

TERRORISM AND INSURGENCY: AS AN INDICATOR OF STATE FAILURE.

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Abstract

This study explores the relationship between terrorism, insurgency, and state failure, positing that the presence of the security challenges can serve as indicator of State failure as result of institutions ineffectiveness. This study examines how weak governance, lack of effective authority, and inability to provide basic services create environments conducive to the emergence and proliferation of terrorist and insurgent groups. The study employ Social Disorganization Theory. The analysis highlights the complex dynamics between state failure and security threats, offering insights for policymakers and practitioners working to address the root causes of instability and strengthen state capacity.

Introduction

Nigeria has been ravaged by a multitude of violent conflicts, including terrorism, inter-state crisis, political instability, religious tensions, the Boko Haram insurgency, clashes between Fulani herdsmen and farmers, Kidnapping, and other forms of insurgency, resulting in the death of thousands and the damaged of properties worth billions of dollars. Youths are often pivotal in these conflicts, both as key stakeholders and primary victims, contributing to Nigeria's reputation to be tagged as one of the most insecure nations in the continent. The primary goal of societal institutions is to foster an environment that promotes security, prosperity, and socio development. This study explores various institutions, including government, police, military, family, judiciary, religion, education, and the economy, indeed, each playing a distinct responsibility yet interconnected roles in maintaining social order. A deficiency in any of the institutions has significant implications to the rest, as they collectively serves as instruments for repositioning and rebuilding such society. Ultimately, the attitudes, character, and behaviors of the people of the particular society reflects the overall effectiveness of such society institutions.

Conceptual Clarification

Government: The government is an institution that plays a crucial role in maintaining law and order, enforcing legislation, and delivering public services. Effective governance reinforces societal norms and values, drives economic development, and ensures citizen well-being.

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The family: The family remains the cornerstone of every society, playing a vital role in socialization and childrearing. A child's family background has a profound impact on the development of such society, and the family structure ultimately shapes the future of society. As the African proverb aptly puts it, "Charity begins at home, family structure determines the future of such a society.

Religion: is a complex system of beliefs involving practices and rituals that connect individuals to the supernatural, divine, or spiritual realms. Religion often involves faith in a higher power, such as God or gods, and encompasses various forms of worship, prayer, and devotion. Religion provides a framework for understanding life's meaning, purpose, and moral direction. It also serves as a source that unifies the people of the community, bringing people together through shared beliefs, values, and practices.

The economy: as a vital institution that plays a significant role in shaping society. It encompasses the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services, influencing the well-being and quality of life of individuals and communities. Effective economic institutions promote stability, growth, and development.

Police: The police remains vital institution responsible for maintaining law and order, ensuring public safety, and enforcing laws. Their primary role is to protect citizens, prevent crime, and uphold justice. Effective policing promotes community trust, security, and stability of the society.

Judiciary: The judiciary is a crucial institution responsible for interpreting and upholding the law, ensuring justice, and protecting individual rights.

Education is a vital institution that plays a transformative role in shaping individuals, communities, and societies. It empowers people with knowledge, skills, and critical thinking, enabling them to contribute to their communities and the world.

Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in the Social Disorganization Theory developed by Clifford Shaw and Henry McKay. The theory posits that crimes are more likely to occur in areas where social institutions are disorganized or ineffective. According to the Social Disorganization theory framework, weak or absent of institutions, such as economic, family, educational, and community structures, can lead to loosing of social control and an increase in crime rate in any given society. In Nigerian context, the crisis in Nigeria's economic as an institution has indicted for rendered other institutions weak and ineffective in their various roles and responsibility and also alleged for responsible for the high rate of social vices in Nigeria society. Specifically, the weakness of Nigeria's economy has been responsible to high numbers of unemployment in Nigeria society, which in turn contribute to the high level of poverty, while the poverty undermines the ineffectiveness of other institutions, including family, education, religion, police, judiciary, and government. As noted by Adebayo (2013), economic hardship often drives individuals to crime because of the high desperation and deprivation of basic necessities. Nigeria's high unemployment rate has fueled various social vices, such as terrorism, insurgency, and the Inter-State Crisis, while the government's financial constraints has hindered the government in her ability to provide good and reliable security for her citizens and also exacerbating the judiciary's ineffectiveness as a contributing factor to high rate of social vices in Nigeria society.

Boundaries conflict:

Boundary conflicts in Nigeria are a recurring issue that often results in violent clashes, displacement, and loss of life. These conflicts typically arise from dispute over land ownership, community pride, and sociocultural differences. Some keys factors contributing to boundary conflicts in Nigeria include the following:-

Historical Legacy: Nigeria boundaries were largely determined during the colonial era, which has led to ongoing disputes and tensions between states and communities.

Resource Control: Many boundary conflicts in Nigeria are fueled by disputes over the control of valuable resources, such as oil wells, land, and fishing areas.

Porous Borders: Nigeria borders are notoriously porous, making it challenging to maintain security and prevent the movement of unauthorized individuals and goods.

Inter-State Disputes: Several states in Nigeria, including Cross River State and Benue State, Cross River State and Akwa Ibom State, and others.

Some notable examples of boundary conflicts in Nigeria include the following:-

Cross River and Akwa Ibom Conflict: A longstanding dispute over 76 oil wells has contributed to tensions and violence between the two states.

Herder-Farmer Clashes: Conflicts between Fulani-herders and farmers have resulted in significant loss of life and displacement, particularly in states like, Benue, Adamawa, and Zamfara, and Oyo State Nigeria.

The role of the economy in sustaining institutions

The economy serves as the foundation upon which all other institutions depend to survive and function effectively. It determines the stability and effectiveness of key structures such as family, government, education, religion, judiciary, police and others. The ongoing economic crisis in Nigeria has severely impacted other institutions, leading to their inefficiency in fulfilling their roles. For instance, the economic downturn has had a profound effect on the unemployment rate, while unemployment leads to poverty and the effect of poverty reflects and affects all structure of institutions. For instance, in African society, the father is traditionally, responsible in providing for the household. However, with the current financial hardship (poverty) in Nigeria society, it has left many families irresponsible and struggling, while some families now rely on their children for survival, regardless the sources of their income. Similarly, religious institutions, once seen as moral compasses promoting righteousness and social order, have largely shifted their focus. Many places of worship in Nigeria have become centers for the prosperity gospel, where wealth accumulation and miracles take precedence over moral guidance and ethical teachings. The education system has also suffered significantly. Education is widely regarded as a tool for innovation and development. The deteriorating economic of economy conditions have led to a decline in the quality of public schools, poor remuneration for teachers and growing disparity in access to quality education. As a result, only the children of the wealthy can afford a high-standard education through private schools. Indeed, the Nigerian economic crisis has had a far-reaching effect on the government in fulfilling its role and responsibility to the masses. However, the instability in Nigeria economic has undermining the effectiveness of law enforcement agencies and the judiciary, while inadequate funding for law enforcement agencies and the judiciary system has limited their role in discharging their roles and responsibility. Indeed, instability in the Nigerian economic sector has contributed to the weakness of every sector of the country's institutions as a major factor to the nation's instability, rising crime rates, and weakened state structures. Addressing these economic challenges is crucial for restoring institutional effectiveness, reducing crime, and fostering national development.

Unemployment, Poverty, and Rising Crime Rates

A weak economy inevitably leads to high unemployment rate and widespread of poverty. Oni (2007) established a direct correlation between unemployment, poverty, and crime, emphasizing that economic hardship increases the likelihood of anti-social behavior, particularly among the youth. The lack of employment opportunities has given rise to various social problems, including the emergence of street children that accelerate youth involvement in crime. Such as armed conflicts, Inter State Crisis, terrorism, and insurgencies. Nigeria has witnessed several violent conflicts, such as militancy in the Niger Delta and the ongoing Boko Haram insurgency, all of these violent conflicts has been fueled by youth's unemployment and economic deprivation.

Ajufo, (2013) posited that poverty is a significant contributor to various forms of crime, including armed robbery, prostitution, political thuggery, corruption, kidnaping, and extrajudicial killings. The prevalence of poverty has become a major obstacle to development in Africa. The consequences of poverty and joblessness have made many young people vulnerable to recruitment by extremist groups and criminal organizations.

Government strategies for institutional effectiveness in Nigeria

The aim of every administration is to achieve development in which the Nigeria government is not exempted from this great tasks. Over the years, the Nigerian government has implemented several programme of economic development aimed at revitalizing the country's deteriorating economy. Among these initiatives are the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), the Economic Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), and others, that purposely established and designed to tackle economic challenges and promote sustainable growth. However, despite these efforts, these programs have largely failed to achieve their objectives, and Nigeria's economic condition remains deteriorating due to the weakness of most of the institutions in charge.

Institutional Failures and Reform Strategies

The persistent ineffectiveness and weakness of Nigeria's institutions have intensified these socioeconomic challenges. Institutions intended to provide stability, security, and economic opportunities have largely failed in their responsibilities. The inability of the government to implement sustainable economic policies and effectively management of resources has further deepened the crisis. To overcome these challenges, the comprehensive economic reform are necessary to strengthen the institutional effectiveness and create opportunities for economic growth in Nigeria. Revitalizing the economy will not only reduce unemployment and poverty but also restore the functionality of critical institutions, ultimately fostering national development and stability.

Conclusion

This study has extensively examined the complex relationships among terrorism, insurgency, inter-state crisis, and institutional weakness. The analysis reveals that weak institutions create an environment conducive to the emergence and proliferation of terrorism and insurgency, which can further destabilize states and lead to inter-state crises.

The findings underscore the critical role of effective governance, robust institutions and social cohesion in preventing and mitigating these security challenges. Strengthening institutions, promoting good governance and addressing the root causes of instability as essential for building resilience against terrorism and insurgency.

Ultimately, addressing institutional weaknesses requires a comprehensive approach that incorporates political, economic, social, and security dimensions. By understanding the intricate dynamics between institutional weakness and security challenges, policymakers and practitioners can develop more effective strategies to promote stability and security.

Recommendations

Indeed, the task of every administration is to achieve development, in which Nigeria's government is not exempted in the task based on the analysis of terrorism, insurgency, and inter-state crisis as indicators of institutional weakness, the following recommendations are proposed:

Government and Policymakers:-

1. Strengthen the Institutions: Invest in building robust and effective institutions that provide security, justice, and basic services to citizens.
2. Promote Good Governance: Implement policies that promote transparency, accountability, and good governance to build trust and legitimacy.

3. Root Causes: Targeted development programs should address the root causes of instability, such as poverty, inequality, and social exclusion.

4. Enhance Regional Cooperation: Foster regional cooperation and dialogue to prevent and mitigate inter-state crises.

1. Provide Targeted Support: Provide targeted support to fragile states to help them build effective institutions and promote good governance.

2. Encourage Diplomatic Efforts: Encourage diplomatic efforts to resolve inter-state crises peacefully.

3. Support Development Programs: Support development programs that address the root causes of instability and promote economic growth.

For Civil Society

1. Promote Social Cohesion: Promote social cohesion and community engagement to build resilience against extremist ideologies.

2. Support Inclusive Development: Support inclusive development initiatives that address the needs of marginalized communities.

3. Advocate for Good Governance: Advocate for good governance and institutional reform to promote stability and security.

By implementing these recommendations, governments, the international community, and civil society can work together to address institutional weaknesses and promote stability and security.

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