Insurgence, Banditry and Secessionist Movements in Nigeria: A Complex Web of Threats

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Abstract

Nigeria, as Africa's most populous nation, faces a multitude of interconnected security challenges, including insurgency, banditry, and secessionist movements. These issues pose major threats to national security, stability, and development. This research explores and analyze the complex interplay of these forces, highlighting their diverse motivations, regional variations, devastating impacts and exacerbate each other, creating a complex security web. Insurgency, spearheaded by groups like Boko Haram in the northeast, often employs violence and terror to achieve ideological goals like establishing an Islamic caliphate. Banditry, particularly prevalent in the northwest, involves armed gangs engaging in cattle rustling, kidnapping, and extortion, fueled by poverty, unemployment, weak law enforcement, porous borders, weak governance, and proliferation of small arms. Secessionist movements, like those advocating for an independent Biafra in the southeast, stem from historical and political grievances, perceived marginalization, lack of trust in government and aspirations for self-determination. The study made use of largely secondary materials which included textbooks, journals, newspapers and internet. The study adopted the failed state and Human Need theory as the model of analysis. The methodology of the study is qualitative research design of descriptive survey. The inability of leaders to provide good democratic governance therefore was responsible for these menaces in the country. These menace will continue to impede the political, social and economic activities of the country. It is on this note that this research submits that until good democratic governance is put in place with security agencies well remunerated and trained with modern technological ammunitions, internal security cannot be guaranteed.

Key word: Security; Democratic Governance; Insurgency; Banditry and secessionist movements

1. INTRODUCTION

Numerous struggles for disintegration or secession have been witnessed by many countries of the world most especially in the federal States which are product of colonial creation. This is either because of their failure to properly manage their ethnic and religious diversities or wrong foundation of colonial amalgamation. Many countries of the world have at one time or the other experienced different forms of struggle for self-determination which took different dimensions (Chukwudi and Etal, 2019). For example, the disintegration of the defunct Soviet Union in 1991 led to the emergence of fifteen independent sovereign states in the world map. These new States had been the conglomeration of the states that hitherto made the Soviet Union. Similarly, the split of India into India and Pakistan in 1947 and subsequently the emergence of Bangladesh from East Pakistan in 1971 marked disintegration that world witnessed in the 19th Century (Choudhury, 1972). Additionally, the Balkanisation of Korea into North and South and the withdrawal of Singapore from Malaysia in 1965 was also another secession that occurred in 19th century. In the case of Africa, the dissolution

of Ethiopia/Eritrea federal arrangement in 1962 had changed the map of the continent by recognising the two states as independent sovereign States (Jembere, 1999). Again, the referendum of July 2011, brought to an end African's longest civil war in Sudan and the breakdown of the country into North and South Sudan as two different independent nation states in the 21st century (Sarwar,2011).

Contemporary Nigerian society despite its relative infrastructural development is clobbered with human security issues posed by secessionists (IPOB and ORA), Boko Haram, terrorism, poverty, banditry, and miscellaneous attacks from kidnappers, gun- men, and killer herdsmen. However, Nigeria is not the only country in the Sahel region facing human security challenges, but it is a well-known fact that Nigeria is the most affected by it, as its internal and external sovereignty are incessantly challenged by primordial groups such as the Biafra and the Oduduwa Republic agitators.

It is of no doubt that the country's chronic security concerns are a push factor fostering extreme ethnic sensitivity, calling the existing international legal personality of Africa's most populous country into question. Indeed, the modern Nigerian populace is more divided than ever before along ethnic, religious, and political party lines, owing to faults mostly related to governance, colonial inadequacies, and basic causes such as primordial identity.

There are divergent arguments offered by the public to this effect; some groups upheld the believe that the problem is attributable to the colonial establishment of a multinational Nigeria, which is usually referred to as "colonial faultiness." Some believe that the incumbent is incompetent, and that insecurity across the country is a result of his incompetence. Some researchers, on the other hand, blame the burgeoning killer Fulani herdsmen activities on climatic conditions such as drought. However, all of the above opinions are, to a large extent, very vital and valid.

Hence, the definition of the concepts of national security, democratic governance, insurgency banditry and secessionism, which will serve as a pointer to the identification of each group's principal goal as a complex web of threats to national integration, is central to the objective of this study.

Conceptualization in this study is to deconstruct and provide clarity in order to reduce the chance of erroneous language usage in the context of insurgence, banditry and secessionism in the contemporary Nigeria. Furthermore, the aforementioned groups, this study's findings will help ordinary people distinguish between insurgence, bandits, and secessionists, as well as grasp their various motivations. Also, it will bring each group's primary goal to the foreground, the crucial goal of insurgence groups, bandits and secessionists hope to accomplish with

their activism. Evaluate efforts of FGN taken to put an end to the raging inferno of insurgences, banditry, and secessionism that is threatening the political stability of Nigeria.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study followed a qualitative research methodology approach, as evidenced by the utilisation of secondary sources such as internet news, textbooks, reports, and other data that were found to be relevant to this study. In order to precisely define and explain insurgence, banditry, and secessionist movement as a complex web which jointly threaten the political stability of contemporary Nigerian society, a descriptive qualitative research design was used in this study. The primary goal of the descriptive qualitative study design is to validate and debunk specific narratives in Nigeria about insurgence, banditry, and secessionist movement. This is a research design that is useful in discussing the research topic and providing solutions to the problem stated above. Similarly, the study gathered unbiased data that was then rigorously examined. However, due to time constraints, a lack of financial resources, and security concerns, a primary study could not be conducted. Secondary source data, on the other hand, is just as reliable as primary source data because it is documented and reported by credible journals and media outlets.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

There are various perspectives upon which the horrendous activities in Nigeria threaten the nation's security, integration and development, the complex web of threat as to the nation disintegration due insurgence groups, banditry activities and secessionist movements across the country. To offer great insight of understanding as to these menace the failed state and Human Need theory is adopted. In the attempt to analyses the emergence of insurgency, banditry, and secessionist movement syndrome in Nigeria. It is an eclectic theoretical framework and the essence is to observe the ineffectiveness of public policies and governmental regulations among which internal security could be located. The proponents of the failed state theory are Zartmain (1995), Migdal (2001), Reno (2010), Osaghae (2010) and Raeymaekers, (2015). They argued that states in Africa constitute a generic species and has continued to be the lowest substratum in order of ranking when it comes to matter of performance. They stressed further that Africa states failure is as a result of regional phenomenon.

The premise of this thesis as advance by Raeymaekers (2015) in his work "Failed State: the abuse of power and the Assault on democracy" he argued that a state should have the monopoly of legitimate violence in its territory.

State should have the ability and capability, military or other wise to curtail vagaries of internal violence as to protect both the criminal and the conformists. The thesis further added that state emerge on the basis of thrust, protection of fundamental human right, ability to make collective decisions, ensure distributive justice contents internal crises and animosity. Thomas Aquinas (1225-74) asserts that;

> The state makes emperor or king; a people set a man over it to the end that he may rule justly, given to every man his own, aiding good men and coercing bad; in short, that the state may give justice to all men. If then the agent violates the agreement according to which the representative was chosen, disturbing and confounding the very things which he was meant to put in order, reasons dictates that the state absolve the people from their obedience; especially when he has himself first broken the faith which bound him and the people together. By his oath at his coronation the state is supposed to have a pact with the citizens to promote a happy and virtues life and if the state failed to fulfill the implied fact the state cease to deserve citizen's obedience (Reno, 2010).

Nevertheless, the failed state index published 2015 by Fund for Peace clearly corroborates the extent to which state has failed or failing. Unfortunately, on the basis of this report, most of the glaring features of the Nigerian state cannot be contested as a failing state. These indicators include:

i. Loss of control of its territory or of monopoly on the legitimate use of violent.

ii. Erosion of legitimate authority to make collective decision.

iii. Inability to provide public services (essential social amenities and basic needs)

iv. Inability to interact with other states as a full member of the international community.

Therefore, all these four indexes of failed state, there is no doubt that 1-3 above have become recurring decimal in Nigeria. This is the reason the league of the worst 20 cases in the failed state rank Nigeria the worst 20th in 2007, 19th 2008, 15th 2009, 14th 2010, 14th, 2011, 14th 2012, 14th 2013, 13th 2014, 13th 2015, 13th 2016, 10th 2017, 11th 2018, 13th 2019, 13th 2020, 13th 2021 and 9th 2022 respectively. While in the latest Global Terrorism Index, GTI 2023, 2024 and 2025, Nigeria is still among the top five countries mostly affected by terrorism, a position which it has maintained since year 2014. This analysis explains the audacity of the banditry which contributed significantly to the worsening Nigerian security challenges.

> Therefore, the Nigerian state contrary to the media humbug is regarded as the enemy not just to the bandits, but by several Nigerians, groups and host of others who advance their grievances in different dimension as the state has failed to provide greatest happiness to their greatest number. The resultant state of affairs is that each group is attacking that state with pottage fierceness as Boko-Haram bombs using whatever means at its disposal. A state where politicians 'break the law with impunity; where law enforcement agents become law breakers see or hear no evil at a slight inducement; where civil servant refuse to stand by moral code of conduct; where mass media report becomes unsubstantiated and diluted; where corruption is the ultimate and only game in town; where hard work is not rewarded and crime is not punishable demonstrate that the state is heading towards a looming danger (Osaghae, 2010).

What the above perpetrators have in common with the contemporary bandits is that the premise on which they act is justifiable and that the Nigerian state is unfair to them, if not an outright enemy there by advancing alternative means knowing clearly the state has failed. This is exemplifying in the ways and manners the Nigerian citizens are flagging to decide their faith, the likes of various groups across the nooks and crannies of the country. This is a dangerous and devastating trends leading to de-Nigerianization process. Giving the democratic and security situations in Nigeria and the current trends in security breaches, the theories above capture the study (Okoli & Orinya, 2013).

4. CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

The major concept that formed the topic of this work will be briefly explained below.

4.1 Insurgence

The term Insurgency is an ambiguous concept. For instance, The United States Department of Defence (2007) defines it as organized movement that has the aim of overthrowing a constituted government through subversive means and armed conflict. This definition suggests that insurgent groups employ unlawful means towards achieving an end, which could be political, religious, social or even ideological. The goal of insurgency is to confront and overthrow an existing government for the control of power, resources or for power sharing.

The conception of insurgency would be best understood by defining the concept of security, which has been defined by Achumba and Ighomenho (2013) in Akin (2008) as the situation that exists as a result of the establishment of measures for the protection of persons, information and property against hostile persons, influence and actions. Ogunleye et al. (2011) see it as a measure designed to protect and safe guard the citizen, the resources of individuals, groups businesses and the nature against sabotage or violent occurrence

Hence, Insurgency as assessed by O'Neal (1990) is organized movements aimed at the over throw of a constituted government through the use of supervision and armed conflict. The term insurgency is often used to cover a wider scope of low intent conflict and is often linked inextricably to terrorism as terrorism is a tool that many insurgent groups use to further their agendas. Bernard, (2005), maintains that insurgency is the state of fear or anxiety stemming from a concrete or alleged lack of protection. It refers to lack or inadequate freedom from danger.

In the view of Chalk, Byran et al. (2001) certain conditions can transform a dissatisfied future of the population into an insurgency, people resist because of the government (or occupying power) or unwillingness to meet the legitimate needs of the population, the lack of government or occupying power and control can be real or perceived. Insurgencies often make use of the media to present the image of an unresponsive or unprepared government. Corrupt and inefficient governments cannot provide basic services, create jobs, encourage growth or improve the lives of the general population, this is why terrorism has become such a popular tool for insurgents; the government's inability to protect its citizens and destroy the insurgents is placed across the pages of the international press and becomes a daily reminder of lack of government control.

Furthermore, O'Neill (1990) gave additional elements that are common to all insurgencies in varying degrees. The combination of these elements determines the overall effectiveness of an insurgency and provides likely targets for counter insurgency efforts. These elements are ideology, organization and goal, environment and geography, the strategic approach (mao's lenin or castro's strategy) phase and external support, etc.

4.2 Banditry

According to Word Reference (2021) maintained that the conception of "banditry is traceable to the 16th century from the Italian word bandito, which plainly means banished man. In addition, bandit means an outlaw, a marauding band, or a person or group who indulges in taking unfair advantage of others. Similarly, Brenner (2021) defined banditry as an organised crime that incorporates kidnapping, armed robbery, murder, rape, cattle rustling, and environmental resource exploitation.

Banditry is a kind of organized crime conducted by outlaws that usually involves the threat or use of violence. A bandit is someone who steals, raids, and primarily performs crimes such as extortion, robbery, and murder, either alone or as part of a group. Bandits are not primarily driven by politics; rather, they are driven by money. These are genuine descriptions of the bandits operating in Nigeria's northern region and migrating in small numbers to other parts of the country to maraud, extort, or kill. In modern Nigeria, there has been an expansion of bandits in the northern region, who operate in a manner com- parable to well-known terrorist organizations. They do, however, pose a conundrum for Nigerians and international observers because their activities closely resemble those of terrorist organizations. How- ever, no one knows what their group's identity or name is, and no one knows what their primary objectives or ideals are because their activities change on a daily basis. Bandits have been spotted attacking mosques and murdering Muslims. Therefore, they are a threat to all (Mosadomi, 2021).

It is pertinent to note that one thing they all have in common is a desire for financial gain. Recently, the eastern part of Nigeria has been suffering a political kind of banditry that resembled guerilla warfare but was later shown by the Nigerian joint taskforce to be nothing more than cannibalism and banditry. Similarly, the Southwest region is plagued by ritualists who make a living by pillaging and killing commuters in order to barter their body parts for money (Iheaka, 2021; Azeez, 2021; TVC News Nigeria, 2021). The political or religious component of banditry is not as visible as it is in terrorist actions in Nigeria. However, both bandits and terrorists pose a threat to human security. The conceptual definition is important to minimize identity confusion and to explain the goal or purpose of each of the aforementioned groups.

4.2.1 Main Goals of Bandits

Bandits such as gunmen, killer, herdsmen, ritual killers, kidnappers, cattle rustlers, and other assailants engage in cruel and terrible acts that saturate modern Nigerian society. Kidnapping, ritual killing, and bizarre killer herders have become commonplace in Nigeria's Western, Eastern, Southern, and Middle belts. However, a widespread notion in modern Nigeria is that assaults in most regions of the nation are coordinated by killer Fulani herdsmen, however such a claim should not be entirely believed to prevent instilling ethnic stereotyping.

Nonetheless, some Fulani herders have shown expansionist inclinations across the country, as evidenced in Plateau State and other Nigerian states. This is not to suggest that members of other ethnic groups in Nigeria are not participating in banditry-related activities (BBC, 2021; Malumfashi & Kaina, 2021; Majeed, 2021; Ahovi & Olatunji, 2021; Shobayo, 2021).

Indeed, Governor Aminu Masari of Katsina state has stated unequivocally that the bandits are primarily Fulanis, and that they are ordinary people who speak the same language as he does and practice the same religion as he does, and that Fulanis from West, North, and Central African countries are frequently recruited by the Fulani bandits to wreak havoc on Nigeria. He went on to say that they are primarily cattle ranchers. Tragically, a widow who was kidnapped on her way to Imo from Lagos, stated that her kidnappers had cattle and were stationed in the forest. This is a description of a bunch of ab- ductors that exactly matches the description of bandits in Katsina state (Oyero, 2021; Adedipe, 2021).

Recent events such as the abduction of students from schools and commuters, and the attack on the National Defence Academy (NDA) has subjected observers to confusion weather the groups wreaking havoc in Kaduna State and proximate states are terrorists or bandits. In fact, the government was called upon by the public to proscribe the bandits as terrorist. However, proscription of the bandits as terrorists might be misleading because in as much as there are similarities in their activities,

bandits and terrorists remain unidentical. As put by Lai Mohammed, the incumbent Minister of Information avowedly stated that a group can only be proscribed provided their identity is known (Adewole, 2021; SaharaReporters, 2021).

In modern Nigeria, Boko Haram and ISWAP are not renowned for demanding ransoms, but this is the focus of bandits who have a history of exploiting the Nigerian government and victims. At one time, they requested that the victims' parents in Kaduna give them with basic supplies such as imported rice, beans, and cooking oil (Punch, 2021; The NEWS, 2021; Altine, 2021; Asadu, 2021; Abiodun, 2021). Similarly, the testimony of one "Emmanuella Anyanwu" about her ordeals at the hands of hoodlums who kidnapped the route to Imo from Lagos state clearly indicated that the bandits' interest revolves around monetary benefit. Her account is as follows:

They told me that they were kidnappers and they abducted me because of ransom. They said if I didn't have money, they would take my life. I asked them how much they wanted, but one of them was furious I was asking them questions. I told them I needed to know what they wanted as ransom. They asked if I had N10m and I told them there was no way I could get that kind of money. I told them I would give them N500,000 from the money gathered from my village. One of them said I was a fool and they told me to sit down (Adedipe, 2021).

Collation and dissection of bandits' activities, especially in the Northern region of Nigeria, has proven that the bandits are not evidently politically, ethnically, or religiously motivated, but are conspicuously motivated by economic needs. This is a fact attributable to the criminogenic nature of capitalism, especially when looked at from the prism of the fact that Nigeria is in recession, and many youths are unemployed. The huge income garnered from banditry has inevitably made the vice a lucrative and an attractive one.

It would not be a flawed premise to conclude that the bandits are just an organised group using banditry as a means to an end. It can even be argued that the increasing operation of bandits is a response of unemployed able men to the government's poor management of Nigeria. Similarly, the ultimate goal of secessionists might equally be an indirect response to the persistent state of bad governance in Nigeria, which has accelerated poverty.

4.3 Secessionist Movement

The concept of secession or secessionism is not new to international politics, following the Westphalia Treaty of 1648 that birthed the conceptualised notion of nation state. Secessionism in a simpler term means balkanisation or fragmentation of an entity into smaller fragments or units. It was the case following the fragmentation of Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) which birthed the existence of autonomous nation states in Eastern Europe (Kohen, 2006). Two former Sudan used to be a unilateral state, but following the wave of secessionism, the South Sudan was born. Similarly, Pakistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia are all a product of secessionism or separatist movements.

Secessionist movement can threaten both national and international legal personality of an existing state or reduce the geographical coverage of an existing nation. For instance, should the Oduduwa Republic and Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) actualise their primary objective of being autonomous entities, it naturally follows that Nigeria's geographical coverage will shrink significantly if the country did not go into extinction. Secessionist movement is a threat to the survival of a multicultural or multinational society since it frequently threatens to revert linked societies/nations to their primordial configuration (Stewart, 2010:4; Mansbach & Taylor, 2012). While secessionism is a threat, it should not be viewed as illogical or unethical because it is frequently a response to contentious sociopolitical and economical concerns such as political horizontal inequality. The term "political horizontal inequality" refers to a situation whereby a group is more favored by the status quo, to the detriment of other ethnic groups in a multicultural society. For example, the Odua Republic and Biafran agitators continuously hammer on the claim that the Hausa and Fulani are the only privileged groups in Nigeria; therefore, ethnic groups in the Federal Republic of Nigeria are highly unequal politically (Langer, et al., 2007).

For instance, the Odua Republic and Biafran agitators openly said that the Hausa/Fulani excesses could no longer be tolerated due to their dominance in Nigeria's politics and other key sectors, such as the Federal Government parastatals. The Hausa ethnic group in Nigeria wields a significant political position in Nigeria due to its size. Sadly, the Hausa seem to be dominated by the minority Fulani ethnic group due to the conquest of Uthman Dan Fodio. To the Fulani ethnic group, the Hausa ethnic group is a potential tool. This might have one thinking that the Hausas and Fulani are culturally similar or identical; contrary to this, culturally they are dissimilar, but only identical in the context of religious inclinations. Across the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the Fulani are the closest to the Hausas, who are the majority in Nigeria. The prominence and political influence of the Hausa and Fulani in Nigeria has inevitably led to a surge of political inequalities, which is basically the root cause of secessionist fervor in the East and Southwest.

The prominence and political influence of the Hausa and Fulani in Nigeria has inevitably led to a surge of political inequalities, which is basically the root cause of secessionist fervour in the East and South-west. The secessionists are of the opinion that since the Hausa/Fulani are fixated on the centralized system of government, which is contrary to the regionalized system

of government, the country should rather disintegrate. In the worldview of the secessionists, their aspirations are believed to address all that the union of Nigeria could not address since decolonization in 1960. However, the inevitability of political horizontal inequality, which is the root cause of secessionist fervor in Nigeria, is attributable to colonial fault lines. The more extreme political horizontal inequality gets, the more impacted ethnic groups question the premise upon which Nigeria was created. According to Akinrefon (2020), "in a joint statement by the International General Secretary of Yoruba One Voice, Dr Sina Okanlomo, and the Head, Directorate of State of the Indigenous People of Biafra, Mazi Chika Edoziem, jointly stated that the 1914 amalgamation of the Nigerian autonomous regions into an entity lacked the populace's backing. As a result, it has created an unbroken path for the exploitation of the people of Nigeria's southern axis. They recognized Nigeria's success as a country throughout the period of regional autonomy 'self-determination.' However, the imposed unitary/centralized form of government that has existed thus far has severely failed the people of Nigeria.

Furthermore, they avowed that the administration of President Buhari, has failed Nigerians because it lacks the ethos of statehood and federalism as embodied in Chapter 11 of the Nigerian constitution, which is the source of government authority. They also believe that "terrorism, banditry, instability, for loneliness, discrimination, murders, unemployment, inequality, corruption, scandals, brutality, oppression, and extortion" have become all too common. According to the secessionists' thoughts recorded in Akirefon (2020), they respect the regional governance system's triumphs during Nigeria's golden period. It was a time when the central government was weak but effective, and regions were autonomous and financially buoyant because they were compelled to endogenously source for means of generating in- come, as opposed to the centralized system practiced in modern Nigeria, where most states, particularly those in the north, rely on the central government for survival.

The agitated Nigerians calling for a restructured Nigeria raised alarm that the incumbent President's body language lacks the ethos of statehood, which is also a violation of the federalist ideals enshrined in Chapter 11 of the Nigerian constitution. The secessionists' narratives clearly demonstrate that the underlying reason of their agitation is evidently the ongoing poor governance and widespread political horizontal inequality. Furthermore, several actions of the federal government of Nigeria clearly indicate the feeding of horizontal disparities in Nigeria. For example, despite being a northerner, the incumbent Governor of Kaduna State, Malam El-Rufai, revealed that students from the northern extraction of Ni- geria seeking admission into universities are given special preference by the Federal Government so that they can have an edge over students from other regions of Nigeria. Here's how he phrased it:

> "The north has traditionally lagged behind in terms of education. We have consistently been the disadvantaged area since independence, despite receiving advantages, JAMB scores, and other benefits. This has not helped; in fact, it has made our people lazier. In light of the disparity in JAMB and FG (Federal Government) results, I believe people should be encouraged to work hard and compete, and we are prepared to make our students in Kaduna State competitive not just in the state, but also world- wide (Oyero, Stop preferential cut-off marks for northerners, El-Rufai tells JAMB, 2021)."

It is against this backdrop that proponents of the Odua Republic and Biafrans have validated their desire for a split Nigeria, which would eventually lead to the country's demise. The ultimate objective of the secessionists is to strip Nigeria of its international legal personality, which would effectively destroy the country's existence, whereas the terrorists' goal is to take over the government, and the bandits are merely driven by economic necessities. Each of the aforementioned groups' goals prompts the following questions:

• Which among the secessionists, insurgence, and bandits poses the greatest threat to Nigeria's existence?

• Clearly, secessionists pose a threat to Nigeria's survival.

• Which of the three groups does the state consider to be the most imminent threat?

• The secessionists are the most urgent threat to Nigeria's stability of the three factions.

• Which of the three organizations poses the greatest threat to the government and the people?

The secessionists movement pose a threat to the government and the state, whereas Boko Haram poses a threat to the government and the people but not the state. The bandits, on the other hand, pose a direct threat to the people and the administration, but not the existence of the state. Therefore, secessionism in Nigeria should be discouraged, based on the reality of nations like Pakistan and South Sudan, where secessionist achievements have not resulted in political and economic stability.

4.3.1 Secessionists Movement Attempts in Nigeria

The first threat to secede came immediately after the amalgamation of Northern and Southern protectorate by emir of Zaria who was one of Northern delegates during the Constitutional Conference which held in Ibadan for the review of 1946 constitution who argued that unless North was allotted 50 per cent of the seats in the proposed House of Representatives, it would seek "separation'' from the rest of Nigeria. Also, Yoruba also threatened to leave out from the country if the decision of the British colonialists to make Lagos as independent of the Western Region was not reversed (Adangor,2017). Subsequently, in 1964 the premier of Eastern Region Dr. M. I. Okpara,

declared that Igbos would secede if North insisted that there was no secession clause in the 1964 constitution. Similarly, in 1964 United Middle Belt Leader Isaac Shehu declared that Tiv people felt unwanted and threatened to pull out of the north and Nigerian federation. Moreover, Isaac Adako Boro leader in the Delta region threatened to secede Niger-Delta region and Nigeria in 1996 by declaring the Region as an independent State (Ogunmupe, 2021). Following the 1960s Igbos coup and northern revenge counter coup led to the creational of creation of the twelve States from the previous four regions which as a result the then governor of Eastern Region Lieutenant-colonel Chukuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu declared the region as independent State of Biafra (Paden,1986).

'I Lieutenant-colonel Chukuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu, military governor of eastern Nigeria by virtue of the authority and pursuant to the principles recited do hereby solemnly proclaim that the territory and region known and called eastern Nigeria together with her continental shelf and territorial waters shall hence for the be an independent sovereign State of the name and title of 'the republic of Biafra (Amadi, 1973)'.

The above declaration led to the three-year Civil War (1967-1970). On the other hand, the demand for an independent nation of the Yoruba people did not start with the Sunday Igoho declaration of Oduduwa republic, it started immediately after the annulment of 1993 presidential election which the Yoruba people felt marginalized because of what they perceived as stolen of their mandate. However, secession agitation in the Yoruba land died after 1999 election with the returned of Yoruba General as elected president in person of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo (Sahara Reporters,7th, April, 2021), Until recently, resuscitated by the calling for the creation of an independent Yoruba republic by Sunday Igboho (BBC,14th Febuary, 2021). Furthermore, the Ogoni people protested environmental catastrophe caused by oil drilling companies until the introduction of amnesty programme by Yar'dua administration. The idea of Arewa republic also did not start with the ultimatum given by the Northern Youths to the Igbos residing in the north on June 6th, 2017, that they should vacate Northern Region before 1st October, 2017. It started with the Arewa People's Congress (APC) which was formed immediately after 1999 election by one Sagir Mohamed, who argued that it was the North and the South East that voted Obasanjo into power but, the new president turned out to favour the South West, his Yoruba ethnic group, who did not vote for him saying that it was North and East were Marginalized (Echezona,2002).Similarly, prior to the formation of indigenous people of Biafra (IPOB) the struggle for the Biafran State had been championed by Movement for Sovereign State of Biafra founded in 1999 formed by an Indian trained lawyer Chief Ralph Uwazuruke (Maiangwa, 2016).Although at the initial stage MASSOB claimed

to be peaceful as advertised in what it called 25 stage plan to achieve its goal. However, the group changed to violent and aggressive leading to arrest and charged of Uwazuruke with treason in 2005 until granted amnesty in 2011 by the president Jonathan who directed that all members of MASSOB across the country be released. However, only two years after released of MASSOB members, the Indigenous People of Biafra was formed because of what they described as compromised of MASSOB leadership by Nigerian Government (Adibe, 2016).

The IPOB Secessionist Movement in Nigeria: The indigenous people of Biafra (IPOB) are a separatist group which emerged to agitate for self-determination of the Igbo people. It is important to note that the republic of Biafra was Secessionist State which existed during the Civil War in South East (Chukwudi, and Etal, 2019). The major aim of IPOB is to restore the defunct Biafra State and to fight the unfair treatment of Igbos in the present political dispensation which they said to have been made relatively deprived in the economic, political, cultural, government presence among others (Ekpo and Agorye, 2019). Although IPOB was formed in London, it used London based Biafra radio to start spreading its views to the people of the South East. The violent conflict between IPOB and Nigerian security agencies started after the arrest of the group leader by security agencies. Thus, the federal government sought both legal and military solution which led to proscription of IPOB declaring the activities its activities everywhere in the country as illegal and act of terrorism and military operation titled operation python dance was also launched against the group (Chukwudi, 2019, Okwumba, and Etal, 2019). The court gave Nmandi Kanu bail which he disappeared after an army invasion to his family home in Afaraukwu Umuahia in October, 2017 (Vanguard, 5th July, 2021). Thus, his bail was revoked by federal high court in Abuja on March, 2019 and the judge ordered his for re -arrest. Hence, on 27th June, 2021 Nmandi Kanu was rearrested by join team of security operatives in Kenya and brought to the country for continuation of hearing on June 28Th 2021 arraigned at the federal high court Abuja on charges include terrorism, treasonable felony, unlawful possession of firearms and management of unlawful society among others (Dailytrust, 29th June,2021; Guardian 14th July, 2021).

SECURITY

The concept of security is subject to scholars, academic and policy debate in literature. Firstly, it usage came in the United Nations Development Programs (UNDP) 1994 Human Development Report. The report devoted a chapter the "New Dimensions of Human Security", characterizing the term as a "a child who did not die, a disease that did not spread, a job that was not cut, an

ethnic tension that did not explode in violence, a dissident who was not silenced," as well as stating that human security was universal; its components interdependent; based upon preventative, rather than reactionary measures; and intrinsically people-centered (UN, 1994, pp.22-23). Defining human security as "safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and disruptions in the patterns of daily life," the UNDP broadened the conceptualization of security, which moved it away from state-centric approach that had prevailed to encompass seven key individual centric components: economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security, and political security (UN, 1994, pp.24-25).

As stated in the General Assembly resolution 66/290, "human security is an approach to render assistance to Member States in first and foremost identifying and addressing widespread and cross-cutting challenges to livelihood, survival, and dignity of their people. "It calls for people-centered, comprehensive, context-specific and prevention-oriented responses that strengthen the protection and empowerment of all people" (UN. Org: 2020). For the purpose of this paper, the conceptualization offered by the UN aligns with how Terrorism and/or Banditry's impacts humanity by making them vulnerable to socio-political socio-economic, investor repatriation, and food insecurity among others. This vulnerability has played out in Nigeria since the emergence of terrorism and banditry in the country.

Furthermore, human security in Nigeria is threatened by political security, social security, food security, economic security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security and inter-border security. Terrorism or Banditry disrupted the economic security of millions of Northern Nigeria as it dislocated their stable basic income from productive and remunerative work force. Banditry caused many Nigeria households to suffer food insecurity and it seriously threatened their health security because the incidents of rape and other forms of gender based violence in Nigeria increased which threaten personal security of the people. It is in view of the effects of banditry that the FGN and other stakeholders make efforts to combat the crisis in order to enhance the security and wellbeing of the citizenry.

DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

There is no universally accepted definition of democracy. Scholars and statesmen have conceptualized it from different perspectives and therefore emphasized different aspects of the process. Democracy may be defined as a form of government in which the major decision of government or the direction of policy behind those decision rest directly or indirectly on the freely given consent of a majority of the people. The concept of democracy originated from ancient Greece. To the Greeks, 'Demos' means 'the people' and 'Kratien' means 'government or rule'. Democracy is a form of government in which people exercise their governing powers either directly or through representative periodically elected by them, this implies supremacy and equality of the people's will on basic social, political and economic as well as fraternal feeling among them. Democracy also connotes the form of government that allow qualified citizens to vote in an election to choose those who will govern them for a fixed period. It incorporates ethnic, cultural, racial, religion, and social equality. The UNESCO in 2002 defined democracy as a technique where every eligible voter casts his or her vote in an election. The fundamental issue of democracy, according to UNISECO is that there is the observance of human rights during the democratic period as defined by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Vienna Pacts and Declaration of 1993.

Olu-Adeyemi (2012) sees democracy as the power of the people, as it manifests in ways of thinking, behaving, and organizing that enhances participation in and influence over the decisions affecting their everyday lives. From this definition reveal that democracy cut across all human power both internal and external.

Powell (1992) as cited in Jamo (2013) conceptualizes the tenets of democracy as: "the legitimacy of the government rests on a claim to represent the desires of its citizens; That is the claim of government assertion to be doing what the people want it to do; The organization arrangement that regulates this bargain of legitimacy is the competitive political election; Leaders are elected at regular intervals, and voters can choose among alternative candidate's in practice, at least two political parties that have a chance of winning are needed to make such choices meaning full; Most adults can participate in the electoral process, both as voters and candidate for the important political offices, Citizens and leaders enjoy basic freedom of speech, press, assembly and organization; Both established parties and new ones can work to gain members and whenever democracy exist, political disagreement subsist." Other features of democracy comprise episodic election, the rule of law, the views of opposition parties are allowed and the impartiality of the judiciary and the electoral commission is assured.

The former President of the United States of America, Abraham Lincoln, as quoted in Schumpeter (1967), defined democracy as the "government of the people, for the people and by the people". Schumpeter (1967) sees democracy as: Institutional arrangement for arriving at political decision in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of competitive struggle, for people's votes.

In Schumpeter's view, democracy is the formation of electoral body, formation and registration of political

parties, registration of voters, vying for political position, voting on elections etc. In his view, Satori (1965) cited in (Jamo, 2013) sees democracy as the "power of people and rule of people". To the author, democracy is people oriented. That is to say, situation where power belongs to the masses, which ultimately elect people that represent them. Appadoria (1975) contends that democracy is a: system of government in which the people exercise their governing power either directly or through representatives periodically elected by them.

Marx and Engel (1981) defined democracy as "the dictatorship of the proletariats". To authors, democracy is anything but a system, which the ruling class uses to exploit the masses. In other words, they disagreed that democracy is a government of the people, for the people and by the people. The pillars of democracy included: sovereignty of the people; government based upon consent of the governed; majority rule; free and fair elections; equality before the law; due process of the law; constitutional limits of government; social, economic and political; pluralism; values of tolerance; pragmatism; cooperation and compromise (Jamo, 2013).

Democratic governance or rule on the other hand, is a situation where the government exercise freedom in adult suffrage and participate in an egalitarian way in the working of government democracy, predicted on a free, frank, fair and cordial dialogue of every person within the geo-political entity. (Okafor & Tobi, 2016) argues that democracy has endured as the most acceptable throughout the world because it seeks for the good of a majority of the people in a state/nation. It recognizes the rights and importance of every citizen in that system. According to Plato's Republic, Socrates and his contemporary philosophers identified three classes of people in a state – the ruling class, the wealthy class and the poor masses who constitute the majority of the society. Democratic governance in modern times recognizes that each of these classes is equal before the law of a given state; hence, every citizen has a right to participate in the government and deserves a fair share of the resources and also a fair share in the contribution towards the development of the state (Onah, 2015). Democratic governance, according to Onah exists in an environment where there is efficient and effective electoral body, registration of voters, conduct of free, fair and periodic elections, and provision of social services and maintenance of existing infrastructural amenities like tap water, good roads, good schools, sound education, electricity, employment opportunities etc. by the people's representatives both at the local and central levels. Also, there should be equal rights, justice, equity and fair play among the polity.

This means that democratic governance involves mass participation in decision- making and in government. Equally, democratic governance allows for mass participation by the adult governed in the selection/or election of leaders and representatives by means of free and fair electoral process. In a nutshell, democratic governance ideally, is a situation where the general (common) will overrides personal will. One can therefore accentuate that a democratic government or governance is not merely government by majority rule; it is also government in which minority rights are protected. Democracy applies in a polity when rules and conventions of the political game are set and operated members of the polity through consensus and active involvement. Without commitment to the rules of the game by members of the polity, the whole idea of democracy becomes a fiction or at best mere idealism. In other words, the major question about democratic governance does not relate to the issue of what rules and principles exist but whether the rules and principles are largely accepted and respected by both micro and macro nationalists in a given polity such as Nigeria (Oni & Segun, 2011).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In conclusion, contemporary Nigerian society appears to be more upset by developing political horizontal inequality, the persistence struggles of agitation by the secessionist movements in Nigeria indicates the failure of Nigerian government to manage the emerging groups in its territory and the current agitation in the South East is nothing more than the about 2023 election presidency, when look at previous ones in 1999 and 2014. The fervent separatist desires in Nigeria's eastern and western regions demonstrate the consequences of political horizontal disparity. Unfortunately, the federal government's response to the secessionists has caused widespread suspicion in locations outside of the north. Insurgence and bandits, on the other hand, have outwitted authorities by targeting less secure locations, military and paramilitary sites, schools, and commuters. This is owing to a lack of an adequate early warning system in the affected areas, as well as a shortage of security personnel. More so, secessionists are soft targets due to their objective, well-known identity, and residency, as well as the fact that they are less armed compared to bandits and terrorists, who are heavily armed and always ready to combat the military.

Recommendation

There is a need for Nigerian government to collect statistical data on federal political representation in order to create scientific confirmation of the existence of political horizontal imbalances in Nigeria.

The government should try as much as possible to be responsive, transparent and accountable to the people, and in addition run inclusive governance. This, if not eradicate, will minimize secessionist agitations in South East and other regions in Nigeria.

The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), and the Federal Character Commission (FCC) should collaboratively organize and conduct quantitative and

qualitative research on political representation along ethnic lines at the federal level to assess whether or not political horizontal inequality exists in Nigeria.

The government should be proactive towards secessionist movements, and instead of the use of force, should adopt non-kinetic method in tackling such cases. This is to avoid further militarization of these agitations in South East and other regions in Nigeria.

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