

**REGIONAL SECURITY OUTFIT AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE IN NIGERIA:
A ROAD MAP TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

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Abstract

The paper made an attempt to look at the effects of the recently introduced regional security outfit and governance structure in Nigeria. The paper relies essentially on secondary source of data in writing the paper. There are stretches of roads running to several kilometres or more and there are no towns located especially in the far North Eastern parts of Nigeria. The Police seem incapable of maintaining security on our streets in most part of the country. There is hardly any day without newspaper report of one crime or the other. It is either kidnapping, armed banditry, raping on the high ways, bank robbery, incessant killings and raids on villages and several social vices in the country. The paper critically examined the operational structure and implications of national security management in Nigeria using the theoretical framework of twin theories of relational cohesion and community participation. The paper argued that the centralized security system in the country has failed and it embodies dysfunctional systemic implications that perpetuate violence and insecurity. In line with the theory of relational cohesion and community participation, the paper identified the individuals as the centerpiece from where the household, community, the local government area, the State and the Federation evolve and revolve as security network. Accordingly, it emphasizes the need for decentralization of the police and other state-owned agencies of internal security management in order to mitigate the upsurge in crime and violence including those emanating from armed robbers, political assassins, ransom kidnapers, oil thieves, and armed banditry among others. The Boko Haram terrorist and their activities remained unabated within the North East and some parts of the North West. The paper believes that with the assistance and introduction of State Police or Regional Security outfit, the insecurity experienced in the country may be reduced or abated. It also believed that if properly channeled and implemented to the rules and guidelines followed to the letter, the regional security outfit will solve some of the security problem in Nigeria if not eradicated. The paper concludes that, Nigeria should pursue the option of restructuring for now if it hopes to remain as an indivisible country and the regional security outfit should be allowed to be in operation viz-a-viz the Nigeria police to enhance sustainable development in the country

Keywords : Security, Insecurity, Governance, Sustainable Development, Regional and State Police.

Introduction

Since independence, various crises have retarded the growth and development of the Nigerian state. These crises range from religious intolerance, ethnic rivalries, resource control, to the current *Boko-Haram* menace in the North Eastern Nigeria and Biafra independence movement. The evolutionary process of democracy in Nigeria is constrained by crises and such crises contributed to the fragility of our democratic experience. The Nigerian nation, though a product of colonial creation, until 1900, existed as a number of independent and, sometimes, hostile nation with linguistic and cultural differences. All attempts at constitutional reviews from 1922-1954 were mere coercive efforts at creating a united nation while guaranteeing the survival of colonial rule. Though the struggle against colonialism led to independence, the post-independence government could not sustain the tempo of crisis that erupted in the country.

From 1960-1966, Nigerian artificial arrangement as a nation resulted in a series of crisis. The intervention of the military in 1966 led by Kaduna Nzeogwu and the other two majors was seen as an unfortunate necessity needed to ease the tension. But unfortunately, it was to set in motion a cycle of military

coups, counter *coups* and attempted *coups* which made Nigeria from 1966-1999 a military endemic state. The *coup d'état* that ended Nigeria's first democratic governance entrenched and introduced the culture of military politics into the country's political system. The First Republic democratic pursuit could not guarantee life and security to the citizens. There was the 1964 election crisis in the western region, which led to operation 'wetie' that culminated in the killing of Tafawa Balewa and the reprisal attack in the north when the Ibos were being killed.

The Second Republic emerged with the conduct of 1979 general elections, which produced Alhaji Shehu Shagari as the first Executive President of Nigeria under the National Party of Nigeria (NPN). The Shagari administration was toppled in a military *coup d'état* led by General Muhammadu Buhari. The Buhari administration was also toppled by General Ibrahim Babangida in a palace *coup* on 27th August, 1985. Babangida was in power until he annulled the general election of 1993, generally believed to have been won by Moshood Abiola. At the exit of Babangida, he handed over to an interim government under Earnest Shonekan who was toppled by General Sani Abacha. The death of Abacha in June 1998 brought in General Abdulsalam who embarked on the shortest transition program from June 1998 to May 28, 1999.

In Nigeria, the security situation can be said to be challenging. "The country cannot boast of relative peace, when the situation is viewed from a national perspective" (Radio Nigeria, 2014). No place in the country, regardless of how one tries to picture the scenario, is secure. Hardly do Nigerians wake up to good news as regards their security. It is either that it is the news of abduction and killing of some people, especially children in states like Borno, Yobe, Kano, Plateau, Katsina and Bauchi, Kogi, Niger or the senseless massacre in the name of protesting an election result or the invasion of some communities in Zamfara, Southern part of Kaduna and a host of other villages in North Central Nigeria by unknown violent men or the occasional IPOB and MASSOB disturbances or the Niger Delta Avengers, militancy or the usual religious/ethnic oriented conflicts or the insurgency traversing the borders of Benue, Nasarawa, Adamawa, Plateau, Taraba and Kogi States or the Boko Haram terror attacks in the North. In fact, the 276 female students abducted by Boko Haram militants on the night of April 14th-15th, 2014 from the Government Secondary school in the town of Chibok in Borno are yet to be totally accounted for or located. There was another gruesome attack in early November, 2020 in the same town of Chibok where many people were murdered in a day light attack without any resistance because there was no presence of the military.

Also, multiple explosions within the country have been recorded in the past. These explosions go off at a rate which will soon make them look like a normal occurrence. Coupled with this, these miscreants and terrorists called Boko Haram and Armed Bandits are not relenting in their bid to making Nigeria, and now, her neighbouring countries like Cameroun, Niger and Chad, restive. Their method has not only developed in a sophisticated manner but also, unsuspectingly in their deploying of young girls and child soldiers to cause these havoc and explosions. In creating violence and terror, Abubakar Shekau, the leader of the terrorist group had tried creating an independent state for group within the country. This situation may eventually result in a devastating effect on the unity and stability of the country. The situation of insecurity in Nigeria is so scary that many in Nigeria are hopeless of any forthcoming solution to this seemingly intractable state of insecurity that looms large in the polity and as such, have disposed themselves into expecting the worst of the situation. According to the Transparency International Index, Nigeria today is the poverty capital of the world, the 147 most corrupt nation of the World, the home to the second deadliest terrorist group and the most unsafe place to give birth in the World (Wikipedia, 2020). Equally, according to the Global Terrorism Index, Nigeria ranks number three most terrorized country in the World.

As a result of this scenario, one is constrained to ask a pertinent question, what has the Nigerian government done to proffer a lasting solution to the security issue of the country? Recently, the farmers in Katsina State had to pay tax to the bandits to the tune of 1.7 million to be able to assess their farms. The government of the country seems clueless as regards resolving the security problem. Not that the government is not working towards resolving this issue, its action has been predictable and quite negligent enough to give these miscreants causing mayhem and various atrocities breathing space to regroup and re-strategize on their next line of dastard action. Another puzzle in the Nigeria security architecture is the recruitment of arrested members of Boko Haram and Bandits in to the Nigerian army and the acclaimed 'deradicalisation' and amnesty granted to 'repentant members of Boko-Haram. It appears absurd for criminals who have maimed and killed thousands of Nigerians to be granted amnesty and enlisted in to the Nigerian army. Those

who are not recruited are being empowered with #150,000 per month. A serving Senator representing Borno South Senatorial constituency in Borno State corroborated this claim recently when he condemned this anomaly at the floor of the National Assembly (The Nation, 2020).

Adejumo (2011) talked of this negligent attitude of the government when he recalled President Jonathan Goodluck's response to 2011 UN House Bombing when he remarked that, "Terrorism is a global phenomenon. May be it is Nigeria's turn." As further interpreted by Adejumo, it seemed that the leader of the country then was saying that, "Why not, it's our turn to start getting blown up." How much should one expect? The situation is now worse compared to the period when the former President made such an assertion. It is not that this security problem was a new phenomenon to the present government in the country, the security problem has been on for more than a decade. To worsen the situation, President Muhammadu Buhari retained the service chiefs in the face of all these security breaches and failures and despite the call by the National Assembly to the President to remove the service chiefs who are overdue for retirement.

Since the early 2000s, the Nigerian authorities have been grappling with a dangerous and dramatic twist in both the rate, dimensions, and forms of act of insecurity particularly the rising cases of terrorism, kidnapping, armed banditry, oil bunkering, and piracy relationship between the police and Vigilante groups. A point appears to have been reached that the known conventional strategies of combating the dreaded scourge of violent criminality appear to have proved most ineffective. Therefore, the introductions of informal security structure inform of regional or State Security outfit is a welcome development. Though extant literature revealed that right from the pre-colonial era, the various primitive communities across what later came to be known as Nigeria at independence had evolved for themselves various efficient systems for fighting crime of all types; that during the colonial era (between the 1930sand 1950s) local hunter known as di-nta , sode, sode or ode and yantauri among the Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa respectively was adopted in fighting violent crime across the country; and that the strategy(the local hunter system) has been popularized, abandoned, and re-adopted time and time again by various communities across the country (Adejumo,2011). The local security strategy (the local hunter system) which was built on very strong reliance on such local implements as Dane guns, bows and arrows, machetes, torch lights, whistles, and above all, various assortments of anti-criminal charms or occult medicine had proved very effective in fighting crime during the period. It was also revealed recently that a number of States in both Northern and South-western parts of Nigeria have readopted the local hunter system as a tool for fighting crime.

In certain instances in North-Eastern Nigeria, both the military and police formations currently engaged in fighting terrorist insurgency in parts of the region are successfully deploying the local hunter strategy code named Civilian JTF, not only for intelligence gathering and surveillance but also for special direct physical confrontation with the heavily armed terrorist insurgents. The regional security outfit as a matter of urgency should be a way out for the remaining State Governments across the country to embrace as part of their official security architectures. The recruitment and training of these able-bodied youths, practicing hunters, retired military personnel and police officers should be with a view to strengthening the fast emerging and unabated security threats within the country.

Apart from the contemporary nature of this topic, another factor that motivated the topic was the incessant security challenges in the country and the earlier hostility that attended the introduction of Amotekun security outfit in South Western Nigeria. This paper therefore examined the systems of regional security architecture in Nigeria, and how they have evolved overtime in an attempt to solve the problem of security challenges militating against the development of the country and which have continued to undermine Nigeria's security architecture. The paper beamed it's searchlight on the failure of governance systems which had failed to promote the tenets and dividend of democracy, thus providing room for insecurity, conflict, poverty and deprivation in the country. Finally, the paper highlights several measures and recommendations which can be adopted to foster more viable security solution in the country in order to promote adequate security and stability towards Sustainable Development in the country.

Conceptual Framework

The reconceptualization of security has been triggered by the end of the Cold War, by the process of globalization, and by the gradual transition from the Holocene to the Anthropocene phase of earth history (Brauch 2008, 2009). From a philosophical perspective, in the contemporary security discussion the "dual moment of prevention and compensation of genuinely social and technical uncertainties" (Makropoulos,

1995) becomes decisive. These new uncertainties are no manifest or latent dangers emerging from individuals and societal groups that can be prevented by police and political measures but 'societal risks'. This implies that security is no longer a situation free of dangers, but rather an 'insurance' as a 'technology of risks' becomes a disposition of the social steering of modern societies. With the shift of focus from protection against concrete dangers towards insurance in the context of abstract risks, security has become "a general 'societal idea of value' and a universally employed 'normative concept', which is used with different meanings in an affirmative manner" (Makropoulos 1995).

Peace, safety and security are both necessary and indispensable requirement for development and the attainment of good quality of life for any human society. They provide the requisite enabling environment for citizens to live and work towards social, economic and political development of the society (Groenewald and Peak, 2004). By the same token, their absence stifles the human capacity to develop and heavily compromises the dignity and quality of life of both individuals and society. Furthermore, insecurity impacts negatively on all citizens through loss of property, life and limb, or through loss of confidence from fear of violence. It is against this backdrop that the delivery of safety and security is considered a justifiable public good and the very essence of the state (Lubuva, 2004).

Human safety and security are indeed human rights having a value of their own and serving an instrumental function in the construction of human contentment and prosperity (Odinkalu, 2005). Unfortunately, social life in Nigeria has remained largely characterized by fear and insecurity (Odekunle, 2005; Odinkalu, 2005; Bach, 2004; Alemika and Chukuma, 2004). In a manner that suggests that the country lacks the capacity to discharge its security functions especially that of policing, Mr. Sunday Ehindero (2006), an erstwhile Inspector General of Police, told the National Assembly on August 6, 2006 that the mobile police are ill-equipped to match the sophistication of the modern day robbers in the country (Jamiu, 2006). Crime has become as complex as human nature, (Zems, 2011). The modern technological advancement and tremendous progress in communication have facilitated emergence of criminals in every corner of the world to commit a crime using sophisticated equipment in one place and then escape to another place. The present-day world faces the grim problem of illicit drug trafficking, smuggling, hijacking, kidnapping and terrorism (Felson, 2002). In spite of vigorous and vehement national and international efforts towards combating such crimes, it is quite disappointing to note that the crime rates are rapidly growing in various forms and dimension in the country.

Crime has adversely affected the societies of both developed as well as developing countries by impairing the quality of life, threatening human rights and fundamental freedom and posing a serious challenge to the community. Crime, therefore, is also getting more sophisticated and deadlier with every passing day. There are reports about armed robbers now using dynamites and hand grenades to blow up the doors of banks and bullion vans conveying money with full police escort and using rocket-propelled grenades to attack helicopters (Soyombo, 2009). Similarly, kidnapping which used to be a localized problem of the Niger Delta area targeting expatriate oil workers, has assumed a national character, targeting the rich and powerful especially, in the society and making them to live in grave fear and uncertainty. The profundity of the country's security problem is heightened by the daring disposition of the dreaded criminals as evidenced by their temerity to take their trades to the door-steps of the men of the agency that is charged with the responsibility of protecting lives and property in a manner that suggests that they have conquered the territory. The climax of the said rise in criminality was the recent and unabated incidents of throwing of bombs and armed attacks by insurgents, bandits and religious fundamentalists in parts of Northern Nigeria leading to loss of several lives and property.

Overview of the Nigeria Police

The Nigeria Police which was first established in 1820 is the principal law enforcement agency and the lead security agency in Nigeria. It performed conventional police functions and was responsible for internal security generally and for performing military duties within or outside Nigeria as directed (Wikipedia, 2020). The force is a very large organization consisting of 36 State commands grouped into 12 zones and 7 administrative organs.

The problem of policing in Nigeria started from 1966 immediately after the coup. The policemen were on ground to monitor affairs after the coup. Sometimes later, the military felt jealous of the force and

removed actual policing from the police force and took over the functions of the conventional police. At a stage, the intelligence aspect of the police was christened NSO (Nigeria Security Organisation) which is the SSS (State Security Services) today. The SSS was removed from the police and taken away to the supposed Paramilitary. The administration of policing the society actually left the police and unconsciously handed over to the military. The militarization of the police made police to see themselves as force rather than service. They therefore perceive the public which they are to serve as bloody civilian. There is therefore a wide gap between the police and the people, it is only the VIP's that always have the best of the police.

The Security Challenges of the Nigerian Government

Having discussed the foregoing, it is pertinent to note that there are so many security challenges which the Nigerian government has to grapple with if adequate security is to be restored to Nigeria. First of all is the failure of security agencies in the country. In particular, the failure of the intelligence services to contain the recurring security breaches. These security agencies appear incapable of matching the sophisticated weapons of these miscreants. They discharged their duty unprofessionally and unmotivated. One wonders how they can veritably help the Nigerian government in restoring security to the country. In fact, the current trend of violence is imprinting on the psyche of Nigerians that the government security apparatus is incapable of guaranteeing the security and safety of its people. Thus a greater percentage of the population is clamouring for State Police or a regional security outfit.

Another problem militating against National security in Nigeria is corruption. Recent reports on corruption in Nigeria revealed that corruption and related crimes in the country has attracted an annual revenue loss of almost \$25.76 billion to the nation in the last five years. On a daily basis, Nigeria is reported to be losing about \$70.575, 342 to corruption and related crimes, (*This Day, 2015*). Also, a well know non-governmental organization, Transparency International (TI), projected Nigeria in its corruption perception index (CPI) as being the third most corrupt nation in the world (131st of 133 countries surveyed). On corruption in Nigeria, the report says: Every single responsible institution in Nigeria is corrupt and has failed to appreciate fully the obligations upon it to do something concrete about corruption. This is to the extent that politicians, government officials, the police and, most saddening of all, the civil society in Nigeria, have all failed to present a genuine attempt to improve the negative image of the country as far as the phenomenon of corruption is concerned (*This Day, 2013*). According to the Global Terrorism Index, Nigeria ranks number three (3) most terrorized country in the world and number one in Africa (UNEP and UNDP, 2019). Consequently, the effects of corruption on the security of the country and the society in general are so devastating to the point that the nation's political structures especially the Police institution have significantly lost their capacity to perform their constitutional functions.

Another security challenge comes from the judiciary arm of government of the country. In Nigeria, the Judiciary has occasionally compromised cases that concern insecurity and thereby making the law not to act as a deterrent again. The current clamp down on corrupt judges in the country is pointer to this assertion. This challenge needs to be speedily resolved since many Nigerians have become conditioned to the acts of carnage, brigandage, looting, massacre, butchery and bestiality. Indecisiveness on issues bothering on insecurity from the part of the Nigerian government is another security challenge. This indecisiveness is not peculiar to the present Nigerian government but it has been an attitude of every federal government since the first republic. The leaders of this country need to cultivate strong political will to oversee this security problem and not appear ever clueless, negligent and predictable.

Unemployment appears to be the strongest security challenge of the Nigerian government. So alarming is the rate of unemployment in this country. Many Nigerians of whom are in the youth bracket are not gainfully employed. This situation has continually fanned the embers of insecurity in Nigeria. These youths are frustrated by their unemployed state into perpetrating crimes of various degrees. Most of the paraded criminals are youths who are unemployed and most of them are ready to be recruited by the terrorist for any ridiculous amount of money.

Another security challenge is the issue of lop-sided development of the country. As Nwadiakor (2011) rightly observed, "the deliberate concentration of Nigeria's capital resources to the development of a few cities in the name of Federal and State capitals, culminating in the prevalence of a large population of rural and underdeveloped communities who later came to see the developing cities of

Lagos, Port-Harcourt, Kano, Enugu, Ibadan, Kaduna and Calabar to mention but a few, as a different country has equally compounded the security woes of this country. The situation created is such that the rural areas dwellers consider as enemies and subsequently, appeared to have waged a cold war against the urban centres dwellers. The rural areas dwellers out of envy for the goodies enjoyed by the urban centres dwellers, engage in organized criminal expeditions to the cities and retreat to escape security agencies, and this has continued till date. They will later return to the village to enjoy their loot.

Another security challenge in the country today is the nefarious and virulent activity of the Islamic sect cum terror-group, the armed bandits and the Boko Haram. These terror-groups have constituted itself a thorn in the flesh of the current government of Nigeria. The group has claimed responsibility for most bomb explosions and mayhem experienced within the country in recent times. The sheer lawlessness and carnage carried out by these Islamic sects have heated up the nation and made the country less secure.

Today 'security' as a political value, at least in Western thinking, has no independent meaning and is related to individual or societal value systems. As a social science concept, "security is ambiguous and elastic in its meaning" (Art, 1993). Wolfers (1962) pointed to two sides of the security concept: "Security, in an *objective* sense, measures the absence of threats to acquired values, in a *subjective* sense, the absence of fear that such values will be attacked". From the perspective of social constructivist approaches in international relations (Adler 1997; Fearon/Wendt 2002; Risse 2003; Wendt 1992, 1999) 'security' is conceived as an outcome of a process of social and political interaction where social values and norms, collective identities and cultural traditions are essential.

From this perspective, security is always inter-subjective or "security is what actors make of it" (Wendt 1992). For Wolfers, security refers to an absence of objective dangers, i.e. of security 'threats', 'challenges', 'vulnerabilities' and 'risks', and of subjective fears or concerns, and to the perception thereof. From a realist perspective, *objective* security is achieved when the dangers posed by manifold threats, challenges, vulnerabilities and risks are avoided, prevented, managed, coped with, mitigated and adapted to by individuals, societal groups, the state or regional or global international organizations. From a social constructivist approach, security is achieved once the perception and fears of security 'threats', 'challenges', 'vulnerabilities' and 'risks' are allayed and overcome. While objective factors in the security perception are necessary, they are not sufficient. Subjective factors influence security perceptions. The perception of security dangers depends on the worldviews or traditions of the analyst (Bull 1977, Wight 1991) and on the mind-set of policymakers (Booth 1979, 1987) that have often distorted the assessment of 'new challenges' and that "freeze international relations into crude images, portray its processes as mechanistic responses of power and characterize other nations as stereotypes" (Booth 1987; 1998). Since 1990 new debates have emerged between traditional approaches, critical security studies, and constructivist approaches. While national security has the state as the major referent point, human security has human beings and humankind as the referent point. The answers to the questions of security for whom, from whom, by whom, of what values, from what threats and by what means differ fundamentally between both concepts?

Theoretical Framework

This paper was anchored on the twin theories of relational cohesion and community participation. The relational cohesion theory is associated with E.J Lawler and David Apter and argues that social groups, networks or communities are formed and maintained through social interactions and repeated exchanges by members. Such interactions foster shared sentiments, beliefs and values, shared activities, and provide a basis for attachment and commitment to the group based on shared identity and interest.

The relevance of this theory to informal security structures is thus to be understood from the notion that they are part and parcel of the communities and therefore share similar sentiments and aspirations with the rest members of the community. Their commitment is also defined by their membership of the community and identification with its collective interests. This position approximates Orator's (2005) argument that the informal security structures endure because they are rooted in the traditions, customs, and native practices of the people. By the same token, the general police have failed thus far because they are detached from the people and are not bound by their sentiments and values. Also considered relevant to the understanding of informal policing structures is the theory of community participation.

The theory underscores the need to give control of affairs and decisions to people most affected by them, in this instance, community people believes that the advocates of community participation besides serving as a means of getting things done, involving people in solving their own problems also brings many lasting benefits to people. First, it allows for the redistribution of power that in turn enables the have not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included (Arnstein, 1969). It also brings people together in making decisions about their environment. Therefore, participation brings about individual empowerment, as people benefit from each other (Kreuter, Lezin, and Young, 2000). In as much as the involvement by community members is a way to incorporate local values and attitudes into any programme and to build the layman`s perspective into the programme. Community member involvement can also provide access to local leaders, resources, and technical skills not otherwise available (Bracht, and Tsouros, 1990).

Above all, participation engenders a sense of identification and continuing responsibility for any programme, often referred to as the principle of ownership (Carlaw, 1984). The aptness of this theoretical orientation is underscored by the increasing realization that no government or authority has the means to solve all the public problems adequately, and in the case of security, that the local people as stakeholders in their communities not only understand their neighborhoods and environment better, but also share the common aspiration of promoting and protecting it. It is also this realization that explains the increasing demand for state police, state security service, vigilante groups, and arrangement which proponents believe would bring policing closer to the local people and reduce criminal activities.

Methodology

The data for this paper was drawn mainly from secondary sources. This involved information elicited from other persons and events observed by such persons, data from books, newspapers, periodicals and archives. The problems of insecurity in Nigeria had assumed a dangerous dimension which has been reported by researchers, scholars, groups and individuals and their reports and submissions constituted the data upon which this research work was based. The impetus of this study was to establish the fact that the spate of security threat in the country calls for a separate security outfit to complement the efforts of our security agencies.

Regional Security Outfit in Nigeria

As a result of the security situation in the country, Nigerians will continue to demand for solution to ameliorate the sympathetic menace. Insecurity will continue to trigger state response and demands to curb these incessant security threats. The State governments are clamouring for the establishment of State Police, but the Federal government appears to be reluctant to give a nod to the development. Though, the reluctance of the Federal government had given rise to the agitation and establishment of the regional informal security outfits. It is a fact universally acknowledged that security is the fulcrum upon which the entire architecture of a state or country revolves, and without security, no state can carry out its constitutional responsibilities to the citizens, which include protection of life, enjoyment of peace and pursuit of daily activities that bring dignity and add values to the lives of the citizens.

Without mincing words, Nigeria's security architecture is centralized and concerned with government protection rather than citizen's security. This could be as a result of the outcome of an over centralized government structure, with concentrated power, created by an extended period of military regimes. The preoccupation with state security and the neglect of the economy as well as the social security of the individual, over the years, clearly manifest a distortion in our priorities at all levels of government (Ojo, 2019). The efforts of the government about how to secure the lives of individual from kidnappings, armed banditry, senseless killings, rape by armed gunmen who, often than not, were never arrested nor prosecuted (Okeke, 2018). In other words, operating a unitary command structure of government in a supposedly federal system has contributed so much to the cause of insecurity in the Nigeria. It is a known fact that we never heard of armed robberies in Nigeria when the Regions had their own Police Force before the incursion of the Military in 1966 (Jamiu, 2006).

At independence what was negotiated and agreed upon, as the basis for our remaining together as one nation, was that each of the federating three regions would have their own police force (Adedeji, 2019).

The 1963 Republican Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria provides in Section 105(7) that each region shall have its own Police Force on provincial basis. In exercise of this power the Northern Region and the Western Region established their own local or what was referred to then as Native Authority Police (Soyombo, 2009). The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) in Section 214(1) abrogated this power of the States to establish their own police. The section provides that no other Police Force, other than the Nigeria Police Force shall be established for the federation or any part thereof. This simply means that our laws recognize only one Police Force. However, the current spate of criminality in the society could no longer cope with that portion of the provision of the 1963 constitution.

With the military intervention into Nigeria's politics in 1966, the concept of Federalism was jettisoned and the constitution was suspended and replaced with Decree (Odinkalu, 2005). The military displaced the politicians and subsequently supplanted the politicians with appointed senior military officers. The military plunged the country into a civil war and the polity became centralized in line with the command structure of the military. At the exit of the Military in 1999, they imposed on the country an over centralized Federal system, through an illegitimate unitary constitution which ensures a very strong centre and weak, infinitesimally small states which are seen and treated like appendages or conquered territories, with noticeable domination and marginalization (Brauch, 2008, 2009). According to Alemika (2004), a pertinent principle of federalism is the division of powers between the Federal Government at the centre, and the federating units, that is, Regions or State Governments, in such a way that would best preserve the independence and autonomy of each government in the performance of its duties of maintaining law and order, and securing lives and properties within their respective states. With the above scenario at the back of our idea, one can conveniently argue that, the different States and Region in the country are ripe enough to establish their own security network to be able to protect the citizens within their jurisdiction.

In other words, the unification policy by the military regimes, of the main security apparatus of the whole 36 states, 774 local governments and the FCT has proved grossly inefficient in a country of almost 200 million people, with a diversity of nations, with different cultural patterns, historical realities, socio-political and economic identities (Odekunle, 2005). Nigeria with three major ethnic groups, two hundred and fifty tribes and four hundred and eighty dialects cannot prosper effectively with a unification policy. Unfortunately, this is what we have been grappling with in the country since after independence. This centralized policing system is inimical to the whole concept of federalism, and it must be corrected through a process of restructuring of the policing system in Nigeria thereby given opportunity for proper policing and crime reduction. This can effectively be achieved through regional or State policing outfit. Nigeria appears to be the only country in the world that is operating federal system of government but using unitary policing system.

Policing is a primary responsibility of the federating component units that is the States or Regions as the case may be. This is what obtains in Federal system of government like Germany, USA, Canada, India and even UK, with unitary form of government (Faron, 2002). This is the only avenue through which insecurity will be reduced because members of the regional security outfits are members recruited within and among the community where they will operate. The people employed into these security outfits are expected to know the nooks and crannies of the environment. It is strange why we have chosen to have a centralized and single Nigeria Police Force in Nigeria, because this is a negation of the principle of federalism. The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) clearly proclaims in Section 14(2) b that "the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government". Yet in relation to security issues, State Commissioner of Police has overriding powers over the Governor of the State, who is expected to be the Chief Security Officer of his State. It is sad to note that any State Government that lacks control of the coercive powers to enforce its existence, to maintain law and order, to secure lives and properties and enforce its laws, is not a state government, but an administrative authority and an appendage to the Federal Government. Though, this is not the intent of the 1999 Nigeria constitution.

The bone of contention against restructuring is that the individual states are too small, fragile, financially poor and weak to challenge the Federal Government and that to devolve more powers on them is to put on them loads that they cannot carry. This obstacle was surmounted when six States came together to form a regional block that could dare the Federal government with the name Amotekun. This development was a frightening dimension to the struggle for restructuring, and the beneficiaries of the lopsided

governance structure were caught unawares and thrown into panic (Oditia, 2018). The government in response to the development quickly came up with the idea of Community Policing. This step is part of the centralizing trends in the present policing system. It is also a distraction to frustrate the efforts of State government in an attempt to pursue restructuring and reverse the country back to regional basis. The sudden frenzy from government about Community Policing is a preemptive strategy, to pacify the restless natives in the Southern part of the country who are yearning for restructuring (Abideen, 2020). As long as the leadership of the Community Police will be answerable to the Inspector General of Police through the Commissioner of Police, then the status of the State Governor as the Chief Security Officer of the State remains undermined. A State Governor should have greater control over the Commissioner of Police deployed to his state than is the case now, when a State Commissioner of Police will refer any directive given to him by a State Governor to the IG of Police first, rather than complying.

In the case of Operation Amotekun, it is a newly established people-centred approach to security in the South Western part of Nigeria. In a country with a Federal system like Nigeria, State Governments are entitled to set up security outfits, to enable them discharge their constitutional responsibilities as Chief Security Officer. With particular focus on Nigeria, Ogbonnaya and Ehigiamusoe (2013) in their study examined the security challenges posed to nation-states by these “violent non-state actors” such as Boko Haram, Bandits and Kidnappers in international politics, especially since September 11, 2001 bombing of the World Trade Centre in the United States. The study adopted descriptive and analytical approaches and found that these terrorist groups have not only challenged the security of the Nigerian state but also threatened its unity, territoriality and sovereignty. Nwozor (2013) in his study examined the Nigerian state caught in the crossfire of national security arising from the insurgency of various rogue groups; most prominent of them is the *Boko Haram* sect. Relying on secondary sources of data, the study interrogated the force theory that underpins Nigeria’s security architecture and contended that the continued insecurity in this polity is a demonstration of its ineffectiveness. The study also contended that the proposition for regional police outfit is an option towards a secured society.

Conclusion

In the final analysis, the willingness of Neighbourhood Association to intervene for common good depends in large part on condition of mutual trust and solidarity among members. The installation of security arrangement in urban neighbourhoods by the Neighbourhood Association has brought a new dimension to social structure, relationships and ability to live together in harmony with the imposition of some norms and convention. This will introduce behavioral patterns that enhance and strengthen social cohesion, good behavior and responsible citizenships in the neighbourhoods. Under the condition of liberal law or no law at all, the residents are quick to develop rules and laws in their neighborhoods, these laws however may be a pointer to knowing how a set of people want to live together in a neighborhood. Neighbourhood Association’s administration has the potential of redistributing urban residents into their pure structure which can enhance urban managements. We recommend that the police need to collaborate with the neighbourhood association to educate them on issues relating to human right violations, and the strategies of community policing and crime watch. The arrangement of people in space and the demarcation of social and spatial grouping of urban residents are a pointer to identifying effective local administration that is effective in a country where there are many unresolved issues on the jurisdictional partitioning and the democratic practice at the local level which can easily be resolved by the introduction of community policing or the proposed State or Regional policing system.

The respect and the allegiance commanded by the Neighbourhood Association executives are comparable to the local government chairmen and the councilors, yet the neighbourhood Associations executives are more visible in city neighborhoods than the conventional government. Neighbourhood Associations thus reflect how people want to be governed, while the local government political leadership reflects alien or imposed administration which fails in many areas at the local level. Social cohesion and primary affiliation in the neighbourhood is fast becoming Nigerian urban culture as most urban area in Nigeria sleep early. Therefore a community policing outfit supervised and controlled by the State Governor will be most suitable for Nigerian communities.

Recommendation

It is in the opinion of this paper that Amotekun Security outfit and other State owned security outfits should be allowed to transform into State Police to enhance proper security network within their jurisdiction. In addition, regional security outfits should be encouraged, maintained, financed and equipped with modern security equipment for adequate performance. The synergy and cooperation between these security outfits and other security agencies should be watertight so as to enhance sustainable development in the country. Recruitment exercises should be transparent, rigorous and include psychological tests for profiling and determining the mental stability of recruits. Officers to be recruited must meet set standards of physical fitness, with regular fitness tests. All members recruited into the outfit should be given public relations training in order to be better equipped them to communicate and relate with members of the public in ways that uphold human dignity while preserving police authority. This will avoid a scenario like what occurred during the 'End SARS' protest in October, 2020. It is equally recommended that recruited members of the proposed Community Policing outfits should be adequately remunerated and motivated to reduce the low self-esteem and corruptive tendencies that have pervaded the entire public service in the country, especially with the Police Force.

Moreover, it is in the opinion of this paper that the State Governors should be allowed to be directly in charge of any police outfit that might be operating at the state level. The security vote in the coffers of the Governor could actually be spent on maintaining the security at the State level. This in essence will reduce the cost of maintaining the regional or State security outfit and curb corruption to a large extent. There is also a need for rationalization of security agencies. Nigeria has 21 different MDA's which could be rationalized to home security ministry combining the security agencies.

In addition, unless and until we agree to restructure this country's security apparatus and to decentralize the policing system, Nigeria will continue to face real threats of danger to its existence and security. The country will remain a dysfunctional state, without a shared vision or a shared project, in which each individual takes care of himself and his family and promoting each ethnic group distrusts against the other, and several communities engages in war against their neighbours and people kill others in the name of religion and inter boundary disputes.

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