenges, good governance

Introduction

Nigeria is facing a very challenging time concerning security – from the northeast to the southwest, northwest to southeast, northcentral to south-south, nowhere is spared. Just as there are many locations of insecurity, there are many perpetrators of it. Just pick a newspaper in Nigeria today and you will see several of such dastardly acts perpetrated by agents of darkness. The question is, “Any hope of ending this?”

The paper is divided into four major sections. The first section deals with definition of the terms used in the paper; the second section highlights the causes

of security challenges in Nigeria; the third highlights the active security challenges in the country; the fourth section discusses the way forward. The final section is the conclusion. To proceed with this conversation, there is a need to define some of the concepts that I will use in the paper.

Security: Nwolise (2006) defines security as “an all-encompassing condition which suggests that a territory must be secure by a network of armed forces; that the sovereignty of the state must be guaranteed by a democratic and patriotic government, which in turn must be protected by the military, police and the people themselves; that the people must not only be secured from external attacks but also from devastating consequences of internal upheavals such as unemployment, hunger, starvation, diseases, ignorance, homelessness, environmental degradation and pollution and socio-economic injustices. It is generally argued, however that security is not the absence of threats or security issues but the ability to rise to the challenges posed by these threats with expediency and expertise.

National Security: National security refers to the “Aggregation of the security interests of the individuals, political entities, human associations, and ethnic groups, which make up the nation. The security interest includes the safety of life and property, economic, psychological, and mental well-being, and the freedom to pursue the attainment of legitimate objectives without hindrance” (Obasanjo, 2017). Anything that breaches this state of things is a security challenge.

The government must cater for the security and the welfare of the people. According to Section 14(2)(b), “the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government”. Thus, the very reason for which the state exists is to secure the lives and property of its citizens, failure of which it loses the essence of existence.

Human Security - Human security approach is concerned with lasting peace. So, it looks at the whole range of human existence and all the challenges women, men, girls and boys, and governments face. Human security looks at the following - personal security, food security, health security, economic security, community security, environmental security, political security, etc.

Insecurity: Insecurity is the antithesis of security. Insecurity is defined as “a state of fear or anxiety due to absence or lack of protection (Beland, 2005); “It refers to lack or inadequate freedom from danger.”; the state of being exposed to risk or anxiety; a state of vulnerability to harm and loss of life, property or livelihood.

Diversity: Diversity is any dimension that can be used to differentiate groups and people from one another. It means **understanding that everyone is unique and recognising our differences**. These include race, ethnicity, gender, sexual

orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies.

Diversity Management: Diversity management is about respecting, appreciating, and valuing each group. It allows for exploring these differences in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment, understanding one another by surpassing simple tolerance to ensure people genuinely value their differences.

Peace: Peace is not just the absence of war/violent conflicts but the presence of justice, of law, of order – in short of government”. Peace is a condition in which there is no social conflict and individuals and groups can meet their needs, aspirations, and expectations. It is a state of well-being that is characterised by trust, compassion, and justice; a state which encourages all to explore as well as celebrate diversities and search for the good in one another without the concern for personal pain and sacrifice, providing us a chance to look at ourselves and others as part of the human family, part of one world.

Peacebuilding: Peacebuilding is an all-embracing concept that focuses on a broad range of peace activities aimed at capacity building, reconciliation, and conflict transformation (Oyedele, 2019). Peacebuilding is defined as an intervention designed to prevent the start or resumption of violent conflict by creating sustainable peace, address the root causes or potential causes of violence, create a societal expectation for peaceful conflict resolution, and stabilise the society politically, socially, and economically. It covers a wide range of efforts by diverse government and civil society actors at the community, national and international levels to ensure civilians have freedom from fear, want and humiliation before, during and after violent conflicts. Peacebuilding also involves the “development of constructive personal, group and political relationships across ethnic, religious, class, national and racial boundaries ... to resolve injustice in non-violent ways and to transform the structural conditions that generate deadly conflict”. It addresses such issues as human rights, economic prosperity, environmental sustainability, and violence. Thus, successful peacebuilding activities create an environment supportive of self-sustaining, durable peace; reconcile opponents; prevent the resumption of conflicts; integrate civil society; create rule of law mechanisms; and address underlying structural and societal issues and lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development. It includes early warning and response efforts, violence prevention, conflict resolution, peace advocacy, civilian and military peacekeeping, military intervention, humanitarian assistance, ceasefire agreements, and the establishment of peace.

Causes of Security Challenges in Nigeria

1. **Government’s failure due to lack of institutional capacity:** Igbuzor (2011) observed that the state of insecurity in Nigeria is majorly the governmental

failure or can be linked to governmental failure. This is manifested by the government's incapacity to deliver public services and provide for the basic needs of the masses. The lack of necessities for the people in Nigeria has created a pool of frustrated people who are ignited easily by any event to be violent. Nigeria has the resources to provide for the needs of its people. However, corruption in public offices at all levels has made it impossible for office holders to focus on the provision of basic needs for the people. Nigeria is a paradox: "Poverty in the midst of plenty"; the nation's wealth resides in very few bank accounts, leaving the majority (millions) below poverty line.

2. **Weak security system:** This results from inadequate equipment for the security arm of government, both in weaponry and training. In many cases, security personnel assigned to deal with given security situations lack the expertise and equipment. A good example is the complaint of our military in the Northeast, where their weapons are inferior to those of Boko Haram and ISWAP.

3. **Poverty:** Poverty level in Nigeria is very high and pervasive. It is estimated that 70% of Nigerians live below poverty line with women constituting 80% of them (Nigeria has taken over from India as the poorest nation). There is serious hunger in the land; a hungry man is an angry man. Poverty is a result of bad governance, maladministration, exploitation of national resources for personal use, corruption, nepotism, and crass insensitivity to the plight of the ordinary man on the street. People then resort to devising survival strategies with such vulnerable people falling victim of another set of exploiters who may now use the guise of religion or economic prosperity to lure them into criminal activities culminating in security challenges. As a result of the high level of unemployment and poverty among Nigerians, especially the youths, they are adversely attracted to violent crimes. Examples are the Yahoo-yahoo and Yahoo + boys, whose desperation for instant riches has seen them dabble into ritual killings and fear among the citizens. It is argued that Nigeria has the wherewithal to provide for her people, but corruption of public office holders has made this impossible. Nigeria is a 'paradox of plenty,' a prosperous country with impoverished people. With this kind of situation, insecurity of lives and properties is bound to arise/occur (Hazen & Homer, 2007).

4. **Greater awareness of disparities in life chances:** As seen through the various media, this is a major root cause of insecurity in Nigeria. This is a rooted general perception of inequality and unfairness, which has resulted in grievances by many people. This stems from the perception of marginalisation by a section of the people in government's developmental policies and political offices. This has become a primary source of disaffection, resentment, and frustration among many of the Nigerian population, especially the youths.

5. **Ethnicity and ethnocentrism:** Nigeria has over 250 ethnic groups. It is no wonder that ethnicity is considered by many as the bane of the country. Most Nigerians identify themselves first and foremost as members of their various ethnic groups rather than identifying themselves as citizens of Nigeria. Ethnicity

is not the problem per se but ethnocentrism, which is the belief that one's ethnic group is much more important than the ethnic groups of others, the concept of ethnic superiority. Ethnocentrism breeds distrust, insecurity and fear among the various ethnic groups and perpetuates inequalities and marginalisation. The fear of domination, inequalities and marginalisation has led to the re-emergence of various ethnic nationalities. Often, accusations and allegations of neglect, oppression, domination, exploitation, victimisation, discrimination, marginalisation, nepotism and bigotry underlie ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria. These fears were there prior to independence and were expressed by minorities but were deliberately ignored by the Willink Commission, leading to the deaths of thousands of Nigerian citizens.

6. **Religious divide:** Nigeria is roughly split in half between Muslims and Christians with a very small minority who practice traditional religion. These religious groups were able to live peacefully respecting one another's religion until the political elites began to use religious sentiments to reap advantages, especially during the electioneering periods or appointments. This has ushered in the concept of religious supremacy and fight for domination in the country, making ethno-religious conflicts a permanent feature of the Nigerian polity. The consequence is that over the past few years, thousands of people have been killed in series of ethno-religious clashes. Sometimes such killings emanate from developments in far-away countries. For example, the Danish cartoon of Prophet Mohammed (PUH) resulted in the killing of thousands of people and the displacement of over 800,000 persons. The flash points for these conflicts have been the NC and NE zones. The introduction of the Shariah law in 2000 in some northern states resulted in the deaths of many Nigerians.

7. **Majority/minority divide:** Hausas, Igbos and Yorubas (in alphabetical order) are considered the majorities; all other ethnic nationalities are considered minorities. Related to this is the dichotomy of indigenes and settlers that has been a major cause of conflicts in some states in the Country.

8. **Manipulation of diversities and consequences:** The mass population of Nigeria is characterised by diversities based on ethnicity, religious beliefs, political inclination, and resource control. Though these diversities portend strength in synergy for peace and social cohesion, they are often conveniently used as veritable platforms for promoting hate and violence. Nigeria's divisive interplay of politics, ethnicity and religion has led to rising nationalism and militancy of various ethnic and religious movements. Many ethnic minorities are crying of exploitation, marginalisation, powerlessness, cultural domination and violence, political marginalisation and social inequalities, neglect, nepotism, victimisation and bigotry, oppression, discrimination, inequalities in the distribution of power, wealth and status, and the domination by bigger ethnic groups and their collaborators within the smaller groups with attendant consequences.

10. Youth unemployment/underemployment, displaced and out-of-school children:

Nigeria is a young country and will remain so throughout the twenty-first century (Nigeria Next Generation Report, n.d.). The youth unfortunately have been neglected in the scheme of things with dire consequences. Despite the large proportion of young people in Nigerian society, little space is given to accommodate youths in the political arena. Instead, they are increasingly instrumentalised to support political players through political violence. It is important to redefine youth behaviour and roles to enable them to initiate and contribute to positive change in Nigerian society. No wonder Chukuezi (2009) submitted that the choice between success and failure rests on Nigeria's ability to harness the power of its single greatest asset – the youth, not oil. Like women, youth participation in politics and other national issues had been relatively low until the 2015 constitutional amendment ushered in the “Not Too Young to Run” to enhance political participation. Unfortunately, other conditions necessary for actualising this were not put in place.

Unemployment among Nigerian youths makes this group of people a ready pool and willing tools to be used for negative actions such as thuggery, armed robbery, and conflicts. The youth in the various geographical zones are usually at the vanguard of most of the conflicts. Naturally exuberant and creative, they are very dangerous when they choose or are forced by circumstances to apply their mental faculties to negative enterprises. The various crises have led to massive displacement of people, mostly children. Under such circumstances, the traditional family and community networks that normally give comfort and emotional support to children in crisis are broken and destroyed. These are often associated with high levels of violence, alcohol, and substance abuse. Substance abuse makes the youths vulnerable and can easily be recruited/conscripted into the various groups, as in the Boko Haram sect. Another pool for recruitment into the Boko Haram sect is the street children. Since the early 2000, there has been massive intra-country and interstate trafficking of children to Borno State (Maiduguri). Nigeria has 10,193,918 out-of-school children (Minister of State for Education, June 2021). These children are left to fend for themselves on the streets at the mercy of criminally minded characters that use them as cannon fodders during crisis. Some of these street kids were fertile grounds for recruitment into the Boko Haram sect.

11. Proliferation/influx of small arms and light weapons: The porosity of our borders and weak security system have combined to make entry of small arms and light weapons from other countries very easy. Small arms and light weapons proliferation and the availability of these weapons have enabled militant groups and criminal gangs to have easy access to arms (Hazen & Horner, 2007). According to Edeko (2011), Nigeria is estimated to host over 70 percent of about 8 million illegal weapons in West Africa.

12. **Impunity:** Punishment is compromised when criminal elements hide in various government institutions under the guise of immunity. There is a disposition for selective dispensation of sanctions, one for sacred cows, one for the common man. This breeds a veritable ground for protest, which degenerates into outright breach of security.

13. **Inequity:** There is no uniform deployment of developmental programmes with federal resources to many parts of the country with power concentrated at the centre. Resources are deployed to states administered by political parties that rule at the centre. This also is a recipe for objection and discontentment, which results in violent response.

14. **Repentant terrorists:** Repentant terrorists are absorbed and integrated into the country's security apparatus, thus inviting chaos. This is a policy that for all intents and purposes is designed to please a particular constituency. Same as hitherto, politicians once corrupt in other parties become saints when they defect to the ruling party.

Some Active Security Challenges in Nigeria

1. **The Boko haram insurgency and other militancy activities:** Nigeria, especially the Northeast, has been under attack by the Boko Haram insurgents, an Islamic group that is bent on replacing the current secular government in Nigeria with the one that is based on the Sharia law since 2009. Their emergence in northern Nigeria has exacerbated and complicated the conflicts in scope and the sophistication of the weapons being used and internationalisation of the conflicts with links to Al Qaeda and Al Shabban in Somali, the rebels in Mali and Libya. The crisis initially affected the six states but is now contained within the three states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe (often referred to as the BAY states). Over 37,000 people have been killed (almost half of them are civilians, and many others are members of the armed forces of Nigeria), over 2.1 million internally displaced and 304,562 Nigerian refugees (January 2020, Round 35). 80% of these are in Borno and 80% are women and children. Many of the internally displaced persons (IDPs) live in very precarious conditions – overcrowded conditions with makeshift and temporary shelters; 7.9 million people needed humanitarian assistance at the beginning of 2020. That figure is now higher because of the COVID-19 pandemic). The insurgents have been involved in the destruction of public infrastructures, including health facilities (more than 40 percent of health facilities in those three states have been damaged or destroyed). The crisis has had a very significant impact on education. They are adamantly opposed to western education and education is one of the primary targets of the insurgents. According to UNICEF, 952,029 school-age children have been forced to flee the violence in the Northeast, 600 teachers have been killed, 19,000 teachers displaced, 1200 schools have been damaged, resulting in 600,000 children losing access to learning. The means of livelihood of the people have been destroyed, resulting in the drastic decline in socio-economic activities and increased poverty.

The Boko Haram insurgency, which started in the Northeastern part of the country, has spread to the northwest, north central, FCT and eastern part of the country with reprisal attacks of the death of kinsmen in the north.

2. The farmer-herder conflicts in the north-central states: The deadly clash between indigenous farmers and herdsmen in many parts of Nigeria is another security challenge in Nigeria. In Benue, Plateau, Nasarawa, Kaduna, Ekiti, Katsina, etc., many people have been killed, maimed, raped and many have suffered untold destruction of their properties. Violence has become a pastime between herders and host farmers leading to loss of lives, priorities and displacement of farmers and cattle thefts.

3. Ethno-religious conflicts: Ethno-religious conflict is defined as a situation in which the relationship between members of one ethnic or religious group and another of such group in a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society is characterised by lack of cordiality, mutual suspicion and fear, and a tendency towards violent confrontation. Ethnicity and religion are the greatest differences manipulated and exploited by politicians to mobilise support for themselves toward electoral victory. To Nigeria's detriment, ethno-religious conflict is seen as a means of correcting any perceived form of marginalisation, oppression, or domination. The absence of good governance and concrete efforts to forge national integration and economic growth has also increased poverty and unemployment, resulting in the communal, ethnic, religious and class conflicts that have now characterised Nigeria. The country's poor and jobless are exploited as mercenary fighters, ready to kill or be killed for a token. As a result, ethno-religious crises usually have large turnouts, including under-aged fighters. According to Hazen and Horner (2007), Salawu (2010) and Igbuzor (2010), ethno-religious conflict is a major source of insecurity in Nigeria. Frequent and persistent ethnic conflicts and religious clashes between the two dominant religions (Islam and Christianity) present the country with a major security challenge. These have arisen from distrust among various ethnic groups and among the major religions in the country. Frequent and persistent ethnic conflicts and religious clashes between the two dominant religions (Islam and Christianity) present the country with a major security challenge. In all parts of Nigeria, ethno-religious conflicts exist. According to Ibrahim and Igbuzor (2002), these have emerged due to new and particularistic forms of political consciousness and identity often structured around ethno-religious identities.

Conflict of values and beliefs is one of the most difficult crises to resolve. It becomes even more complicated when the government is perceived to support one side. This has often led to the erosion of trust between the government and the people and questions the integrity of members of panels of investigation set up by the government.

4. Conflict over resources: Nigeria is dependent on oil in the south and other resources such as agricultural resources from the north. Here we have the farmer-herder conflicts raging in the north-central zone and extending to the Southeast and Southwest zones; the Southern Kaduna killings, the Agatu Massacre, and the various resource control movements - Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP); Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND) (their activities comprise oil bunkering and piracy and kidnapping of oil workers. They sought for the development of oil-producing areas, employment for their youths and amelioration of contaminated farmlands and fishing rivers); Niger Delta Avengers (NDA); Niger Delta Volunteers (NDV) in the Southeast, the Movement for the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) to IPOB (Indigenous People of Biafra) to mention some. At the background of these groups are the more mature sectional and ethnic groups in Nigeria: Arewa People's Congress, Arewa Consultative Forum, Oodu'a People's Congress, Afenifere and the Ohaneze Ndigbo, among others.

5. Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB): The Indigenous People of Biafra is a separatist organisation in Nigeria. Its main aim is to restore an independent state of Biafra in the old Eastern region of Nigeria.

6. Banditry and criminality in the northwest: The northwest zone has become a killing field. **Five thousand and sixty-seven (5,067) Nigerians were reported to have been killed in 2021 owing to insecurity;** 14 Nigerians died daily in various violent attacks reported in the news media from January to December 2021. Majority of these were in the northwest.

7. Kidnapping - Almost on a weekly basis, there are reports of kidnapping – on the roads, from the communities, places of worship, etc. Data from Nextier SPD Violent Conflict Database shows that in the twelve months to September 2021, Nigeria recorded 20 kidnapping incidents resulting in 2,542 kidnap victims. Four states – Zamfara, Katsina, Niger, and Kaduna – account for 44 percent of the kidnapping incidents and 82 percent of the kidnap victims. Only four states did not report any kidnapping incident in the period under review. With the failure of the state to protect or retrieve the kidnapped, Nigerians have resorted to negotiating and paying the ransom. Unfortunately, this practice has made the crime attractive and increased kidnapping incidents.

8. Electoral violence: Nigeria's democracy is marred by electoral violence. According to Nigeria's Security Tracker (2019), 100 people were killed in election-related violence in 2003 and 300 in 2007. The worst election-related violence occurred three days after the 2011 election, with 700 people killed and 700 in Kaduna alone. Electoral violence constitutes a major obstacle to people's participation, especially women, in electoral processes specifically and political

participation in general, as well as a broader risk to peace and security within the country.

9. Corruption: Corruption is highly pervasive in Nigeria. The Corruption Perception Index (CPI), which ranks countries and territories by their perceived levels of public sector corruption according to experts and business people was used to assess 180 countries in 2019. The findings showed that Africa is the lowest-scoring region with an average score of 32/100. Nigeria scored 25/100 and is ranked the 31st most corrupt nation in the world. Corruption has killed more people than Boko Haram and is responsible for the criminality in the country. Every day people go hungry; everyday people die on our roads because monies meant for road construction/rehabilitation have been stolen and taken out of the country. Many are dying of fake drugs and lack of equipment because of corruption.

10. Gender-based violence: This became rampant and pervasive in the country, exacerbated by the various crises so much that in 2021, the Nigerian Governors' Forum declared a state of emergency on GBV. In one workshop my organisation had with adolescent girls and boys, one of the girls defined security this way: "Security means going to school and coming back without being harassed and raped." GBV, such as rape, domestic violence, physical violence, psychological and economic violence increase when there is conflict. The Boko Haram conflict in Northeast Nigeria and the ethno-religious conflict in Jos, Plateau State is a good example of the impact of conflict on the violation of the dignity of women. One of the most traumatic impacts of armed conflicts is the violation of their sexual and reproductive health rights - rapes, sexual abuses, including abduction and sexual slavery, forced marriage and mutilations. Boko Haram insurgents have used rape as a weapon of terror. According to General Patrick Cammeert (2008), "It is now more dangerous to be a woman than to be a soldier in modern conflicts." Rape and other forms of sexual violence are often used to shame and humiliate the enemy and to spread terror and weaken morale. During conflicts, women remain vulnerable in their homes, IDP camps, or flights. In Odi (South-south), women were raped in their homes and killed by military personnel. About 67% of respondents in Jos believed that women were raped, beaten and sexually harassed during the Jos conflict.

Way Forward

1. Advocacy for practice of politics of difference: Recognising the diversities: Politics of difference is about acknowledging that every society is made up of groups and recognition of these groups and differences is imperative to ensure that the group dynamics within the nation are not allowed to negatively influence or assist any group to the detriment of another. Nigeria, with over 400 ethnic groups, is laced with many layers of differences – ethnicity, culture,

language, religions, political parties, geopolitical zones, states, majority/minority ethnic groups, settlers/indigenes, gender, age, disability, etc.

2. Nigeria needs peacebuilding

Nigeria is a country with great need for serious and sincere peacebuilding. Peacebuilding that would create a safe space for the divides to be bridged increase social cohesion through human and structural development which are vital to bringing together Nigeria's different groups.

Women should be involved in the peacebuilding processes at all levels. The positive roles of women in other climes under the same circumstances may also assist the Nigerian woman in the determination of her own roles in these challenging times. The international community recognises the importance of women's participation in creating the conditions for permanent peace, thus on 31 October 2000, the UN Security Council adopted the landmark resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, which acknowledges the critical role women could play in preventing and resolving conflicts, negotiating peace, participating in peacekeeping and in humanitarian response and post-conflict peace-building. Among other things, the resolution calls for women to participate fully in all efforts to maintain and promote peace and security.

This process, which has been noted as best practice, involves a wide range of activities that result in women's direct and full participation in ensuring peace and stability before, during, and after elections. It may involve a range of peacebuilding activities, including consultations, training, monitoring, and advocacy, bringing together women, youth, media, electoral stakeholders, professionals, religious and traditional leaders and institutions to ensure a transparent and peaceful electoral process.

Nigeria's Previous Attempts at Peacebuilding: Nigeria has made some attempts at peacebuilding in the past. States have been created to tackle the age-long complaints of oppression, domination, marginalisation, exploitation, and social injustice. The federal character principle is enshrined in the Constitution in acknowledgment of the diversity in the polity and the need for fairness and equity in the distribution of our common patrimony; the many panels of investigation and tribunals; the Justice Oputa Panel – the Truth Commission; National Political Reform Conference (NPRC); Electoral Reform Panel in 2007 headed by retired Chief Justice of Nigeria, Muhammad Uwais to put in place appropriate reform to the electoral system for credible elections and whose report was not implemented despite calls by Nigerians for implementation; the National Conference (CONFAB) 2014; Inter-religious dialogue led by the Nigerian Interreligious Council (NIREC); the establishment of the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution.

3. Reform of the Democratic System

Nigeria needs to reform her democratic system by making it one that will accommodate all political affiliations, with the goals of peace and security and focus on the citizens; one that will ensure the dividends of democracy and is characterised by good governance— participatory, consensus-oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective, and efficient, equitable and inclusive, and follows the rule of law. Such system should be based on transparent elections that are also open fair and encourage equal participation and accountability to all citizens. Violent conflict/extremism thrives in ungoverned spaces. There is therefore the need to focus attention on the institutions and agencies of government put in place for the smooth running of elections and governance, such as:

- a. **The constitution** – The 1999 constitution is a contraption of the military and was flawed *ab initio* as it was not consultative and the preamble “We the people” is a gross disservice to the nationalities that make up the country. We have been in the business of amendments of our constitution since 2011 and let us not deceive ourselves; everything we are doing is cosmetic. There is a saying that if the foundation is faulty, what can stand? We need to be bold and sincere, putting the national interest above sectoral interest. This may be in the way of a new constitution, deliberated and debated and adopted by elected representatives of all the nationalities. This constitution should eliminate parochial interests and ensure that religion is separate from state. For example, there is need for the maintenance of the secularity of Nigeria by ensuring that no religion is given more prominence than another in the constitution.
- b. **Establishment of machineries for credible elections** – Elections have been flawed for so long in Nigeria. The 2019 general elections especially were characterised by violence, disenfranchisement of voters and serious abuses. In its report, the Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room issued a statement condemning the conduct of the elections concluding that the elections did not meet the credibility threshold based on the patterns of abuse of process and consequent lack of integrity observed. There were questions about the role played by the executive arm of government and other state institutions, such as the military and the security services, and their negative effect on the credibility of the elections.” Credible election is one of the building blocks of national peacebuilding and cohesion. For credible elections, there is need for credible census figures (The last census in Nigeria was in 2006). Unfortunately, census has become an anathema to various people and for them the fear of census is the beginning of wisdom for hiding the truth about how many we are in our states; allocations to the states are dependent on the number of LGAs in a state and population of the state. The adoption of electronic voting will go a long way.

d. The federal character principle enshrined in the Constitution of the Federal Republic should be scrupulously observed. A situation where 80-90% of political appointments are from one section of the country is unacceptable because it portends danger for peace and national cohesion.

e. Revisiting the 2008 Uwais Panel Report, which is as relevant today as when it was submitted in 2008. The key points of the report were on separation of power with no interference as the institutions are co-equal under the constitution; political party financing; independent candidacy; election tribunals; participation by women – use of affirmative action and proportional representation to allow more women more access to positions of political power at all levels of government.

4. Implementation of the recommendations of the two past conferences – NPCR and National Confab, especially the issue of power-sharing (which acknowledges ethnic identities and sees them as legitimate); participation of all significant groups (as recommended by the CONFAB (in fact, the full implementation of the 2014 National Conference Report which was scuttled by sectional interest is desirable to move the country forward).

5. Implementation of white papers and reports of tribunals – The reports of past disturbances should be exhumed from the graveyard of history and be implemented. Government must be prepared to prove that there are no specially preferred ethnic groups and that all must be treated equally under the law.

6. The divide-and-rule tactics by politicians should be stopped - This can be done through the education of the electorates to see one another as not the common enemy but the politicians whose interest is not for the good of the Nigerian people, people in government who have stolen the money that should have delivered the dividends of democracy for them. Nigeria was the 146th least corrupt country in 2020. Nigerians must forget about all fault lines and divides and vote out of office all politicians that are not working for their good and the good of the country. If the agencies established to fight corruption refuse to do it, then the people must find non-violent ways of applying pressure to ensure that they do their work.

7. Development of a National Peace Policy – Nigeria needs to put in place a national peace policy. The peace infrastructure should incorporate early warning systems, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, mediation, and preventive diplomacy. The one that started years ago is still in draft form. This shows the seriousness governments have in their desire for peace in Nigeria. The draft policy should be reviewed and finalised and adopted for implementation.

8. **Changing the narratives** –Ethnic narratives from the politicians divide the people along ethnic lines, which in the end spark ethnic conflicts and act as a threat to the nation’s unity economic and political stability. Thus, there is a need to counter this narrative with that of peaceful co-existence, national cohesion, and nationalism. This can emerge through cohesion, unity, tolerance, peace and understanding in promoting regular national dialogues.

9. **Tapping the potentials of African youth** – Sub-Saharan Africa is home to more than one billion people, half of whom will be under 25 years old by 2050. The continent can take advantage of this demographic dividend by investing in quality education, teacher training, technology and innovation, which would boost productivity, create jobs and promote inclusive growth and prosperity. Youth bulge and restiveness must be tackled. Providing opportunities and empowering women and youth as a development goal will be essential. Inclusive policies are an absolute prerequisite for political stability. The youth must be carried along; the ‘Arab Spring’ can happen anywhere in Africa. The “EndSARS” protest is still fresh in our minds. Investment in the youth is the right thing to do and the smart thing to do.

8.0 Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, I want to reiterate that most of Nigeria's security challenges today emanate from governance failure. Violent extremism and criminality thrive in ungoverned spaces. To tackle these challenges, good governance is imperative, which is currently lacking in Nigeria. A country where there is corruption and impunity, where a few have emasculated the wealth of the nation and left the majority leaving in extreme poverty, why government lack the capacity to manage its diversity and resources, where there is a high level of unemployment/underemployment, especially among the youth, is primed for security challenges and that is why we are where we are today. This paper has however suggested some ways forward, which have been elaborated above.

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INVESTIGATING PEACEFUL LANGUAGE USE FOR SECURITY IN KOGI STATE, NIGERIA

Olágúnjú, Tòsìn Samson, Ph.D

*Department of Linguistics & African Languages
Federal University Lokoja
Lokoja*

*tosin.olagunju@fulokoja.edu.ng OR ayoolagunju677@gmail.com
+2348033894943*

&

Sani Salamatu

*Department of English & Literary Studies
Ahmadu Bello University
Zaria*

*salmahsan2@yahoo.com
+2348035076134*

Abstract

The question of how to find a lasting solution to insecurity in Nigeria has recently become the concern of both the leaders and the citizens. Amidst this, academics, especially in the humanities, are not left out in the quest, working on how language could be used as a panacea to insecurity challenges in the country. This paper, therefore, explores the possibility of drawing from the pool of linguistic resources using language of peace to tackle this menace to attain peace and security in Nigeria with reference to Kogi State. The study dwells on the theoretical framework of Traditions of Linguistics and Peace Education, as postulated by Francisco Gomes de Matos (2006). The theory upholds that language can be used as national resource to improve social life. Data were collected through personal observation, structured interviews, and audio recordings of public speeches of selected individuals (students, civil servants, traders, and politicians) in the three senatorial districts of Kogi State. Consequently, the study reveals that the security challenges and threats at all levels can be handled through language of peace inherent in indigenous proverbs, euphemisms, and idioms. The paper concludes that the government of the day should embark on aggressive language planning, supported by strong political will, ensuring that teaching and learning our indigenous languages are encouraged at all levels. Also, rather than seeing our multilingual and multicultural situation as a bane, it should be used as strong instrument for fighting the menace of insecurity and restoration of peace.

Keywords: Language, Security, Insecurity, Peace, Sociolinguistics

Introduction

Language forms part of what constitutes the world we find ourselves in today. This is because language expresses an individual's innate desire in relation to society. It is also viewed as social control "tool". In other words, language is used to control the society. Whenever and wherever language is used, conversation is inevitable. This validates the popular saying, "no language, no communication."

The analysis of "language use" is necessary in contemporary linguistic studies because of the importance of language to all human endeavours. According to Oyebade (1992), human beings express their views, feelings, and ideas with language. Maduekwe (2007) adds that it is one of the yardsticks, whether written or spoken with which intelligence is measured. Authorities in Linguistics have consistently emphasised the importance of language to humans. Harry (2014), in his summary of De Saussure's 'Course De Linguistique General,' says:

Language is no longer regarded as peripheral to our grasp of the world we live in but as central to it. Words are not mere vocal labels or communicational adjuncts superimposed upon an already given order of things. They are collective products of social interaction essential instruments through which human beings constitute and articulate their world.

In the above submission, language is presented as an essential social tool that transcends its sounds and structures, but which is inclusive of its capacity to facilitate the actualisation of human realities. Humans express their views, feelings, and ideas with language. It is a unique, indispensable tool that nature has bestowed on man. Language importantly serves the communication function in human relations as a social being. The language ability of a man is one of the attributes that shows his feelings and thoughts; using language (verbal and non-verbal), friendliness, hostility, and temperament are depicted.

Language is an indispensable tool for communication, socialisation and interaction with one another. Language has, for centuries, remained the driving force with which thoughts are conveyed. Whether it is in spoken or in written communication, language plays the role of transmitting ideas, knowledge, experience and thought. It has been extensively described by researchers based on their beliefs and orientations. Edward Sapir has been regarded as the most frequently quoted when it comes to the definition of language. He defines language as a "purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires using voluntarily produced symbols." (Sapir 1921:8). This definition, as Lyons (1981) notes, suffers from several defects. For example, a lot more is communicated than just ideas, emotions, and desires. Moreover, it does not say what kind of symbols are produced, whether light, electromagnetic, or sound (Essien, 2003).

Another popularly quoted definition of language is that of Bloch and Trager (1942:5), which describes language as “a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group co-operates.” This definition does not refer to the communicative functions of language; instead, it emphasise its social functions, which is a narrower view of the role language plays in a society. However, as Essien (2003) observes, the definition advances Sapir’s voluntarily produced symbols by stating that such symbols are vocalic, that is, they concern sound. Chomsky (1957:19), the most influential and greatest linguist of our time, defines language as “a set (finite or infinite) of sentences, each finite in length and constructed out of a finite set of elements.” This purely structural definition did not say something on the communicative function of a natural or non-natural language.

The last definition considered and preferred for this study is that of Essien (2003:14): “a system of structural arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which human beings make meaning and communicate, meet, interact with each other in a given community.” This definition has made it explicit that language is a system, that is, a system of rules and principles in which sound, structure and meaning are integrated for communication. More so, language is a system because the components are ordered and not haphazard. It is primarily vocal in which the sounds correspond to meaning; otherwise, one would be making just noises. This implies that language, in all its ramifications is meant for meaningful communication. Words in any language are used to teach, inform, explain, direct, inspire or negatively deceive, mislead, lie, or insult. Thus, it is pertinent to investigate the language of peace for security in Nigeria with Particular reference to Kogi State.

Bio-Sketch of Kogi State

Since this paper’s scope is limited to Kogi State as a case study, it is imperative to provide readers with a little detail about the state. McKenna (2022) **upholds that Kogi State**, Central Nigeria, was created in 1991 from portions of eastern Kwara and western Benue States. Nassawara State borders it to the northeast; Benue to the east; Enugu, Anambra, and Delta to the south; Ondo, Ekiti, and Kwara to the west; and Niger to the north. Abuja Federal Capital Territory also borders Kogi to the north. The state consists of a wooded savanna region bisected by the southward-flowing Niger River; the Benue River, a major tributary of the Niger, forms part of the state’s northeastern border. The Igala peoples are the main ethnic group east of the Niger, while the Ebira and Yoruba live west of the river. Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy. Major crops include yams, cassava (manioc), rice, sorghum, beans, corn (maize), and cotton. Riverine fishing is also important. Coal is mined for national distribution from the Okaba fields in the northern Udi-Nsukka Plateau, east of the

Niger River. Nigeria's largest iron ore deposit is on the Agbaja Plateau north of the state capital, Lokoja. Marble is quarried at Jakura, 20 miles (32 km) northwest of Lokoja, and the town also has a lime-processing plant. Ajaokuta is the site of a major iron and steel plant. Lokoja, on the west bank of the Niger River, is connected by road northward to Abuja and southwestward to Benin City. Idah, on the east bank of the Niger, is a major trading and ferrying port. The languages spoken in the State include but are not limited to Yoruba, Ebira, Igala, Bassa, Egon, Oworo, Hausa, and Nupe.

Statement of the Problem

In the beginning of the global village called *the world*, history has made it a peaceful world, void of acrimony, violence, upheavals, riots and insecurity. But today, the story has changed to the opposite, all thanks to the level at which insecurity has eaten into the peace the world once enjoyed. In all of these, Nigeria is not an exception. The issue of insecurity in Nigeria could be described as the one visible to the blind and audible to the deaf. Though the nation has had several tales of insecurity over time, it seems not to have learnt from the experiences. That is perhaps why the present democratic experiment has been characterised by several shades of crisis, from her genocide in the name of civil war to several ethnoreligious riots, Boko Haram insurgency, Niger Delta resource control agitation, Biafra secession threats, armed robbery cases, banditry, and kidnapping to recession. All these call for serious concern. Consequently, different approaches and measures have been deployed to curtail insecurity in Nigeria to no avail. Little wonder, Motanya and Toro (2015) uphold thus:

Ever since the marriage between the northern and southern protectorates in Nigeria in 1914, the country has been bedeviled by countless anomalies ranging from cultural, social, educational, economic, and political upheavals which have remained with us even after being granted our freedom. The worst of these anomalies today is insecurity which seems to have eaten deep into the foundation of our unity and it is gradually hazardously reducing this foundation. Part of these insecurity challenges are directly or indirectly caused by some of our leaders.

Drawing from the argument of Motanya and Toro, it is evident that tackling the menace of insecurity in present-day Nigeria has become the concern of all and sundry. The problem is the most appropriate measure to employ as lasting solution. This is because several measures have been employed, such as funding the security agencies' negotiation with bandits, Boko haram and kidnappers. However, none of these measures has yielded any positive result. Amidst this, academics, especially in the humanities, are not left out in the quest, working on how language could be used as a panacea to insecurity challenges in the country.

It is against this problematic backdrop that this paper investigates the possibility of drawing from the pool of our linguistic resources using language of peace to tackle this menace with a view to attaining peace and security in Nigeria with reference to Kogi State.

Peace Linguistics

Friedrich (2007) argues that in the 90s, the world witnessed a growing concern for issues of peace and an emerging awareness of the relationship between communication and peace. As part of this new order, Peace Linguistics has branched out of Linguistics as a specialised field in Peace Studies, hoping to influence how we communicate and educate. However, despite its potential contribution, Peace Linguistics has not been systematised into a theoretical model. However, with the submission of Francisco Gomes de Matos, the current paper attempts to explore Peace Linguistics as a theoretical framework for its analysis of data.

Methodology

Data were collected through personal observation, structured interviews, and audio recordings of public speeches of selected individuals in the three senatorial districts of Kogi State- Western, Central, and Eastern Senatorial districts. In each of the senatorial districts, both elderly and young ones were observed through structured interviews. Responses of five persons from each senatorial district were selected for analysis. In addition to this, political gatherings, social gatherings, religious gatherings, and schools such as Kogi State Polytechnic Lokoja, Prince Abubakar Audu University Anyigba, Federal University Lokoja, and Federal College of Education Okene were visited for personal observation, collecting data through interviews.

Theoretical Orientations

This research takes as its theoretical framework as found in the Traditions of Linguistics and Peace Education through their respective key concepts: Language and Peace as postulated by Francisco Gomes de Matos (2005). It holds that universally shared faculty of language is one of the prerequisites for humans to function as language acquirers, language users, and language makers. Thus, everyone's linguistic history starts with childhood language acquisition, followed by life-long communicative development in one or more languages. Humans are bio-neuro-psychologically equipped to learn languages and through social interaction to build up communicative competence. Thus, Language is a human cognitive system. which enables us to communicate via culture-specific systems called languages.

Peace on the other hand is a profound process of humanization, a system of humanizing oneself and others, or in less abstract terms, a system of becoming humanisers, that is, persons imbued with such values as compassion, dignity, human rights, justice, peace, solidarity, (cross)cultural understanding and the application of such ideals in everyday interactions.

Interrelatedness between Language and Peace

Language and Peace have long co-existed as two juxtaposed concepts, and little has been done universally, on a systematic basis, to integrate them, not just theoretically but by its applicability. The existence of such conspicuous gap has led to the Applications of Linguistics to Peace since 1993, when the concept of communicative peace was created. In such spirit, a book in Portuguese was published on a Pedagogy of Positiveness (Communicating constructively in Portuguese) in 1996, followed in 2002 by another book, also in Portuguese, on *Communicating for the good toward communicative peace* by Francisco Gomes de Matos. In both proposals, a case has been made for Peaceful Language/Communication focusing on the vital agents of language systems: language users. In fact, having characterised language as a cognitive activity, it is well to add that human beings are engaged in creative, language-using activities. To deeply humanise the language and peace connection, the phrase Peaceful Language has been adopted in this paper, with the noun *use* left implicit. Thus: *Peaceful Language (Use)*. As human beings, we are language users/makers but to what extent are we also peaceful language users/makers? The concept of *Language Use* as type of linguistic competence is universally shared but it is unfortunate that the concept of *Peaceful Language Use* is conspicuously absent from most educational systems, societal engagements, political rallies and discourses, religious gatherings, etc., if considered as a systematic programme for life-long education of peaceful language users.

Sequel to this argument, Francisco Gomes de Matos proposes four principles for peaceful language users, and these are adopted for analysis of collected data in this work. They are:

Principle 1 - Be a peaceful language bridge person between/among persons, groups, communities. This should be done by viewing and treating conflicts and controversies constructively, convincing others cooperatively rather than competitively or coercively, and contributing to a culture of compassion.

Principle 2 - Dignify your daily dialogue. This can be achieved by addressing other persons with respectful language and optimistic vocabulary, disagreeing through empathic language, that is, by placing oneself in the other's shoes, and using positivizers (adjectives and verbs that can enhance positive qualities/traits in people).

Principle 3 - Honour humanism and foster humanisation. This can be realised by avoiding/preventing verbal harm and humiliation, applying justice and peace to your communicative acts, and rephrasing potentially dehumanizing messages and/or texts.

Principle 4 - Act as a peace patriot always by perceiving persons as peace partners, promoting a passion for peace, especially in aggressive, hostile contexts, and monitoring your communication for their ethical, moral, and social values.

The four principles for peaceful language users, as proposed by Francisco Gomes de Matos have been considered adequate and adopted for the analysis of the data in this paper because, as it is evident in the study, they take care of the appropriateness of how language should be used in the society, especially a cosmopolitan and heterogeneous society like Nigeria and Kogi State to be specific. Another exciting justification for the use of this theoretical framework is the fact that, in the field of Peace Linguistics, it is an emerging theory for analysing data in Peace Linguistics.

Presentation of Data and Analysis

From the data gathered, which are naturally occurring utterances of individuals, 10 were purposively selected for analysis in this paper. This is so for the paper to account for adequate analysis. Also, time and space constraints were considered in the selection of speeches for analysis. These speeches were selected from different individuals and in different contexts. The selected data were presented and analysed in the table below under sub-headings: speech, context, violated principle, adhered principle and remarks.

S/N	SPEECH	CONTEXT	VIOLATED PRINCIPLE	ADHERED PRINCIPLE	REMARKS
1	<i>We cannot allow herdsmen to take over our ancestral land. We must chase away these Fulanis.</i>	During a television interview on NTA Lokoja	Principle 1 has been violated. The language use is not peaceful but violent. Principle 3 is also violated because humanism is not honoured to foster humanization.	NIL	The speaker does not consider the gravity of the utterance. Such a stern threat may provoke the Fulanis to anger for them to unleash mayhem on innocent people.
2	<i>Let us fortify ourselves and attack these bastards (referring to kidnappers and bandits)</i>	During a conversation between two elders at a sit-out in Lokoja	Principle 4 has been violated in that the speaker has not acted as a peace patriot who perceives persons as peace partners.	NIL	No one would ever entertain being referred to as bastard, especially in a society where culture and tradition are respected. So, such hostile and aggressive statement should be discouraged.
3	<i>If the government</i>	This is a statement from a citizen in	Principle 2 has been violated		The language used for the government

	<i>can no longer protect us, let us protect and defend ourselves.</i>	one of the structured interviews.	as the speaker does not dignify his dialogue. He does not believe the government can protect him. Vocabulary		is disrespectful and pessimistic.
4	<i>Me ah de pack my load de comot dis insecurity country (I am packing my luggage out of this unsecured country.)</i>	Observed at an interactive session among students of Federal University Lokoja	Principle 2 has been violated as the speaker does not dignify his dialogue.	NIL	Using Pidgin Language shows the intensity of the pessimism exhibited by the speaker. There should be some level of peaceful hope in the country for security purposes.
5	<i>This state is not for the influx of okada riders from Niger State. They should go back to their state.</i>	A celebrity commenting on the effect of recklessness of okada riders in Lokoja	Principle 1 has been violated because the speaker does not consider being a peaceful language bridge person between/among persons.	Nil	One would have expected the speaker to be pragmatic and diplomatic in the comment for it not to steer anger which could lead to issue of insecurity.
6	<i>Peace of the Father is what I always pray for Kogi State and Nigeria.</i>	From one of the religious leaders in a structured interview	Nil	Principles 2 and 4 are adhered to. The speaker dignifies himself in his dialogue and he is optimistic of peace in the state and in the country.	Such optimistic prayer in an explicit language should be encouraged.
7	<i>The love of our country should come first. So, let us encourage the government in the fight against</i>	One of the Political Science students of Prince Abubakar Audu University Anyingba in an interactive session	Nil	Principle 4 is adhered to. The speaker is seen act as a peace patriot by promoting a passion for peace, especially	The speaker sees the need to put the country first and above any other thing.

	<i>insecurity.</i>			in aggressive, hostile contexts of insecurity.	
8	<i>Let us all live in peace. War, insecurity, and banditry cannot take us anywhere as a country.</i>	One of the elders during a burial at Ogori which was attended by one of the researchers.	Nil	Principle 1 is adhered to as the speaker demonstrates being a peaceful language bridge person between/among persons, groups, communities, contributing to a culture of compassion.	Bringing all and sundry together in advocating for peace should be encouraged.
9	<i>The government should ensure something about peace and peaceful co-existence is taught in schools.</i>	An elder in Ayetoro-Gbede offering advice to the government during an interview.	Nil	Principle 4 has been adhered to in that the speaker has acts as a peace patriot who perceives persons as peace partners. He is also optimistic in the government to provide security.	The speaker has succeeded in convincing all and sundry that if the concept of peace is taught in our schools, there will be peace.
10	<i>No peace no language, no peace no communication, no peace no security.</i>	A school leaver in Okene, during an interactive session	Nil	Principle 2 has been adhered to as the speaker does dignify his dialogue by addressing other persons with respectful language and optimistic vocabulary.	Such optimistic and pragmatic submission in an explicit language should be encouraged.

Discussion

In the submission of Ogundepo, Oladeji and Adebajo (2017), a Yoruba proverb is brought to bear thus: *oro ni yo obi lapo, oro naa ni yo ofa lapo*, meaning words draw kolanuts from the pockets, while words also draw arrows from the quiver. It seems to capture the effect of communications on human actions very well. The expression clearly demonstrates that as words can provoke hospitality, it can also

provoke hostility! What is said and how it is said goes a long way to determine what reactions attend to the utterance.

As seen in the table of analysis above, the first five speeches are capable of instigating war and insecurity if care is not taken. Example can be drawn from Speech 5:

This state is not for the influx of okada riders from Niger State. They should go back to their state. The language use here is not peaceful. From our research, it was revealed that at some point in the history of Kogi State, there was an influx of okada riders from Niger State. These innocent persons were banned from operating in the metropolis of Minna, Bida and some Abuja suburbs; they saw Lokoja as habitable and viable for their transportation business. For anyone to come on national television to castigate them in the name of accidents is not encouraging. The question is, where would they get their daily bread and income? Crime rates may increase if they are banned in a state like Kogi. For peaceful language use, such speech as number 8 (*Let us all live in peace. War, insecurity, and banditry cannot take us anywhere as a country*) would have emanated from speaker of speech 5. This is because, even if there is the need to pursue the okada riders, the speaker should be pragmatic about it. After all, the okada riders, in their way, contribute to the gross domestic product of the state.

Speeches 6 to 10 conform with the concept of Peaceful Language-Use, which is conspicuously absent from most educational systems, societal engagements, political rallies and discourses, and religious gatherings if considered a systematic programme for life-long education of peaceful language users. Example can be drawn from Speech 9:

The government should ensure something about peace and peaceful co-existence is taught in schools.

A portion in one of the holy books upholds that one should follow peace with all men, thereby drawing goodness unto oneself. Speech 9 above is a pragmatic admonition for the government of the day to embark on aggressive teaching on peaceful language use in our schools. There is advantage in teaching this at all levels of education. This will enable sustainability of peace in place of insecurity.

Conclusion

This paper has attempted to explicate how peaceful language use could curb insecurity in Nigeria, with reference to Kogi State. Four principles for peaceful language use have been explored as theoretical orientations. The applicability of this theory has revealed that if these principles are adhered to without any violation, the state will be security-wise peaceful. Consequently, the government of the day is enjoined to aggressively teach peaceful language use, which will be supported by strong political will and ensure that teaching and learning our indigenous languages are encouraged at all levels. Also, rather than seeing our

multilingual and multicultural situation as a bane, it should be used as strong instrument for fighting the menace of insecurity and restoration of peace.

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FOSTERING PEACE LINGUISTICS FOR NATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY IN NIGERIA

Julianah A. Akindele¹

Richard D. Akano¹

Victor Fabunmi¹

Oladele Adejobi²

Osun State University, Ikire Campus, Nigeria¹

Lagos State University²

Abstract

A few studies on Peace Linguistics (PL) in relation to social relationships exist, but studies on PL in the context of national (in)security in Nigeria are scarce. This study explores how PL can be a veritable means to ameliorate insecurity challenges, especially regarding language use in certain social domains of human relations. Structured questionnaires were distributed to 200 randomly sampled respondents. Responses show that out of the overall frequency of 2000 expected outcomes, 468 (23.4%) picked SA, A had 723 (36.15%), 565 (28.25%) for D, and SD at 244 (12.2%) in the use of abusive language in the home, among parents, siblings, among friends/peers, schools, market setting, soccer viewing centres, and preponderantly among commercial bus drivers and other road users. A huge chunk of responses affirm that females deploy conflict-fomenting and abusive language in different contexts of conversations than males do at a total frequency of 267 (13.35) for SA, 717 for A, 664 for D and 352 (33.2%) for SD out of the overall expected total of 2000. The study, therefore, proposes the need to achieve peace through language, especially in a time of rising insecurity in Nigeria. This can be achieved by building positive social structures through peace-oriented linguistic education at an early age of a Nigerian child and building positive media and social communication platforms.

Keywords: Mis-interactions and interpretations; social relationships; national peace and security; peace-oriented linguistic education; peace linguistics

Introduction

Peace is a concept of societal friendship and harmony without hostility and violence. However, it is an experience that is scarce in almost all the societies of the world. What is rife in most communities can be represented in several lexical items, viz: violence, brutality, savagery, barbarity, hostility, cruelty, aggression and, in the Nigerian parlance, ethnic cleansing, internecine wars, terrorism, banditry, ritual killing and so forth. Hence, the attainment of peace in most world societies has become somewhat elusive and uncertain. Nonetheless, the world still tries its best to restore peace in most societies. Most governmental agencies, NGOs and other stakeholders in community management have left no stone

untuned in a bid to ensure peace in their respective societies. Resources and strategies are being deployed daily to make peace attainable the world over. Suffice to say that the attainment of peace in any national life is subject to diverse approaches, including the use of language. For instance, in the opinion of Eyisi (n.d), the English language is strategic to national development for if individuals have attained quality education through thorough instructions in the English language, then they will in turn be gainfully employed, live a good quality of life which in the overall will lead to a good quality of life of the nation. The same opinion is shared by Ogunsiji (2018) as he points out that language is a binding agent and as such the English language can be relied upon in the unification of a pluralistic society like Nigeria. Therefore, this paper explores the English language as a veritable tool that Nigeria can exploit for lasting national peace and security.

The Nigerian Quest for a Sustainable Global Peace

Nigeria is a nation that has been plagued by persistent insecurities for more than two decades now. The issue of insecurity in Nigeria has been going from one security challenge to another ever since the return to democratic rule in 1999. Okeke (2012) establishes that the current political dispensation in the country is characterised by different shades of crisis, which consequently culminate in numerous unresolved national conflicts. Also, the nation experienced genocide in the name of civil war between 1967 and 1970, a war caused by ethnic chauvinism and tribal intolerance. Ogundepo and Oduola (2006:19) aver that:

Today, Nigeria is experiencing a build-up to a foreseeable (though preventable) crisis of a gigantic dimension. Book haram is decimating the Nigerian population; Niger Delta militants are destroying oil installations, applying oil economy, Biafra apologists threaten secession, and Arewa Youths are bracing for the challenge.

These indices and factors of insecurity contribute to the country's development, peace, unity, and progress. Given these backgrounds, therefore, this study focuses on the use of language to induce crisis and how language is effectively deployed to prevent or stem the tide of security challenges in Nigeria to maintain global peace.

Aim and Objectives

The sole aim of this paper is to foreground language as capable of a double-edged function. In other words, this study is an attempt to bring to the fore the ambivalent potential of language as a tool that can be used, on the one hand, to foment crises and, on the other hand, as the same tool that can also be used to deter crisis. This aim is however achievable through some objectives which include:

1. to examine the social context where abusive language is predominantly used and
2. to ascertain whether the use of abusive language is used more by the male sex or the female sex.

Language, Communication and Security: A Tripodal Stool

In examining how language and communication incite crises and simultaneously act as means of engendering national security, there is a need to situate the terms language, communication, and security in the proper perspectives. Therefore, language has been viewed from several perspectives by various scholars. For instance, Ogunsola and Babatunde (2017) described language as a tool for national security. They are of the opinion that language is a system of communication that enables human beings to cooperate and live in harmony among themselves. In a similar manner, Mc. Laughlin (2006) defines language as a system of arbitrary verbal symbols that speakers put in order, according to a conventional code, to communicate ideas and feelings to influence the behaviour of others. Also, Okeke (2012) describes language as a compendium of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences which a user chooses from and string together systematically to express meanings that are appropriate in a particular context. Essien (1998) sees language as a system of structured arbitrary words and symbols by means of which human beings make meaning and communicate with each other in each community. Ogundepo, Alabi and Okedigba (2008) refer to language as the means through which members of a social group exchange ideas, information, and the like; a means of self-expression, a powerful instrument of social interaction and the most potent means of sending and receiving information. From the definitions above, what is common to all is language being used as the instrument of communication. This is because communication is the essence of a language and without a language, communication cannot adequately and effectively take place. This perhaps may be why Ogundepo (2011) concludes that it is through language that any meaningful attempt can be made to communicate.

Communication is another very important factor in any human society. It is a means through which relationships are initiated, formed, maintained, and concluded. As a concept, communication has been defined by different scholars. In Adejumo's (2004) opinion, communication is a process of passing a message across to another person from a source. It is a transference of a message from a sender to the receiver through a channel. Eyres (1983) submits that communication is not just about giving and receiving understandable information but also about transferring a message to another party so that it can be understood and acted upon. Furthermore, Trenholms and Jensen (1995) define communication as a process whereby humans collectively create and regulate social reality. It is a vehicle for social cooperation, co-existence and understanding between two parties which cannot hold unless the two parties engage in creative meaning. As

posited by Soola and Ayoade (2000), communication is both an indispensable and an unavoidable human activity. Moreover, even a deliberate refusal to communicate, for example, communicates something to someone somewhere (Oguundepo & Okedigba, 2013).

Language and communication are inseparable. They are mutually interdependent. Accordingly, Okeke (2012, p. 15) notes that:

Knowing a language is not simply knowing how to encode and transmit a message to a second party, who then decodes it to understand what we intended to say... It also embodies our ability to use language accurately, appropriately, and flexibly to be communicative competent.

This, therefore, means language user needs more than mastery of the rules of language, grammatical correctness etc. to communicate effectively. It must include knowledge of what to say, how to say it, and when to say it. Security can be seen as a form of development (Okeke, 2012).

Prior to Okeke's position, Sobola and Sotoyinbo (2011) described security as a potential liberation and safety from physical, political, economic, socio-economic, or psychological danger or attack. They posit further that security means the protection or safety of people against all kinds of molestation/persecutions/inhumanities emanating from external/military attacks, economic want, poverty, illiteracy, diseases, ill health, political humiliation, or suppression, social exploitation, and criminal acts. A nation is secure when citizens are free from threats to life and property, enjoy socio-economic well-being and live in peace and tranquility. What is more, Jega (2007) sees security as a situation in which citizens can be liberated, live in harmony and safety, participate fully in the process of governance, enjoy the protection of fundamental human rights, have access to resources and necessity of life and inhabit in an environment which is conducive to their health and well-being. Given the views on security sustained herein, it may not be out of place to assert in this paper that Nigeria is perpetually grappling with security challenges as all the indices of security as represented in the above definitions are yet to be obtainable in the country. What is glaringly obtainable in Nigeria is several manifestations of insecurities across all the states, ranging from inter and intra-cultural clashes, cult group attacks and counterattacks, ethnic distrust, political crises, secession agitations, religious intolerance and bigotry, youth restlessness, etc.

Language and Security: A Global and a Local Context

Language as a distinct and invaluable human heritage is the most veritable means through which human beings cooperate among themselves in a given community. Human beings use it to express themselves and manipulate objects in the environment. Human beings use language to share information for group identity, socialisation, social grooming, social stratification, and entertainment, etc. Language brings people together for interactive purposes and serves as a cooperative tool. Cook and Newson (2007) identify language as human heritage; it is in our genes. However, just like other inherited attributes of humans, it does not

rule out variations between individuals as some may be more linguistically or communicatively competent than others. According to Okeke (2012), “what we do with language can have positive or negative consequences.” This means that to maintain continuity and achieve peace and success in language use, people should carefully and strategically figure out, constantly what to say, how to say what and how to understand what others say in the process of interaction with one another. A harmless expression can ignite violence of an unimaginable magnitude if not well managed. This may be explicated with the religious riot in Nigeria in 2002. Ogundepo and Okedigba (2013) report the incident as it happened during the 2002 edition of the Miss World Beauty Pageant held in Nigeria. There was general resentment and opposition from the Nigerian Muslim community. Isioma Daniel, a fashion writer with the *This Day* Newspaper is said to have remarked that:

The Muslims thought it was immoral to bring 92 women to Nigeria and ask them to revel in vanity. What would Mohammed think? Honestly, [he] would probably have chosen a wife from them.

The pundit found the statement funny and sarcastic. However, the same words threw the nation into a chaotic situation that left not less than 200 persons dead, more than a thousand people injured, and yet another hapless population of over 11,000 people rendered homeless. Despite the retraction of the story as well as torrents of apologies from the Newspaper publishing house, its offices in Kaduna were touched and a *fatwa* (death sentence) was issued against Isioma Daniel by the then deputy governor of Zamfara State, Mamuda Aliyu Shinkafi. In a broadcast of 26th November 2002, the former governor is quoted to have said:

Like Salman Rushdie, the blood of Isioma Daniel can be shed. It is binding on all Muslims, whereas they are to consider the killing of the writer as a religious duty (BBC New, 2002).

Similarly, the post-election remarks of the then presidential aspirant (and now the president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria) President Muhammad Buhari in 2011, immediately after the declaration of the presidential elections, resulted in favour of the late President Umaru Musa Yar’ Adua, was believed to have incited the violence that led to the loss of several lives where lots of innocent people died including some Youths Corps members serving in the NYSC scheme at that time. Chovwen’s (2006) study reveals that communication ranked first out of the nineteen variables identified as ‘conflict inducing’ in the forty-one sampled organizations. Chovwen’s findings thus align with Meyer’s (1999) submission on the position that conflict arises out of ineffective communication.

As language and communication can trigger violence and insecurity, it is also the most potent force that can be used to douse tension and bring about peace and tranquility. No society is free of conflicts, no matter how developed and advanced.

Every nation has its peculiar features of insecurity, which can only be effectively curtailed through appropriate language communication. It should be noted that language and communication are good, potent tools for mobilizing people for good or evil and conscious efforts should always be made to use language for good. In the submission of Ogundepo, Alabi and Okedigba (2008), ineffective communication is a major cause of conflicts in most organisations; if people lack adequate information, good intentions might be misinterpreted, thus predisposing people concerned to avoidable conflicts.

Conceptual Framework: Peace Linguistics

Peace Linguistics is an aspect of applied linguistics that intersects linguistics and peace studies. Conflict is a commonplace in human relations. What humans have always attempted to do to maintain peace is to devise means for conflict management. One of the ways conflict is sparked, escalated and sustained is through language use. It is often said that ‘war of guns is preceded by war of words.’ Peace Linguistics, however, is an approach that advocates peaceful communication and the use of language for harmonious coexistence. Peace Linguistics concerns how language and peace can be integrated and applied in varied contexts of human communicative interactions. It is an attempt to harmonise the theoretical foundations of language with that of peace education. It seeks to account for the linguistic structures capable of enhancing or jeopardizing a peace process (Usman, 2020). In recent times it appears that the role played by language in conflict prevention, resolution and management is gradually and speedily being deemphasised and, as such, sparsely explored, unlike what obtains in such other fields of liberal arts as journalism, political science, and sociology. Consequent upon this realisation, therefore, the idea of Peace Linguistics is pushed to the front burners so that it may serve as a viable response and, equally, a seemingly better option to achieving sustainable peace through the disciplines.

An important step towards the birth of Peace Linguistics took place when with the publication of an entry by Crystal (1999) in which we are told that that way of doing Linguistics is “an approach which emerged in the 1990s among many linguists and language teachers in which linguistic principles, methods, findings, and applications were seen as a means of promoting peace and human rights at a global level. Since that applied linguist’s pioneering definition, the concept of Peace Linguistics has been extended (Gomes de Matos, 2014). More recently, this author defined Peace Linguistics in terms of what peace linguists are expected to do by prioritising the humanising nature of language use and being aware of the other side of communicative reality: dehumanizing uses of languages (Gomes de Matos, 2012).

In proposing Applied Peace Linguistics, there is a dual challenge involved: On the one hand, appliers are challenged to identify states of agreement, harmony,

communicative dignity, and communicative peace, and also identify states of disagreement and disharmony such as communicative conflict, discord, contention, and dissension (Gomes de Matos, 2014). Similarly, Coleman's (2012:61-62) propositions of the principles and practices for conflict resolution touch on two aspects of procedures for conflict resolution of all twenty-three procedures: dialogue (enhancement of empathy, compassion and understanding) and reconciliation (based on apology, forgiveness, and new trust). In consonance with the foregoing, Gomes de Matos (2008:31) puts forward some principles for peaceful language users:

Principle 1

Be a peaceful language bridge person between/among persons, groups, communities. How? By:

Viewing and treating conflicts and controversies constructively; convincing others cooperatively, rather than competitively or coercively, and contributing to a culture of compassion.

Principle 2

Dignify your daily dialogue. How? By:

Addressing other persons with respectful language and optimistic vocabulary; disagreeing through empathetic language, that is, by placing oneself in the other's shoes; and, by using 'positivizers' (adjectives and verbs which can enhance positive qualities/traits in people)

Principle 3

Honour humanism and foster humanization. How? By:

Avoiding/preventing verbal harm and humiliation; applying justice and peace to your communicative acts; and, by rephrasing potentially dehumanizing messages, texts, etc.

Principle 4

Act as a peace patriot at all times. How? By:

Perceiving persons as peace partners; promoting a passion for peace, especially in aggressive, hostile contexts; and, by monitoring your communication for their ethical, moral, social values.

Methodology

This study employs a quantitative design approach. This approach focuses on numbers or sample sizes and then concentrates on the quantity of responses to gain insights into the studied phenomenon. The research data for this study was gathered through the Likert Scale questionnaire template, which contains structured questions inspired by the research objectives. A total of 200 questionnaires were administered electronically through Google Form. The target

audience/population that responded to the questionnaires are teenagers and young adults from two universities in southwest Nigeria. Specifically, one hundred (100) students of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Lagos State University, Ojo, and (100) students from the College of Humanities and Culture of the Osun State University, Ikire Campus, Osogbo. For this study, however, teenagers and young adults are classified as respondents between 16 and 25 years. Feedback and responses were represented in tables and charts to give statistical analysis.

Findings

Table 1: Statistics showing the use of abusive/curse words in social contexts

	Questions	No. of Respondents	Strongly Agree	%	Agree	%	Disagree	%	Strongly Disagree	%
1	Most times, abusive/curse words trigger conflict between my parents.	200	43	21.6	73	36.5	55	27.5	29	14.4
2	Whenever I do something wrong, my parents direct abusive/curse words/insults at me.	200	6	3.1	33	16.4	88	44.1	73	36.4
3	My siblings use abusive/curse words during conversations.	200	5	2.2	27	13.7	91	45.7	77	38.4
4	Most of my neighbours fondly use curse/abusive words/threats when talking to people.	200	46	23.2	82	40.9	58	29.1	14	6.8
5.	Most times, abusive/curse words trigger conflict among my friends.	200	63	31.5	103	51.4	30	14.9	4	2.2
6	Most petty traders in the neighbourhood use abusive words at hard-bargaining customers.	200	65	32.4	91	45.4	38	19	6	3.2
7	Most commercial bus drivers direct abusive words and gestures at fellow road users.	200	114	56.7	78	39.2	8	4.1	0	0
8	Most viewers at a football match use abusive words.	200	75	37.9	103	51.4	20	9.8	2	0.9
9	Most of my teachers direct abusive/curse words at students	200	19	9.3	39	19.6	119	59.3	23	11.7
10	Most of my colleagues in school are fond of abusive/curse words during conversations	200	32	16.1	94	46.9	58	28.9	16	8.1
Total		2000	468	23.4	723	36.15	565	28.25	244	12.2

Table 1 shows the overall frequency of 2000 expected outcome of respondents, 468 (23.4%) picked SA, A had 723 (36.15%), D, 565 (28.25%) and SD at 244 (12.2%) for the home, neighbourhood, peer group, school, market setting, and soccer viewing centres as social domains considered in this study. On whether abusive/curse words trigger conflict between parents, 43 responses (21.6%) strongly agree and another 73 (36.5%) agree with this position. Meanwhile, 55

respondents (27.5%) disagree, while 29 (14.4%) strongly disagree. From these positions, it is evident that most respondents take the position that a major source of conflict among parents is the use of abusive/curse words. The position that parents use abusive/curse words at errant children seems to be strongly opposed, as only six (6) respondents (3.1%) strongly agree, while 33 respondents (16.4%) of the study population agree with this position. These positions seem marginal compared to the 88 respondents (44.1%) who disagree and another 73 (36.4%) of the total respondents who strongly disagree. Among siblings, the use of abusive/curse words appears to be largely non-existent as only 5 respondents, accounting for a meagre 2.2% of respondents, strongly agree with this position, whereas another 27 respondents, 13.7% agree. On the other hand, a whooping majority, totalling 91 respondents (45.7%), disagree with this position, while 77 respondents (38.4%) strongly disagree.

In terms of co-habitation and tenement living arrangements, responses as to whether most neighbours use abusive/swear words and threats when talking to one another show 46 respondents (23.2%) as strongly agree where 82 respondents, representing 40.9% agree; 58 respondents (29.1%) disagree whereas 14 respondents (6.8%) of total study population strongly disagree with the position that neighbours use discordant tones with one another. Furthermore, many respondents agree that abusive/curse words trigger conflict among peers and friends since; 63 respondents strongly agree, while 103 agree. These two positions account for 31.5% and another 51.4% respectively. The remaining 30 respondents (14.9%) and another four 4 respondents (2.2%) disagree and strongly disagree, respectively. The analysis also reveals preponderant use of abusive/curse words in petty trade and marketing in the neighbourhood with the strongly agree and agree affirmative responses of 65 respondents (32.4%) and 91 respondents (45.4%), respectively.

Furthermore, 114 respondents (56.7%) with the “strongly agree” position and 78 respondents (39.2%) with the “agree” position show that abusive/curse words are more often used among commercial bus drivers and other road users. Also, soccer viewing centres are a common social domain where abusive/curse words are deployed. To this effect, 75 respondents (37.9%) take the strongly agree position, and 103 (51.4%) take the agree. Schools are also another social context of abusive/curse word usage. Responses show that students use abusive/curse words more than students do. This position is made explicit by the 119 disagree (59.3%) and 23 agree (11.7%) responses that refute teachers’ use of abusive/curse words when addressing students. Likewise, an over average 126 responses (94 agree, 32 strongly agree) affirm that most students are fond of using abusive/curse words even in the school setting.

Table 2: Statistics Juxtaposition of the Use of Abusive/Curse Words Based on Gender

	Questions	No. of Respondents	Strongly Agree	%	Agree	%	Disagree	%	Strongly Disagree	%
1	Females use abusive/curse words and insults more often than males do.	200	46	23	95	47.3	54	27	5	2.7
2.	Most of my male friends use curse/abusive words and threats during conversations more often than the females.	200	19	9.3	82	40.9	71	35.8	28	14
3	Most times, during conflict, my mother uses more abusive/curse words than my father does.	200	43	21.6	73	36.5	55	27.5	29	14.4
4	Whenever I do something wrong, my father directs abusive, curse words/insults at me more than my mother does.	200	6	3.1	33	16.4	88	44.1	73	36.4
5	My female siblings use abusive/curse words more often than my male siblings do.	200	5	2.2	27	13.7	91	45.7	77	38.4
6	Whenever they engage in casual conversations, my mother uses kind/polite words more than my father does.	200	15	7.7	65	32.3	67	33.6	53	26.4
7	My female friends use abusive words more than my male friends do when appreciating me.	200	6	3.2	49	24.3	95	47.7	50	24.8
8	In casual conversations, most of my female friends use abusive words more often than my male friends do.	200	59	29.6	89	44.4	34	17.1	18	8.8
9	Female students often use negative/swear words more than male students when expressing excitement.	200	30	15	110	55.1	50	24.8	10	5.1
10	Female teachers talk more politely and respectfully to students than male teachers do.	200	38	19.2	94	47.2	59	29.4	9	4.2
	Total		267	13.35	717	35.85	664	33.2	352	17.65

Table 2 above summarises responses on the use of abusive/curse words based on gender at a total frequency of 267 (13.35) for SA, 717 for A, 664 for D and 352 (33.2%) for SD out of the overall expected total of 2000. Most respondents believe females use more abusive/curse words than their male counterparts in all domains. Responses show that mothers use abusive/curse words more than

fathers during conversations and when reprimanding their children, which is evident in the 43 Strongly (21.5%) Agree and 73 Agree (36.5%) responses. Within the school setting, 38 Strongly Agree (19.2%) and 94 Agree (47.2%) affirm respondents' view that female teachers talk less politely than male teachers do when addressing their students. Also, female friends deploy abusive/curse words less often, unlike males in casual conversations and when expressing excitement. This view is expressed with 59 Strongly Agree (29.5%) and 89 Agree (44.5%) positions, superseding 34 Disagree (17%) and 18 Strongly Disagree (9%) positions. However, contrary to this narrative and based on the 99 Disagree (49.5%) and 87 Strongly Disagree (43.5%) statistics garnered from the responses, female siblings use abusive/curse words less often than male siblings during conversations.

Discussion

The essence of this study is to evaluate the extent to which abusive language and curse words thrive in human interactions across different spheres of social relations and relationship building. To achieve this, the two proposed objectives are to examine the social contexts where abusive language is predominantly used and ascertain whether the use of abusive language is used more by the male sex or the female sex. This section, therefore, contains analysis as well as discussions of findings.

Responses in the questionnaire show that abusive language between couples or parents tends to spark and/or foment crisis. This is also like mostly informal interactions in the neighbourhoods. Most respondents attest to abusive language as one of those factors that initiates, sustains, and escalates conflict among age groups or peers. This aligns with the general epistemic notion that abusive language causes friction in interaction and poses threat to negotiation and consensus. In line with the first research objective (the social domains of abusive language usage), it was discovered that many respondents affirmed that their parents use abusive language less frequently. In the case of tenement settings/dwellings, however, our study reveals that most neighbourhood dwellers and landlords use subjective, derogatory expressions, especially during conflicts. Further responses revealed that abusive languages are more frequently used during haggling or bargaining on prices in market/sales transactions, conversations among commercial bus drivers and road users, and at soccer viewing centres. Our inquiries probe further into the use of abusive language in schools, an important and more strategic domain through which the re-engineering of language use for peaceful co-existence can be jumpstarted. Responses, however, show that teachers are deliberate in emphasizing courtesy in students' disposition toward others and life's situations, while a little population of the respondents claim their teachers hurl abusive language at them. It was also

discovered that, despite the emphasis on peace-promoting language use, students readily use abusive language during interactions, especially in informal settings.

Glaringly, responses also show that abusive language dominates in the interactions of petty traders, newspaper/vendor stands, soccer viewing centres and, most predominantly, in the interactions among commercial vehicle drivers/operators, who are always quick at hurling swear/taboo words/expressions and curses at their colleagues and fellow motorists or road users. This discovery aptly and perhaps appropriately dovetails with Ken-Maduako's (2016) position on the features of motor park discourse where the use of abusive language takes centre stage, leading to a question that may likely provoke further research into how the 'principle of communicative politeness' can be 'smuggled' into and/or entrenched in motor park conversations or discourses.

The second objective in this exercise appeals to the sentiments of respondents on sex/gender and this is to ascertain whether abusive language is used more often by the male sex or by the female sex. In the responses available (68% of which came from female respondents) the female gender could still be adjudged as having the highest frequency use of abusive language, curse words and insults. In essence, females tend to be less polite and more vulgar in many discourse settings. This finding, however, contravenes Lakoff's (1975) position, in 'Language and Woman's Place', that females are more polite and less colloquial than males, a position that is however subject to the linguistic, communicative, and contextual or cultural background in which speakers are nurtured. Nevertheless, findings in this study show that females are much more users of abusive language than their male counterparts.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Furthermore, as observed in the responses, abusive language deepens crisis and complicates solutions. This proposition is sustained especially because many of the respondents agree with the position that abusive language is capable of sabotaging internal and societal peace. Equally, from the responses, it could be inferred that parents and teachers are bent on encouraging politeness and peace-oriented word choices in all communicative events. Finally, a general observation from this survey is the strong signifier that abusive language use will continually trigger and aggravate friction in human relations, which will usher in menace, suspicion, and individual/communal insecurity. In this light, the approach of Peace Linguistics is advocated as a veritable approach for de-emphasizing conflict-oriented language use and refocusing language (and the power of discourse) for peaceful social interaction. Through Peace Linguistics, therefore, it may be strongly positioned that societal security and peaceful co-existence can be fostered.

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NIGERIA'S CYBERSECURITY STRATEGY AND NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY

Adebukola Olubunmi, Ayoola (Ph.D)

bukkyayoola2014@gmail.com

+2348034754318

&

Iyanu-Oluwa Ayobami, Ayodele

History and International Studies Programme

Bowen University, Iwo Osun, Nigeria

ayodeleiyanuoluwa74@gmail.com

iyanu-oluwa.ayodele@bowen.edu.ng

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5169-5891>

+2348162235943

Abstract

Cybersecurity in the last two decades has grown exponentially as it relates to national security for countries around the world. The cybersecurity strategy of Nigeria is an important sectorial part of Nigeria's national security policy. The Office of the National Security Adviser considers the protection of cyber assets important and strategic. In the last ten years, Nigeria has been able to develop and implement a cybersecurity strategy which has dictated the direction of the protection of cyber assets and addressed challenges in the cyberspace. This paper examines the strategic position of a strong and effective cyber security policy in Nigeria's national security. The paper examines how a robust cyber security policy can help protect Nigeria's cyber assets from attacks from state and non-state actors in the era of cyber wars. The study relies mainly on both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include official documents from the National Security Adviser office while secondary sources involve analysing existing papers and works on the subject matter. Using content analysis, the study argues that Nigeria's cyber security policy cannot be excluded from her national security policy and strategy as the cyber security strategy is a sectorial strategy needed by the security policy and strategy to handle national security issues arising from cyber-attacks, cyber espionage, and other related cyber offenses.

Keywords: Insecurity, cyberspace, cyber-security, strategy, and national policy

Introduction

Cybersecurity in the last two decades has grown exponentially as it relates to national security for countries around the world. The cybersecurity strategy of Nigeria has become an important part of its national security policy. Protecting critical national infrastructures and the safety of private sector assets has become a major concern.

In the last ten years, Nigeria has developed and implemented a cybersecurity strategy to provide a direction for the protection of cyber assets and address challenges in cyberspace. Still, despite its efforts, the country has failed to achieve a desirable result. Issues of cybercrimes like cyber terrorism, cyber espionage, cyber conflicts, money laundering and con-artistes (*yahoo yahoo trade*) and online child abuseⁱ have in recent times assumed an alarming rate both in the private and official spaces with government security agents falling culprits of aiding and abetting cyber con-artistes in their heinous crime. All these have also given Nigeria and Nigerians a negative image within the international community.

The cybersecurity strategy of Nigeria is embedded in the national security policy as one of the four sectorial strategies of Nigeria's national security. The grand strategy for national security developed in the year 2000 by President Olusegun Obasanjo was the foundation for the development of the national security strategy in 2014 by the office of the National Security Adviser headed by Colonel Dasuki Sambo (Rtd.).ⁱⁱ

The national security strategy identified national security interests and threats to national security. The sectorial strategies were developed in response to the threats identified, which include information technology and cybercrimesⁱⁱⁱ.

The sectorial strategies contain four key strategies, which include the national cybersecurity policy. This shows the relationship between national security policy and national cyber security policy. The national cybersecurity policy is the guiding policy for Nigeria towards combating cyber threats from internal and external aggressions from state or non-state actors to protect both public and private assets and infrastructures.

The Nigerian National Security Strategy of 2014^{iv} was developed to combat security threats facing the country under the administration of President Goodluck Jonathan. This document was developed under Colonel Sambo Dasuki's (rtd) leadership, the then National Security Adviser. The policy document identified the various security challenges faced by the country, particularly terrorism, which is one of the major security threats to Nigeria. In the document, all other threats to national security were identified, including cybercrimes and related offenses. The document identified a robust cybersecurity strategy as one of its sectorial strategies required by the national security strategy to function properly to combat threats to the nation. The strategy provides a common framework on which the nation should focus its efforts. To properly articulate the government's strategy for tackling these security challenges, there is a need for a strategic plan in the form of a document to guide security agencies in the conception of ideas, formulation of policies and conduct of operations so that every single agency will be guided appropriately and be seen to be working

towards the same goal: the awareness that individual agencies are part of a larger whole, which when properly coordinated would present a neat, coherent, orderly and complete system.

The 2019 national security strategy^v is an update of the 2014 Nigerian national security strategy. The changes can be seen in the name of the document. This document reflects new perspectives and frameworks to ensure the protection of the Nigerian state in terms of her national security. The document was developed by the office of the National Security Adviser under the leadership of Major General Babagana Moguno (Rtd) during the first term of President Muhammadu Buhari. The policy document aims to ensure a secure, safe, just, peaceful, prosperous, and strong nation. The mission is the application of national power to ensure security (human and physical) while ensuring peace and stability with the promotion of Nigeria's interests. The document identified key objectives such as national interests, the geo-strategic environment of Nigeria, national security threats such as terrorism and violent extremism, armed banditry, porous borders and cybercrimes and technology.

The document pays attention to protecting Nigeria and the Nigerian people from any form of internal and external security threat, promoting Nigeria's prosperity and sustainable development, promoting regional and international interests and, lastly, peaceful co-existence. The 2019 national security policy document provides a framework and guidelines for protecting Nigerian territory. It is a holistic document as it considers all areas, such as cybersecurity policy.

Nigeria's first cybersecurity policy document was developed in the year 2014. It was called National Cybersecurity Policy^{vi}, and it was developed during the administration of Goodluck Jonathan. The policy was implemented under the leadership of Colonel Sambo Dasuki (Rtd.), then the National Security Adviser. The policy was developed upon the realisation of the country to the importance of the protection of cyberspace and its implication on national security. The policy document identified national cybersecurity threats, such as online child porn, cyber terrorism, cyberbullying, and cyber espionage. The collaboration between national security strategy and cybersecurity with the national doctrines will be adopted to combat cyber threats. The document did provide the groundwork for cybersecurity for national security. However, it had its pitfalls, such as no proper implementation framework, which led to the update of the present policy document in 2021.

The update to the 2014 document is the National Cybersecurity Policy and Strategy, 2021^{vii}. The document was developed with new realities, including Nigeria being one of Africa's leading digitally connected nations. The new policy identified several cyber threats that already existed in the 2014 document with

modifications such as pandemic-induced cyber threats and election interference. The new document considers the policy's direction, governance and coordination of the policy, management of the legal framework to ensure the law is on the same page with the policy, and, lastly, the protection of national assets.

Bayo Sule et al.^{viii} examine the implication of cybercrime and weak cybersecurity defense for Nigeria's national security and digital economy. They opine that cybersecurity is a major challenge to national security. With the rising case of insecurity in Nigeria, it is evident that national security is in bad shape. Their attention was also drawn to digital economy as the world has moved from traditional economy to effective use of the internet and its machinery. This, they claim, has therefore, made Nigeria susceptible to cyber threats. They observed that the various challenges of cybersecurity to national security include poor funding, inadequately trained personnel and working frameworks. According to them, the prospects are positioned toward funding, training, and structured framework.

On the other hand, Denise Baken^{ix} identifies Nigeria's vulnerability to cyber warfare, particularly with the rising presence of violent state actors in Nigeria such as Boko Haram, ISWAP, and others. He elaborated on the exponential use of cyber warfare as the new form of warfare with reference to states like China, the US and others. He referenced the leaked identity of DSS operatives by Boko Haram, which compromised the covers of personnel and affected the infiltration of the sect. Denise considers a strategic cyber security strategy that will help in the new form of warfare: cyber warfare. Idowu Bobade^x identified the relationship between national security and cyber security, stating that high-security awareness will reduce cyber threats. He appraised cyber threats and national security from the angle of increased accessibility to the Internet and Internet-enabled devices, which has made crimes and other related offenses to be on the increase in the country. The impact of cyber threats on Nigeria was assessed to include the possibility of indirect or direct attacks that can work against the state or private sectors. The challenges of combating cybercrimes were also highlighted. These include lack of funding, poor training, lack of infrastructure, and cyber strategy, among others.

Adewunmi Falode^{xi} posits that Nigeria has an active and expanding presence in cyberspace, with critical sectors of the economy relying on access to cyber technology. He argues that the presence of cyber threats necessitated the development of the national cybersecurity strategy in 2014. A review of the national cybersecurity strategy was done with the prevailing dynamics of the Nigerian situation. The study examined international conventions on cybersecurity, international law and its effect on national security as it relates to cybersecurity to conclude that a strong cybersecurity policy is not just a tool for

national security but also economic prosperity and this is because cybersecurity protects every sector of the Nigerian economy.

Nigeria's National Security Strategy

Nigeria's national security strategy provides the direction for the protection of the Nigerian people and territory. To understand this strategy well, it is important to study the concept of national security and its interpretation in the Nigerian context. The definition of national security that will be adopted comes from the grand strategy document developed during the administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo in the year 2004. National security is defined "as the aggregation of the security interest of all individuals, communities, ethnic groups, political entities and institutions in the territory of Nigeria"^{xii}. This can be interpreted to mean the protection of all Nigerians and institutions within the territory of Nigeria irrespective of their affiliations. The 2014 national security document identified two critical threat areas: the national security interests^{xiii}, paying close attention to the security and the welfare of the people in areas such as sovereignty and defense of territorial integrity and so on. In the areas of threats to national security, they included terrorism, organised crimes, kidnapping, cyber threats^{xiv} and so on. The document further identifies sectorial strategies, which the national strategy relies on and is derived from the grand strategy. The sectorial strategies were developed as a response to the threats to national security. The sectorial strategies include national defense policy, national counter-terrorism strategy, national policy on public safety and security and national cybersecurity strategy. The national cybersecurity provided a framework of guiding principles and action plans to address cybersecurity threats^{xv}.

The national security strategy of 2019 was an update of the 2014 document. The vision and mission of the new policy document can be summarised as ensuring the security of Nigeria and the prosperity of its people, while the mission is to ensure physical and human security using all strategic means to ensure peaceful co-existence, national unity, prosperity and ensuring the promotion of Nigeria's interest across regional, continental, and global affairs.^{xvi}

The 2019 national security strategy objectives are summarised as protecting the Nigerian people and territory, promoting economic prosperity and sustainable development, promoting national and peaceful co-existence, and enhancing regional and international interests. The document identified security threats in contemporary times which include terrorism and violent extremism, armed banditry and kidnapping, transnational organised crime, porous borders and cybercrimes, technology challenges and many more^{xvii}. It is important to state that the sectorial strategies developed in the 2014 policy document are also used as a response mechanism for threats identified by the 2019 document.

Understanding Nigeria's Cyber Security Strategy

Cyber security became prominent in Nigeria in 2014 with the development of the first-ever national policy document. The national cybersecurity strategy, as it was called, was developed by the Office of the National Security Adviser upon the realisation that cyberspace has become an essential component of 21st-century activities.

The understanding that critical and non-critical activities are increasingly migrating to cyberspace and state actors' response to protect state and private sector assets and critical infrastructure from state and non-state actors from threats and attacks prompted cyber security in Nigeria.^{xviii}

The 2014 policy document on cybersecurity recognises cyberspace as an indispensable global domain coming after land, air, sea and space, particularly with the increase in states' dependency on information and communications infrastructures in governing societies, conducting business, exercising individual rights on interactions and freedom of communication^{xix}. Cyberspace allows for open interactions with no defined boundary as in the case of the other domains, and this allows both state and non-state actors, including violent ones, to use cyberspace for their selfish and destructive purposes. The document identified cyber threats in Nigerian cyberspace, including cybercrime, cyber-espionage, cyber-conflict, cyber-terrorism, child online abuse and exploitation, which the policy seeks to tackle. The national doctrine on cybersecurity was an integral part of the 2014 policy document and its goal was to provide needed framework to counter cyber threats of all kinds^{xx}. As stated by the 2014 document, the vision and mission of cybersecurity are summarised as a safe, vibrant, and trusted community providing opportunities for its people to safeguard national assets and interests to ensure peaceful interactions and proactive engagement in cyberspace for national prosperity. The mission was to provide harmonious, sustainable, integrated national cybersecurity readiness and coordination to counter cyber threats^{xxi}.

The new policy document on cybersecurity developed in 2021 is an update to the 2014 document. The update was required to provide a better-structured policy to meet the new threats faced by Nigeria and provide context for cybersecurity to meet up with global standards regarding the framework to counter threats. The 2021 document was borne out of understanding the realities of Nigeria being a leading digitally connected nation, ranking 57th in the global cybersecurity index, and the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and the presence of new threats, making the document timely and strategic.

The new threats identified by the new policy document include pandemic-induced cyber threats, election interference, and online gender exploitation, with

previous threats already identified in the 2014 policy document include online child abuse, cybercrime, cyber terrorism, and a host of others^{xxii}. The new policy on cybersecurity provides the national doctrine which rotates around the protection of the citizens national and private key infrastructures. These will be done by providing safe and secure cyberspace without restrictions on the rights of citizens and private organizations^{xxiii}. The new policy document provides a national cybersecurity direction, paying attention to national objectives, which include protecting national security, strengthening economic development, and fighting corruption. It also contains four fundamental national cybersecurity considerations: security and well-being, cybersecurity and economic development, technological development, and regional and international collaboration. There are also eight pillars of strategic focus.

These include governance and coordination, legal and regulatory framework, cyber-defense capability and monitoring and evaluation^{xxiv}. The priorities of the 2021 policy are directed at the preservation of Nigeria's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and human security, and ensuring we uphold regional and international laws around cybersecurity.^{xxv} A comparative study of the 2014 and 2021 policies on cybersecurity has been done to have an in-depth understanding of cybersecurity policy in Nigeria.

The Impact of National Cybersecurity Policy and Strategy on National Security

The grand strategy document of 2000, developed under the administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo, provides the foundation for a policy document on national security in Nigeria, while Nigeria's national security strategy of 2014 was able to identify sectorial strategies which are important to the actualisation of the national security strategy.^{xxvi} One of the four sectorial strategies is the national cyber security strategy developed to provide frameworks and guidelines for combating cyber threats/attacks against Nigeria. The various cyber threats already identified have made it imperative for Nigeria to develop a robust cyber security policy and strategy particularly in the era of cyber warfare, cyber espionage, and even cyber terrorism which the country is susceptible to as it has fought terrorism in the last 12 years.

The strategy's development has helped protect key national critical infrastructures and private assets as Nigeria is fully embracing the digital economy, which translates to the reality of all our sectors moving away from a manual system to a digital system. Every area of the Nigerian economy has been digitalised to protect government and private assets from threats/attacks which will, in turn, hamper the ideology of national security, which is to protect the Nigerian people and territory, irrespective of affiliation.

Challenges of National Cybersecurity Policy and Strategy to National Security

We have established the importance of the national cybersecurity policy to national security and cannot ignore the obstacles that stand in the way of achieving the policy's purpose for national security. The implementation of the policy is one of the greatest challenges to national security, which is a common problem in Nigeria. The framework is available. Unfortunately, Nigeria finds it hard to put machineries in place to ensure the policy is fully activated. The reasons for this are not far-fetched and, in this case, the lack of proper funding structure to provide required facilities and manpower. The actualisation of the policy will require the purchase of state-of-the-art equipment and the employment of industry experts in participating government agencies. Funds must be set aside from the defense budget to provide the required needs to build a robust system to implement the policy.

Another major challenge is the lack of inter-agency collaboration to implement the policy. All hands must be on deck to achieve the common goal of protecting the Nigerian people and territory. The office of the National Security Adviser, which is the coordinating centre, must ensure everyone plays their role and share vital intelligence and data to ensure the policy is properly put into action and its objectives achieved. International collaboration should be encouraged without compromising national integrity and sovereignty.

Conclusion

This work examined the importance of the national cybersecurity policy and its proper implementation for national security. Nigeria considers cyberspace an important domain that can alter her national security interest with the abundance of threats identified in the national cybersecurity strategy, particularly cyber warfare, cyber espionage, and cyber terrorism, to mention a few. The work also studied the synergy between the national security policy and national cybersecurity policy^{xxvii} to help give a better insight into the impact of the policy on national security. National security cannot be achieved effectively if national cybersecurity is ineffective in countering threats posed to the Nigerian state. Finally, the cybersecurity policy looks good theoretically but requires all available resources to see its implementation practically. It requires comprehensive funding and, most importantly, the availability of experts and collaborations among agencies.

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NIGERIA AND SMALL ARMS CONTROL: A PARODY OF SECURITY BUILDING IN THE WEST AFRICAN SUB-REGION

By

Adewole Ayodeji ADELEKE

Osun State University, Osogbo
adewole.adeleke@uniosun.edu.ng
Cell Phone: +234 805 581 9061.

Abstract

Research conducted by the United Nations in 2006 into the illegal proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in the West African sub-region has produced some considerable media attention focused on efforts of the Economic Community of West African States, and, in particular, Nigeria, in curbing the multiplicity illegal weapons as well as the parody this has produced. The world body had sounded the alarm of an estimated five hundred million illicit weapons in “wrong hands” circulating in the sub-region with over three hundred and fifty million or seventy percent of such weapons in Nigeria alone. In January 2022, a report from the office of the Auditor General of Nigeria indicated that nearly two hundred thousand different types of weapons went missing from the armoury of the Police at the close of 2019 without any trace or formal report on their whereabouts. The West African sub-region and Nigeria are linked to a history of illegal arms trade, the latter emerging as the biggest market. Consideration of this history may help in stimulating a debate in the theory of arms control that will illuminate how the increase in small arms fuels terrorism, banditry, crime and conflicts in Nigeria, in particular, and the West African sub-region as a whole. It may also engage the larger questions of the demand for a robust political will and impelling arms management to confront illegal arms proliferation in West Africa. From findings, SALW has emerged as a primary cause of human suffering in West Africa, particularly women and children who are targets of non-state actors and criminal groups.

Keywords: United Nations, ECOWAS, Nigeria, Small Arms, parody.

Introduction

The circulation of uncontrolled weapons aggravates conflicts in West Africa and across states on the continent of Africa.^x The characteristics of the region’s conflict trends and patterns in the last few decades have been the modifying nature of conflict and insecurity, their spillover effect which creates a broader radius of impact, the persistence of these conflicts and their socio-political, economic and humanitarian impacts. Most of these conflicts break out at the sub-

national level where uncontrolled arms are deployed.^x The vital implication of illegal weapons proliferation in the sub-region of West Africa is the intense risk it poses to greater and even immense degrees of violence. When there is access to arms and they become uncontrolled, it encourages violence.^x Since 2000, West Africa has witnessed an emergent pattern of political violence that includes electoral violence and constitutional crises in states like Mali, Côte d'Ivoire, Niger, and Nigeria, to mention a few.^x The relationship between illicit weapons or arms and violence resulting from violence cannot be divorced from electoral violence. It has been established by research from the United Nations that there are many sources of these illicit weapons in the sub-region.^x An example includes the diversion of arms legally acquired by the government, which transpires in diverse ways, including the prohibited exchange of arms by corrupt state officials with criminal groups. For instance, some Nigerian soldiers were arrested recently for selling official arms to groups associated with the Islamist terror group Boko Haram, in February 2016.^x As late as January 2022, the audit report of the Auditor General of Nigeria indicated that nearly two hundred thousand different types of weapons went missing from the armoury with no trace or official report on their location.^x

Instances abound where non-state actors take possession of illegal arms while battling with state military forces. One example can be found in the north of Mali.^x The deflection of official arms is similarly aided by beggarly and inadequate remuneration of security personnel, poor oversight over state arms procurement, lack of accountability of weapons stockpiles and weak governance structure. Poor welfare among personnel of the armed forces has often sparked riots, looting and acts of corruption in Mali, Burkina Faso and Guinea.^x Elsewhere, insufficient stockpile management and a lack of transparent and accounting frameworks in arms procurement encourage the unlawful exchange of official arms by soldiers to criminal groups. Procurement of illicit arms is also made possible from locally-made ones diverted and traded in parallel arms markets. In West Africa, there are several unofficial local arms manufacturers where curbed regulation of their activities encourages access to illicit arms.^x External sources of illegal arms have also been traced to some countries in the Americas, Asia and Eastern Europe, where arms are initially shipped outside the continent. Who has the guns in Africa? An independent Geneva-based research centre has established the Small Arms Survey (SAS), which states that civilians hold 80 percent of all SALW in Africa.^x

Based on United Nations-sponsored research into SALW proliferation in the sub-region, there were two specific sources of illicit weapons from within the continent. The sources were Liberia and Libya. Liberia's fourteen-year bloody civil war had been driven by light artillery and illegal arms, many of which found their way into the wrong hands in the sub-region after that.^x Similarly, the

military armouries in Libya were ransacked after Muammar Gaddafi's ouster triggered by the 2009 revolution, erupting in the Libyan Civil War in 2011. Several weapons from Libya ended up in the Sahel, especially in the hands of separatists in Mali's northern region.^x Many of these weapons also found their way into Nigeria and other West African states given the porosity of their borders.

Theoretical Framework

This research applies the Arms Control Theory to its study.^x Although traditional arms control theory evolved during the Cold War period, the theory preceded this and dates back to ancient Greece. The earliest attempts at arms control in the modern industrial era involved the Rush-Bagot Treaty of 1817 entered into by the American and British governments.^x In recent times, the World Disarmament Conference held in Geneva in 1932 marked the closest pre-Cold War attempts at international arms control.^x

This research adopts the Arms Control Theory in both its traditional and contemporary variants. The Traditional Arms Control Theory can be viewed from arguments propounded by strategic analysts who first formulated the idea of arms control between 1958 and 1962 as an ancillary to national security.^x Traditional Arms Control Theory emerged due to the distinct amalgam of forces that mirrored the conclusions, analyses and policy importance of policymakers and experts on defense of this period. Thomas Schelling and Morton Halperin, the earliest exponents of arms control theory, stated that states' arms control and military strategy objectives should, to a great extent, be the same.^x The concept places national security at the topmost of traditional arms control. In its traditional form, this theory established national security as its key functioning principle, understanding that disarmament and arms reduction were all geared towards the re-enforcement of national security. Scholars such as Jonathan Dean, Stuart Croft, John Steinbruner and many others also argued broadly on the theoretical support of arms control.^x They posit that arms control is intended to alter the security perplexity and to create reciprocal security between partners and general stability.

Parody

Parody refers to a feeble or ridiculous imitation of something.^x This research argues that despite its hegemonic tendencies in the sub-region of West Africa, attempts by the Nigerian government to curtail the rapid spread of SALW in the country and the region generally remain a parody.^x Nigeria's efforts in this regard appear ridiculous despite being the first country in Africa to commit to the signing and ratifying of what is known as the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). In its bid to keep back arms proliferation and regularise explosives importation into Nigeria, the president, Muhammed Buhari, transmitted to the National Assembly

two executive bills.^x Great gesture, no doubt, yet deeper scrutiny of the bill exposes the government's inept approach and the weakness of security agencies in containing arms smuggling into the country. It appears a parody of a sort when Nigerian newspapers reported in July 2021 that the Senate passed a bill providing three-year jail terms, a 3 million naira fine, or both on persons caught in possession or engaged in firearms dealings in Nigeria.^x The parody in the passage of the bill is that the legislation was an amendment of a section of the Principal Act where a fine of just one thousand naira was previously provided as a penalty. In other words, such an amendment only provided for 'stiffer' penalties and nothing more.

Criminals persist in making Nigeria insecure, given the different methods employed to smuggle weapons into the country. Currently, Nigeria is battling with militant insurgents, killer herdsmen, highway robbers, kidnappers and bandits who use sophisticated weapons to carry out mayhem across the country.^x Despite multiple checks by security forces to arrest the dire situation, violent crimes remain on the rise, a situation fuelled by and given the availability of SALW in the wrong hands across the country. Experts have attributed this course to Nigeria's poorly managed land borders occasioned by this as well as the proliferation of arms and the booming business of gun-running, which continue to fuel the security challenges and give rise to criminal activities in the country.^x In that way, a horde of blame has been poured on the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) over the inflow of illegal firearms into Nigeria through its large porous borders. The border police have been accused of being a toothless bulldog as they could no longer control the porous borders where illegal arms are shipped into the country.^x Perhaps due to the citizens' assumption that the government could no longer guarantee their security, many have looked for alternatives to secure themselves. For example, a recent Nigerian newspaper report recalls several communities in Nigeria's North West and North Central pulled money to procure arms and other small weapons to protect them against incessant attacks from terrorists, bandits and other criminals.^x Also, it was reported that wealthy individuals were procuring arms for themselves or groups to protect themselves against an existential threat.^x

Conceptual Clarification: Small Arms and Light Weapons

Small arms are defined by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research as those weapons designated for official use by a country's security agents.^x On the concept of light weapons, a United Nations document classified light weapons as those designated for official use by security agents of a country.^x Apart from the definition above which reflects the categories of weapons under various classifications, Ochoche defines SALW by summarising several perspectives.

First, the focus is on lethal equipment, i.e., weapons and ammunition, generally used by military and paramilitary forces, excluding items such as knives and hunting rifles. Second, the emphasis is on weapons that are man-portable or transportable by light vehicles, i.e., on the weight and size of the equipment. Third, this equipment is easy to maintain, can function without much logistical backup and requires light training for use. Fourth, to be militarily and politically relevant, the definition comprises frequently used weapons, i.e., weapons that really kill.^x

Indeed, SALW bears vital characteristics that make them available to state security officials, military officers, insurgents, combatants, civilians, criminal groups and terrorists.^x SALW are affordable as well as being widely accessible. Their manufacture demands limited sophisticated technology. Secondly, SALWs are not difficult to put to use and they are easy to maintain.^x They necessitate minimal service support and can be operational for a long time. Furthermore, SALW requires little training to achieve its desired effect. Third, the sophistry and deadliness of SALW cannot be overemphasized. Lastly, being light and easy to conceal makes them easy targets for use. Keili describes the use of SALW thus: SALWs are extreme tools of violence in Africa for several reasons. Small arms are durable, highly portable, easily concealed, simple to use, extremely lethal and possess legitimate military, police and civilian uses. In Africa, these weapons are cheap and widely available; they are also lightweight and can be used by child soldiers, who have played a significant role in recent conflicts in Africa. SALW have been used to grossly violate human rights, to facilitate the practice of bad governance, to subvert constitutions, to carry out coups d'état and to create and maintain a general state of fear, insecurity and instability.^x

SALW: Fueling Terrorism, Banditry and Hostility in Nigeria and West Africa

It is a truism that SALW have continued to pose an extensive menace to Africa's security, peace and continental development. Data reveals that an appreciable number of African states are affected by the proliferation of SALW. From a 2019 SAS and the African Union (AU) study, 80 percent of the continent's SALW is estimated to be held by civilians.^x Civilians, armed militias and rebel groups have over 40 million SALW, unlike the military with fewer than 11 million. From a 2013 report that provides insights into the most current insecurity cases in the sub-region of West Africa,^x Mali, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria and Liberia are identified as states encountering insecurity challenges. In Nigeria, for instance, reports indicate that between 1,000,000 and 350,000,000 unregistered and illicit SALW has contributed to over 30,000 deaths per year.^x Another report also notes

that in 2017 alone, an aggregate of 21,548,608 arms were illegally shipped into Nigeria.^x

The proliferation of SALW is an undeniable reality of West African security architecture. It has also been described as the agent and manifestation of different conflicts in West Africa. At the end of the Cold War, African states encountered a rise in the illicit sale and circulation of SALW, attributed to the need for America and the Soviet Union to establish spheres of influence. Asoba and Glokpor contend that SALW, during the cold war gained access to African security architecture via unlicensed exports, support for a criminal organisation and private (security) entrepreneurs/organisations or the activities of local blacksmiths and clandestine gun-running.^x Apart from the Cold War, incessant conflicts and bloody civil wars, for instance, in Liberia and Sierra Leone, the proximity of some conflict zones to West Africa and Nigeria as well as the theft of weapons by dishonest peacekeepers have aggravated the illicit flow and distribution of SALW.

Table 1. The concentration of SALW in Africa as of 2018

S/N	COUNTRIES	POPULATION (2017)	SALW _t
1.	Libya	6,409,000	851,000
2.	Somalia	9,225,000	1,145,000
3.	South Africa	55,436,000	5,351,000
4.	South Sudan	13,096,000	1,255,000
5.	Ghana	28,657,000	2,280,000
6.	Sudan	42,166,000	2,768,000
7.	Morocco	35,241,000	1,690,000
8.	Mozambique	29,538,000	1,337,000
9.	Ivory Coast	23,816,000	1,049,000
10.	Egypt	95,215,000	3,931,000
11.	Nigeria	191,836,000	6,154,000
12.	Algeria	41,064,000	877,000
13.	Cameroon	24,514,000	510,000
14.	Kenya	48,467,000	750,000
15.	DR Congo	82,243,000	946,000
16.	Tanzania	56,878,000	427,000
17.	Ethiopia	104,345,000	377,000

Source: Small Arms Survey, 2018

Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire, Mali, Sierra Leone, Senegal (Casamance), Guinea and Nigeria are hotbeds of SALWs. The 2003 SAS shows that from the 650 million SALW globally distributed, approximately 7 million are located in the region of West Africa, while there are 77,000 small arms in the safekeep of major West African insurgent groups.^x It is observed that the Inter-Governmental Action Group Against Money Laundering in West Africa shows in circulation within and outside West Africa alone and outside known interceptions by security agencies at various entry points there more than 4,364,690 SALWs.^x This observation was made for 2013 alone. Mohammed Ibn Chambas, who doubles as Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel, observes that SALW worth \$35 million reaches West Africa annually. These illegal weapons often find their way into the sub-region through non-state actors, with Nigeria constituting a major destination for 70 percent of the arms smuggled into the continent.

In West Africa, Nigeria takes the lead in terms of SALW in the hands of non-state actors. Adetula contends that most of Nigeria's porous border entry points are taken advantage of by illegal migration, trafficking in young persons, narcotics trafficking and illegal transfer of SALW into the country.^x The porosity of Nigerian borders with little or no adequate and sustainable security architecture has further provided actors in pilfering SALW in the ungoverned space to operate. SALW have caused West African states the increasing operation of terrorists and insurgent groups. For instance, violent insurgent and extremist groups such as Nigeria's Boko Haram, whose breakaway group has committed itself to an alliance with ISIS, taking for itself the name Islamic State in West African Province (ISWAP), have employed SALW during their activities.

Also, in Nigeria, the resources war in the Niger Delta region have not abated because of the proliferation of SALW. These violent non-state actors locally manufacture improvised explosive devices, among other harmful weapons that carry out dangerous attacks on Nigerian communities. The untold destruction of lives and property, coupled with a huge humanitarian crisis sparked by the Islamist terror group, Boko Haram, have caused massive displacement of citizens within Nigeria and neighbouring Chad, Niger Republic, and Cameroun, where they seek refuge and safety.^x Apart from SALW imported by these insurgent groups, their consistent attack on security forces, raids on security installations like police and military stations to cart away weapons and release criminals and relationship with other armed groups, such as the Niger Delta militants, is also a key source of weapons acquisition. For instance, former Niger Delta militant Anietie Etim and four others were alleged by the Nigerian police to specialise in procuring arms in the Bakassi Peninsula, which are then supplied to members of the Boko Haram, were arrested in July 2013.^x

Also, the proliferation of SALW has endangered internal security in West African countries. The Niger Delta resource war is a vivid case. The region crises have been prolonged and complicated through the pilfering of SALW, which has provided agitating groups to militarise their activities. The incessant oil bunkering, kidnapping of foreign officials and multinational oil cooperation expatriates, destruction of multinational oil cooperation facilities and competition with federal, state and local security apparatus in the area have been conditioned by the flow of SALW. In the annual NNPC statistical bulletin on oil vandalisation, there were 2,753 cases of vandalisation in 2006, 1937 in 2007 and 1801 in 2016.^x Operations by militant groups in the creeks of the Nigeri Delta are conducted using advanced weaponry acquired through gun running just as the illegal sale of crude oil is exchanged for sophisticated weapons and locally made arms.

Today, Nigeria's region is described as an ungoverned or ungovernable space. Following the introduction of the amnesty programme by Shehu Musa Yar'adua in 2009, the disarmament stage witnessed the surrender of arms and ammunition by 26,808 militants between 6 August and 4 October 2009. Some 2760 and 287,445 assorted guns and ammunition of different calibre, 18 gunboats, 763 and 1090 dynamite and dynamite caps, and 3,155 magazines, among other military accessories that include bullet-proof jackets, dynamite cables and jack-knives were recovered during the disarmament process. The huge amount of weapons this group relinquished in the amnesty period demonstrates the appalling swats of SALW in circulation in the country. The disarmament stage further witnessed the destruction of these weapons on 25 May 2011.^x

The proliferation of SALW into the hands of civilians has also enabled criminal groups such as cultism, gangsterism, banditry, kidnappers, and armed robbers to perpetrate activities endangering millions of lives and properties. From Table 2, West Africa has the highest number of arms held by civilians totalling some 11 million. The next is Northern Africa, with civilians holding 10.2 million, while Eastern Africa totals 7.8 million. From the above, it is evident that West African countries are automatically vulnerable to conflict and instability as SALW lubricates the wheel of crime.

Table 2. Distribution of SALW in civilian hands by sub-region in 2017

<i>Sub-region</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Number of firearms held by civilians</i>	<i>Civilian-held firearms per 100 population</i>
Eastern Africa	416,676,000	7,802,000	1.9
Middle Africa	161,237,000	4,981,000	3.1
Northern Africa	232,186,000	10,241,000	4.4
Southern Africa	63,854,000	6,012,000	9.4
Western Africa	372,551,000	10,972,000	2.9
Africa total	1,246,505,00	40,009,000	3.2

Source: Small Arms Survey, 2019

Tackling Illicit Flow of SALW in West Africa

Given the prevalence of SALW, state and non-state actors have concentrated on containing the proliferation of SALW in an attempt to end the incessant security

challenges affecting West Africa's development. Non-state actors such as ECOWAS have continued to embark on initiatives to curb the production, proliferation, and use of SALW.^x The initiatives and programmes are designed to tackle the illicit flow of SALW in the West African sub-region.

Member countries have also taken into key interest the importance of curbing SALW as part of their continuous effort to resolve the insecurity challenges. In Nigeria, the National Security Strategy and National Counter Terrorism Strategy are noticeable.^x This was first published in 2014 with the recognition that the illicit flow of SALW assists non-state actors such as Boko Haram and bandits, which undermine the government's monopoly of coercion.^x Also, Section 9 of the Terrorism Prevention Act (TPA) 2011 (as amended) criminalises actions that aid violent non-state armed actors as well as the (in)direct provision of all kinds of weapons or equipment, technical or strategic training, advice or assistance associated with military activities.^x In the sphere of political approach, the Yar'adua administration fell back on implementing the Presidential Amnesty Programme with components dealing with disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration in the Niger Delta area. President Buhari's Operation Safe Corridor rehabilitation programme also incorporates the stage of disarmament of combatants of the SALW before undertaking the rehabilitation programme.

However, both regional initiatives under the jurisdiction of ECOWAS, as well as efforts of states have been faced with the complexities surrounding the proliferation and circulation of SALW. The first distinct challenge is the acquisition of SALW and the complex pattern of its distribution networks (market). The illicit flow of SALW into the region is linked to the insecure and porous land and sea borders of ECOWAS member states that have made all efforts to stem the tide abortive. Ikoh notes that the West Coast of Africa is a smuggling route for arms smugglers voyaging via the Gulf of Guinea.^x This demonstrates that Nigeria's insecure land and sea borders provide access for arms smuggling from neighbouring states such as Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea with the aid of speedboats and ferries at the seashores and high seas. Also noticeable is the distribution networks which are controlled by arms lords and brokers who acquire arms and make them accessible to terrorists and insurgent groups, civilians, and other armed groups. The acquisition and supply of SALW are often illegal and conducted in a clandestine and unregulated manner which jeopardised regional and national security architecture. Apart from arms lords, the artisan craft arm manufacturers also contributed to the challenges of curbing SALW in West Africa.

A key dynamic affecting the containment of SALW is the possession of the weapons, which is difficult to trace. Drawing from the proliferation of terrorist and insurgent groups in Mali, for instance, the Tuareg Nationalist Movement for the Liberation of Azawad, Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, Movement for

Unity and Jihad in West Africa, Boko Haram in Nigeria, among others possess large stockpiles of SALW. The situation has become more complicated and remains difficult if any disarmament programme can solve the intricacies of SALW possession in West Africa.

At this juncture, structural factors are also key to the trafficking of SALW in West Africa, including issues around governance, globalisation, and corruption. West African states are confronted with these challenges and many others which in turn encourages the trafficking of SALW. In Côte d'Ivoire, for instance, officials of state security are not as better as the rebels.^x Also, the acquisition of SALW by civilians stems from the population's loss of confidence in its national, state and local security agencies. Reports show that the absence of security forces, in addition to the high rate of insecurity has spurred the emergence of diverse coping mechanisms that include communal self-defense through the acquisition of SALW but which further creates new forms of insecurity through its use beyond self-defense to operating clandestine activities. Nigeria's current reality shows that its security architecture cannot cope with the logjam of banditry, kidnapping, farmer-herders conflict, and robbery.

This paper discovers that illegal small arms trade in West Africa encourages conflict, contributes to poverty and stunts development. Illicit arms and ammunition misuse negatively impacts society, ranging from injuries, death, psychological harm and displacement. It also leads to several extensive socio-economic effects on health and education. Africa is not unaware that it must encounter the threat of illicit SALW on a collective ground which is evidenced by the 2000 Bamako Declaration. The illegal flow of weapons is easily diffused and remains a key indicator of security breaches in the sub-region of West Africa. Within their limits, countries in West Africa have done a lot to counter the illicit trade of SALW. However, a lack of resources serves as a drawback in accomplishing the task. Drawing on a 2016 publication on Conflict Armament Research, it was reported that gun transfers in the Sahel region are on the increase and the analysis of stocks of firearms and ammunition seized from traffickers and combatants. The research indicated that while Libya has stopped being the major source of illegal firearms in West Africa, Côte d'Ivoire and Sudan have in recent times have the biggest stocks of guns in the region. Chinese and Russian firearms are also common.

Conclusion

The illicit flow of SALW in West Africa, particularly Nigeria, is frightening. What becomes clear is the relationship between increasing and unchecked arms flow and sustained open clashes in the sub-region. To prosecute the continental war on terror and in recent times, banditry in Nigeria and the sub-region, the war

on the illicit flow of arms is required to be won first. The free transfer of arms has empowered criminal groups and the confidence to commit even more crimes. The sub-regional organisation and the government of Nigeria are required to covet the firm support and confidence of the citizens before actions against the proliferation of arms and its associated threats could be taken. This objective can be achieved by building strong institutions and preparing a strong legal framework to penalise acts of violation and punish offenders. A holistic approach must be adopted to control the diffused socio-economic and political insecurity spurred by the proliferation of SALWs that has produced and promoted a culture of lawlessness in West Africa.

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