NATIONAL SECURITY AND CRIME MANAGEMENT IN NIGERIA: DOES LIBRARY HAVE A ROLE?

by

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Abstract

Every nations of the world seek peace; they sought after peace, unity and harmony within and outside their territories. This they do with their policies, external and international relations, as well as fortifying their military base to prevent cases of threats and dangers. The presence and the assurance of peace is the key to growth and development or otherwise of any Nation. The stories of great empires which once blossomed and died are now of historical past, these undoubtedly were as a result of the invasion, porous security system, religious crisis and challenges not adequately managed by them. The growth and eventual death of such empires are instructive to the modern nation states in the 21stCentury of great technological advancement for almost all facets of human endeavour. The country Nigeria is not left out in the worldwide security threat, she must be able to manage her national security and crimes if development and her continued existence would be assured. Whilst Nigeria is endowed with abundant resources, negligence to numerous challenges of insecurity of the environment arising from case of corruption, ethnic division, religious dissimilarities and many more have favoured the thriving porous security condition that engendered unity and retard her development. This paper however, peeps into the security threats

and insurgencies in Nigeria and suggest way out for development and improvement in the security issues through a library that is sensitive and which plays its role of educating and enlightening the public on the consequences of crime and insecurity.

Introduction

The development of a nation state has always depended on the degree of security of the nation state. All things being equal, a nation that experiences peace is a nation that is set on the path of national growth in all ramifications, given good governance of human and material resources of the nation state (Okwilagwe, 2015). According to Nnimno reflections (2012):

> A secure atmosphere is indeed vital for national development. This security is not merely on which physical violent, actions are absent, but also includes one where structural imbalances are eliminated. Poverty, disease, unemployment, homelessness, lack of energy, poor infrastructure and illiteracy are all aspects of violence and insecurity and a nation cannot be said to be on a development path if these bound.

Insecurity can be termed as the presence of fear and absence of economic or physical protection for persons, buildings, structures, organizations or country against destruction, threats or attack, while security can be defined as freedom from threats or violence which could lead to loss of lives or properties (Adebowale, 2016). To Omoyibo and Akpomera (2012), security in Nigeria is synonymous with an individual who erects iron bars across his or her windows which eventually prevents the individual from escaping a fire outbreak. The Nigeria corporate existence can be undermined by a number of factors among which is an escalating and uncontrolled crime problem Tanimu (2006). Lack of security affects the welfare of poor and rich people. It can cause injury and death, reduce family income and generate a climate of fear (DFID, 2000).

According to Soeze (2006), crime arises because of the changes in African values. Before colonialism, people were respected based on good characters. Recently, people are highly respected because of the money they have, the houses they own and their big cars and not for their good character however,, people of good character who are not rich or wealthy are no longer respected as before. As a result of this, many people preferred to be rich in order to command respect from the society through any means possible even if it is criminal. In general, criminals commit crimes for all kinds of reasons or motives. Their continued involvement in criminal

activities is probably due to their belief that they could get away without being suspected, apprehended or even identified.

Security in Nigeria is becoming worse each passing day that it is hard to tell with can happen in the next minutes and where, this has affected all societal sector and human affairs. The manifestation of insecurity in Nigeria is so strong in so many forms like terrorism, kidnappings, armed robbery, oil theft and bunkering, ethnic and religion conflicts, street crimes, destructions of property, loss of businesses and gender-based violence, corruption, low quality of life and even death (Adebowale, 2016). According to Alamu (2013), insecurity and religious crisis are seen as a way of life in Nigeria today. Alamu (2010: 141) observes that insecurity brings many ugly situations that make it difficult for people to live in peace and unity in order to overcome their developmental challenges. According to Him, there is an increased alarm of abduction, crime wave as the men of the underworld launch the onslaught on the state, kidnapping (most recently the cases of the kingpin "Evans"), assassination (issues of the Baddo group in Ikorodu, Lagos State, One million boys in Oyo State, the indomine boys, the Ijaw boys, cult guys in higher institutions of learning), religious crises, post-election violence, senseless and reckless killings by individuals and members of the force etc., All of these point to the fact that security in Nigeria is a mess .other factors that pose threat to the national security are high rate of poverty in the country, unemployment, environmental degradation, political instability, economic upheaval, flood and many more (Abolurin, 2012)

National security ensures development of a country and all the other facets that constitute a nation state, it also makes a nation a positively functional entity that can create phenomena that productively support her growth. There has to be a measured ,well-articulated synergy between national security and crime management strategies and the library. National security is imperative to democracy and national development. It ensures economic security and development by laying that vital foundation for human creative energy investment in the utilization of natural resources and ensuring food, health environment, ethnic, and other forms and element of national security for national development. Scholars, politicians and social administrators tend to have a common view that:

National security is the podium of democracy and its values for the people. As such, there is no factor that provides meaning and legitimacy to democratic rule than security. It is the umbrella of all other sector of the democratic systems. It is also the pillar of political order,

stability and development in all segments of societal values and aspirations… the survival of democracy is therefore dependent, upon other things on the dynamics of national security (Jacobs, 2009).

National security predisposes level and direction of development and the well-being of the citizens of a nation. For instance, the current state of insecurity in Nigeria is a manifestation of deep-rooted and structurally entrenched crisis development that creates the environment for the emergence of the condition of poverty, unemployment and inequality in Nigeria. This is why the issue of national security should be handled and treated on equal basis as national development as they constitute each side of the same coin. The presence and unyielding confrontation occasioned by the challenges of poverty, inequality, unemployment, social exclusion on account of any social-economic reasons will incubate, give birth and sustain national insecurity. To Kastina (2012), national security is synonymous with national development and they should not be treated as separate entities; treating them as separate subject is not only counter-productive but is fraught with danger, this is because such situation would fan the ember of wide and uncontrollable institutionalized poverty, social injustice and inequality, stagnant economic growth and development, half-heated political reforms, shabby democratization processes, corrupt and despotic leadership.

The concept "national security" attracts many definitions or explanations from a multitude of scholars and national leaders. It is so important that nation states have deployed human and material resources towards national policies formulation. However, the nature, degree, level and direction given to the concept will depend on the perspective from which a nation state conceptualizes national security. Brennam (1962); Agbaye (2000) in Ogunbanwo (2014); Ray (1987); Igbolo (2015) maintained that national defense connotes situations of peace, stability, order, progress, desire and capacity for self-defense amassment of military armament, personnel and expenditure .Some scholars seem to place emphasis on absence of threat to acquire values or tendencies that would undermine national cohesion and peace as criteria for determining what security connotes (David, 2006; Wolfrs, 1962; Oche 2001). In his view,,David (2006) as cited in (Igbuzor, 2011:2) posited that security is the condition or feeling of safety from harm or danger, the defense, protection and the absence of threats to acquire values. Security in an objective sense, measures the absence of threats to acquire values, in subjective sense, the absence of fear that such values will be attacked (Wolfrs, 1962).In spite of its conceptual complexities, the understanding

of the term shows that security is vital for national cohesion, peace and sustainable development. Thus:

> Security has to do with freedom from danger or with threats to a nation's ability to protect and develop itself, promote its cherished values and legitimate interests and enhance the well-being of its people. Thus, internal security could be seen as the freedom from or the absence of those tendencies which could undermine internal cohesion and the cooperate existence of the nation and its ability to maintain its vital institutions for the promotion of its core values and socio-political and economic objectives, as well as meet the legitimate aspirations of the people. Internal security also implies freedom from danger to life and prosperity (Imobighe cited in Oche 2001:76-77).

It therefore refers to the search to avoid, prevent, reduce, or resolve violent conflict-whether the threat originates from other states, non-state actors, or structural socio-economic conditions (Stan, 2004:2). Amidst the development challenges facing Nigeria like unemployment, poor health delivery services, lack of access to education and pipe-borne water, etc., the security situation in the country has also deteriorated drastically. Nigeria's return to democratic rule is threatened by security disaster. Arguably, considerable progress has been achieved in the areas of freedom of speech and liberty, but series of resource based conflict (Niger Delta), ethno-religious crisis (Joss crisis), communal conflicts, kidnapping, arm robbery, abdication for ritual purposes and conflicts between herdsmen and farmers persisted. The climax of these security threats is the insurgence of a group called "Boko Haram" in the Northern Nigeria (A sect that is averse to western education, secularism and democracy in Nigeria and its championing the cause of religion freedom, exclusive rights and Islamic state). On the other hand is another sect called Maiyatti Allah, a group of Fulani herdsmen advocating for creation of separate colony to move their animals from one place to another without continuous violence clash with the farmers in Nigeria.

Thus, a considerable effort to end the violence and build a sustainable peace to steer the economy to sustainability seems far from realization. The Federal Government of Nigeria in its National Security Strategy (2011) however has awoken to the insecurity challenge in the country; it adopted a deterrent posture in the form of ubiquitous security concepts. This seeks to ensure that armed security personnel are visible to potential troublemakers (Okwilagwe, 2015).

The national security strategy of the Federal Republic of Nigeria emphasized the concern of the Federal Government to security in Nigeria with its eleven-point strategies which consist of

both defensive and offensive measures to ensure that the Nigerian government shift from being reactionary to adopting a more preventive posture in its efforts to curb insecurity in the country. The Nigerian eleven security strategic objectives are:

1. Adopting a whole of government approach to improving security in the country. The national security establishment must be supported by all other levels of government (i.e. state and local levels) in the country, in addition to all the ministries, agencies and parastatals of the federation. Unity of purpose throughout the government is the *sine qua non* for improving national security.

2. There is a need to contain existing threats and crisis in the country, to prevent them from spreading to other local government areas and states of the federation. In addition, Nigeria must ensure that threats within neighboring countries do not spill into its national borders.

3. Improved border security is an essential part of containment. Preventing the movement of dangerous persons, expertise and weapons is essential for preventing further instability in Nigeria.

4. Improved effort to monitor the movement of goods and people within the federation is an essential means of preventing the spread of conflict and other forms of instability within the federation.

5. Hardening potential targets across Nigeria is a necessary step in denying extremist groups and others the opportunity to successfully sow fear and panic across the nation.

6. The nation intelligence services must be prioritized as the single most important tool that the government has for detecting and dismantling threats to the peace of Nigeria.

7. In order to further bolster the nation's intelligence gathering capabilities, the country must leverage its dominance of its airspace to improve intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance across the federation.

8. The federal government must also leverage its ability to procure advance technologies, to improve its ability to detect and defeat conflicts, criminality and terrorists' attacks.

9. Another critical intelligence-related development is the need for the security forces to re-align its relationship with society. At present, there isa lot of mistrust directed towards the Nigeria security forces. There is a lot of mistrust directed towards the Nigerian security forces. This is inimical to dismantle emerging and existing threats to the peace.

10. Increasing the productivity of international partnership will also serve to boost Nigeria's ability to improve internal stability. The country's international partners possess valuable intelligence and other resources that will provide the national security forces with a decisive advantage in maintaining stability.

11. Training and procuring for threats that are likely but have not yet materialize is a critical measure designed to improve the country's readiness to combat all forms of insecurity.

The basic questions are: why has development continued to elude Nigeria in spite of numerous amounts of human and material resources? To what extent has security crisis impacted or contributed to development crisis in Nigeria? Does the library really have a role to development in Nigeria? These pertinent but complex questions needed urgent attention especially now that Nigeria is struggling to be among twentieth world developed countries in 2020: 20

National security and crime management: Role of library

Dopamu (2007) posits that security is a complex concept that defiles every definitive quest, especially in modern societies where the concept covers a large number of variables from internal security to external security. Dopamu (2007) define security as something which protects or makes secure:

> It is protection against law breaking, violence, enemy acts, external aggression, danger, risk, attack, want, poverty, insufficiency, unemployment, environmental degradation, illiteracy, disease, oppression, suppression, inhumanity, destruction, rebellion, natural disaster and the likes. In a modern society, the government of the day is expected to provide security for all these to ensure high degree of peace, economic growth and social development.

According to Aremu and Ahmed (2011), crime is a universal phenomenon that is threatening the security of various countries in varying degrees. The causes of criminal activities also vary from one nation to another. In Nigeria, political and business crime rate is on the increase almost on a daily basis, and it is difficult to point fingers at the direction of the twin evils that left the country prostrate economically, politically, and socially. It is no exaggeration to say that the worst enemies of our society in present times are fraud, corruption and other criminal activities in all their aspects. Mismanagement and tribalism might have put Nigerians in their present predicament, but it cannot be doubted that fraud, corruption and other criminal activities in the public sector is playing an even greater role in this regard. According to Ayanda and Alapata

(2011) cited in Okwilagwe 2015, they observed that political and business crime rate in Nigeria is on the increase, almost on a daily basis and this had made it so difficult to point fingers at the direction of the evils that have left the country prostrate economically, politically and socially. Some of the prevalent crimes in Nigeria are: direct violence: including deliberate injury to the integrity of human life. The act involves homicide, murder and massacre; brutal acts against the civil society: This is in the form of torture, rape and maltreatment; restriction and Physical Constraints: this usually reduces the population. e.g. kidnapping, imprisonment, forced labour; indirect violence: Such as non-assistance to human beings (citizen-the elderly, children, etc.) in danger; mediated violence: such as dangerous medication of the nature and social environment of the opposing ethnic group repressive violence: deprivation of the fundamental rights, derail of participation in political activities due to threat, to attack and to lack of protection of property.

In consonance with the same issue, Soola (2007) asserted that: Nigeria socio-political and economic landscape has been blighted by the endemic twin evil of crime and violence. The library therefore has a cogent role to play in combating this menace. The libraries, archives and other information centres as repositories of knowledge have changed their horizon over the years to become not only a place or building but a thoroughfare through which information can be delivered to people, no matter the location. Since the human race from evolution to date has metamorphosed in many ways, services to man should also change to reflect his present place and status in today's society. This is to say that indeed all information practitioners have a role to play to tame the spate of insurgence and terrorism in Nigeria. Issa (2003) observed that economic and national power and status are considered to be dependent upon the wide dissemination and use of information and knowledge. Even though the onus of libraries and information services rests on the librarian and information scientists, there is also the need to collaborate with other agencies in bringing optimum information services to the public.

It is an irrefutable assertion that information is a transformation agent, a shaper of perspectives and philosophies of life. Therefore, the onus lies on libraries, archives and other information centres and information professionals to ensure that Nigerians have access to information that will shape their life philosophies and direct their actions. Information therefore is a sine qua non for individual and collective freedom and attainment of national security and crime management .Anasi (2010) citing Sokari (2006) agrees that information is necessary for people to be liberated from the shackles of ignorance, misconceptions, economic stagnation, social unrest,

and political instability. Information remains the only product which the library handles and this includes all media in which the information is shaped. The only means through which the real integration of people living in political, economic, religious and ideological poles could be brought together is through the actual cooperation and exchange of vital information between the two: the terrorist and the terrorized (Ossai-Ugbah, 2013).

Information centres provide not only information resources and guidance, but it is also a judgment-free zone in which a citizen can investigate interests of the terrorists without worry of embarrassment or exposure. A greater understanding of the differences and similarities between peoples of the world can potentially initiate and expand feelings of tolerance and empathy for cultures, religions and traditions outside of one's immediate sphere. This the libraries and other information centres can provide. Omotayo (2005) noted that: 'in war situations in enlightened societies, use of libraries and other information centres increases as user's flock to libraries to find information to guide them. Information that can promote peace, unity, progress, peaceful co-existence, and harmonious relationship among all the communities must therefore be available in libraries. Information centres therefore, in promoting access to this information, act as agents of the promotion of communal peace and reconciliation.

The library also has a major function to provide useful information to bodies and agencies of peace during time of security uproar. Information centres can ginger up the electronic media to promote and expand security awareness among the people at large. The library through the media has been waging war of its own to counter the hostile propaganda from insurgents and terrorists in Nigeria. Like their names suggests propaganda: Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) and Boko Haram (Western Education is nonsense), the government through the library can fund effective counter propaganda campaigns that will sensitize the citizens to the ills of terrorism and win over their sympathizers (Ossai-Ugbah, 2013). One of the most effective means of maintaining national security is through propaganda and the primary tool of propaganda is the media. Some of the techniques adopted in a conflict to gain the desired results are repeating the lies of the terrorists, attacking personal opinions disguised as fact, headlining propaganda, selective control of information and the yellow journalism (Gamble and Kwerliambli, 1990). Thus, the role played by the library and librarians is a morale-boosting role."In the military parlance, morale is the will to fight for the national cause to the last" (Hussain, 2008). Thus, in the war on

terror, psychological operation is not the only function which the library can perform in the context of national security; it can act as a bridge between the armed forces and the people (Hali, 2003).

Ossai-Ugbah (2013) in her recommendations said that the security agencies should deliberate government policy and work closely with librarians in the war against terror; Libraries should be in the forefront of national security discourses through sponsorship, guiding principle and act can further the country's national security. The Library can through printing and pasting posters in public places sensitize the public of the disastrous effects of national insecurity. She also suggested redesigning of the curriculum of various degree and non-degree awarding institutions to accommodate issues on national security for all students; Libraries in Nigeria can function by seeking assistance in terms of funds and technical support from other countries where terrorism is on the boil.

Some other prescribed solutions to national security challenges in Nigeria

In his submission, Adebowale (2016) listed some practical solutions to eradicating insecurity in Nigeria, these include: addressing the problem of poverty, creation of jobs and employment of entrepreneurs, enforcement of socio-economic right, proper equipment of security agencies, the use of schools and religious institutions as a ground to foster peace, instilling discipline and championing crime reduction. Security alert posted on Face book on 29/3/2016 by Vince Silas…. this is to awake our security consciousness. A story is told of how armed robbers are snatching the innocent people of their vehicles nowadays. In a party or public gathering, they will meet the MC to make an announcement of a particular car with registration number who is blocking them, while gun will be drawn out to the potential driver at the point of entering his car. Do the following when your vehicle registration number is being called: (1) take your time before going out, (2) do not go out alone, at least in company of two or more people, (3) do not go directly to where the car is parked, at least to confirm from a distance if you are blocking another car or truly. Share this experience today even if you don't own a car and save lot of people.

Abolurin (2012) says that the Nigerian security agencies should work in collaboration with the government to fight crime. Poverty alleviation programmes should be prioritised in the agenda of the Government to reduce poverty to the barest minimum. He suggested that aggressed groups should not take laws into their hands by resolving conflicts with jungle justice, the due process of law should be followed. Abolurin (2012) and Alamu (2013) also suggested the legalisation and

empowerment of community policing in all the states of the federation to complement Nigerian police effort to ensure adequate security of lives and properties of Nigerians.

In Nigeria, the leadership and followership must be fully committed to the process of repentance and reconciliation. Thus, the politics of exclusion and isolation will not take the nation anywhere. Leadership must begin to give rapt attention to faint voices of the oppressed poor, aggrieved politicians and the deprived minority groups. Religious leaders should also do more to educate people in their faith on religious tolerance and inter-religious cooperation as Nigeria consist people of diverse religion beliefs. Boko Haram sect group in Islam should be crushed by all means, since they are not even ready to stop or negotiate with Nigerian Inter-Religious Council (NIREC) as well as other stakeholders in the nation (Alamu, 2013).

Conclusion

This paper x-rayed national security and crimes management in Nigeria and the role of the library and information centre. It has been discovered that Nigeria security is threatened by numerous challenges emanating from factors and incidences of abduction, kidnapping, terrorism, maiming, nihilism, burgeoning recklessness, and senseless killings, religious and ethical crises, among many others. Thus, the citizens despite efforts from the state apparatus to ensure safety and protection of lives still live in constant fear and worry. The Federal Government of Nigeria should make efforts to ensure security and bring down inter-religion and ethic rifts to the barest minimum, the library on its own also have a great role to play as the information agency in the country. The library should front advocacy programmes and campaign on peace and tranquillity and they are imperative to the overall wellbeing and development of the nation. Nevertheless, stakeholders in politics, religion, ethnics, force and government must rediscover the sense of cooperate personality, communal responsibility and human solidarity. The pursuance of selfish ambition must be knocked out totally from the system in Nigeria and a sincere action towards ensuring national security must be implemented.

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