Insurgency and Nigerian socio-economic development

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Abstract

Terrorism has been an insidious act common and conducted daily over decades and has been responsible for the physical and or structural violence experienced by many people in Nigeria. Individuals, Groups and even the state carry out acts of terrorism in one way or the other. The preponderance of terrorists' activities in recent times especially those conducted by Niger Delta Militants and now Boko Haram are only in response to acts of terrorism conducted directly or indirectly by the governments and its' functionaries at all levels whose responsibility is to improve and protect the lives and properties of its citizens. The effects of these acts of terrorism are the threats they posed to national security, peace, unity and development of the country. For instance, it has pushed further the polarisation of the fragile political unity and pushed up the existing suspicion and distrust between the 'north and south'. It has also jeopardised the basic human rights and civil liberties of the citizens due to activities of the terrorists and the Joint Security Task Force (JTF) to maintain law and order. Equally, it has threatened the desperate attempt to industrialised, and the existing socio-cultural tranquillity has been hampered. It is recommended that the government should take the business of governance seriously and address issues of injustices, marginalisation, discrimination, and provision of public good such as security and the creation of enabling environment for investments which in turn will increase and improve the livelihoods of the greatest numbers of its citizens.

Keywords: Terrorism, Insurgence, Threat, National Security, and economy

Introduction

Insurgency, a strategy adopted by groups which cannot attain their political objectives through conventional means, but by protracted, asymmetric violence, ambiguity, the use of complex terrain (jungles, mountains, and urban areas), psychological warfare, and political mobilization, is fast becoming a means of expressing perceived discontent among groups in the country. Its ultimate desire is to subvert and alter the balance of power in their favour.

Insurgent groups in Nigeria have emerged at different points in the country's political history and assumed different forms. Some of the insurgent groups are: the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) and the Movement for the Emancipation of the Ogoni People (from the South – South of Nigeria), The Odua People's Congress, OPC (from the South West), Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra, MASSOB (from South East), and now the Jama'atul ahlul Sunna Lidda'awa Wal Jihad, which means "Brethren of Sunni United in the Pursuit of Holy War" popularly referred to as the Boko Haram, meaning 'Western Education is forbidden'. Boko Haram emerged from the North East of Nigeria. Unlike the other insurgent groups in the country, in the immediate past, the Boko Haram insurgent group dangerously exploited Nigeria's precarious sectarian fault lines to fracture the country.

The Boko Haram insurgency is loosely modelled on the Algerian Islamist group turned pan-Maghreb jihadi organization: al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) with an ideology similar to the one espoused by al- Qa'eda with nearly coincidental goals and objectives as well as employs conventional terrorist tactics. AQIM's emir, Abu Musab Abdel Wadoud, a.k.a. Abdelmalek Droukdel, had claimed that his group provided weapons and training to Boko Haram. (Peter Pham, 2012) [26].

Insurgency has been defined as: - *an armed rebellion against a constituted authority (for example, an authority recognized as such by the United Nations) when those taking part in the rebellion are not recognized as belligerents. Wikipedia, Free Encyclopedia.*

Thus, not all rebellions are insurgencies because there have been several cases of non-violent rebellions, using civil resistance.

Mahatma Gandhi's non-violent political resistance against British colonialism in India as well as the Civil Rights Movement of Dr Martin Luther King Jr. in America, are classical cases of non-violent rebellions. Dr Kwame Nkrumah's Movement of Positive Action against British colonialism in Ghana is often cited as a non-violent resistance or rebellion. By the above definition none of those three political movements can be described as an insurgency.

However, there are those who describe political movements which challenge the legitimacy of a regime or an authority as an insurgency. When that is the case, it merely stresses the fact that the rebellion is not acceptable or is illegitimate from the perspective of the regime. On the other hand, the rebels describe the regime they are opposed to as also illegitimate.

Conceptual Framework

An insurgency is defined as a rebellion against a constituted authority when those taking part in the rebellion are not recognized as belligerents. Insurgency is used here in its neutral form to describe a movement unlawful by virtue of not

being authorized by or in accordance with the law of the land. There are different forms of rebellion. It could be riot or uprisings or political actions to undermine the state. It could be violent or non-violent. Method of insurgency includes various forms of subversion and armed conflict.

A variety of terms, none precisely defined, all fall under the category of insurgency: rebellion, uprisings, etc. The value of the formal models discussed below is to have taxonomy to categorize insurgencies. No two insurgencies are identical. The basis of the insurgency can be political, economic, religious, or ethnic, or a combination of factors. Each had different specifics but share the property of an attempt to disrupt the central government by means considered illegal by that government. North points out, however, that insurgents today need not be part of a highly organized movement:

Sometimes there may be one or more simultaneous insurgencies and the Iraq insurgency is not unique in having a government recognised by most other states and multiple sets of insurgents.

Historic insurgencies, such as the Russian Civil War, have been multipolar rather than a straightforward model made up of two sides.

Insurgency has been used for years in professional military literature.

Insurgency and its tactics are as old as warfare itself. Joint doctrine defines an insurgency as an organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through the use of subversion and armed conflict.

Theoretical Framework
The various themes on this paper hinges on two theoretical frameworks. The first is *public choice* theory that explains the issue of public corruption as developed by James Buchannan in association with Gordon Tullock. It is a theory that uses the principle of economics to explain political behaviour decision making. It takes the same principles that economist uses to analyses people's actions in the market place and applies them to people's actions in collective decision making (Shaw, 2012). James Buchannan defines public choice as politics without romance, noting that it is a wishful thinking to presume that participants in the political sphere aspire to promote the common good. Public choice theory like the economics of rational behaviour assumes that people are guided by their own self-interest rather than for the public. Thus, public officials are portrayed as benevolent public servants who act in public interest and carryout the will of the people. In tending to public affairs, voters, politicians and policy makers are supposed somehow to rise above their parochial concern.

Nonetheless, the behaviours of these people show that they are only motivated by the goal of utility maximization (self-interests). The central theme of this theory is that politicians, bureaucrats and government officials are motivated by personal self-choice, rather than to work for the public interest, and putting into practice the policies of government as efficient and effective as possible. Within the context of Nigeria, government is seen as serving private or special interest group rather than public interests. The politicians and bureaucrats are supposed to be agent of the general public and act in their own interest. However that is not the case. Unless it is in the interest of the agent, they may not act in the interest of the principal. In Nigeria, politic is a game where self-

interested businesses, labour unions, and government bureaucrats use the state to enrich themselves at the expense of the public. Government employees will not do their job unless they are paid to specifically to do a task. This is what is called a bribe and is a corrupt tendency. The second is *frustration-aggression* hypothesis developed by Dollard in 1939 and Berkowitz's Cognitive Neo association model all illustrate how one may become aggressive through frustration. This theory posited that the occurrence of aggressive behaviour always presupposes the existence of frustration. In another way, frustration is an antecedent to aggression. While Frustration is seen as the blocking of ongoing goal directed behaviour, Baron and Richardson in 1994 opined that Aggression is an action with the intent to harm which can be physical and non-physical (Psychwiki 2010). Frustration here means the thwarting of a goal response, and a goal response, in turn, means the reinforcing final operation in an ongoing behaviour sequence. The existence of Frustration always leads to some forms of Aggression. It also involves the reaction to such blocking. This therefore means that been frustrated includes one's access to rein forcers being thwarted by another party or circumstances and also one's reaction to this thwarting is one of annoyance. Frustration produces a number of different types of response, one of which is instigation to some form of Aggression. Some hostile or aggressive behaviour that occurs is caused by frustration. Within the context of Nigeria, violent attitudes such as that cause by Boko Haram fundamentalist religious sect in northern Nigeria could be attributed to either the frustration of some political figures that operate behind the scenes to have access to power or due to their inability to introduce Islamic rule in northern Nigeria or even economic deprivations among the youth. Whichever is the reason there have been some form of frustration or the other in achieving their desire goals. The introduction of the two theories is significant because the second compliment the other first. The attitude of some political and economic opportunist has given vent for the terrorism to occur.

What are the aims of an insurgency?
An insurgency is a political movement with specific objective, a political goal such as:
a) Rejection of an existing authority, which appears to it to be illegitimate, an imposition, an illegality, and seeking to have it changed, without at the same time opting out of the political unit. Rejection of an existing authority (i.e., rebellion) ends once the regime is changed.
b) Rejection of the Methods of an existing authority and seeking to have it change its character of disposition. Rebellion ends once the regime changes its offence character/policy.
c) Rejecting of an existing authority and seeking to opt out its territory and establishing a new one. Rebellion ends once the separation or secession is accomplished.

Whether insurgency involves secession or not its goal is to weaken or undermine the existing authority and make it incapable of achieving its governing the territory.

Conditions that Create Insurgency
Some of the factors that give rise to and promote insurgency and other forms of security challenges include;

a) Injustice such as denial of rights, inequity, persecution, discrimination, marginalization, etc.
b) Illegitimacy of the regime when it comes to power through seizure of power, electoral fraud, tyranny and abuse of power and denial of human rights, corruption, etc.
c) Longing for freedom and self-determination.
d) When a people regard a regime is illegitimate, they long for freedom and fight to win that freedom.
e) Poverty especially when the regime is deemed to be weak and incompetent and incapable to protect the poor masses in the midst of plenty.
f) Weakness of Government.
g) Ideological (religious, ethnic and political factors) influences, etc.
h) The militarization of the society due to long reign of the military as well as the proliferation of insurgency and terrorism in contemporary times are also contributory factors which cannot be ignored.

Operational Modalities of Insurgent groups
There are varieties of tactics and methods used by insurgent groups. Robert R. Tomes had identified the following four elements:-
a) cell-networks that maintain secrecy,
b) terrorism used to foster insecurity among the population and drive them to the insurgents for protection,
c) multifaceted attempts to cultivate support in the general population, often by undermining the new regime;
d) attacks against the government,
e) Massive propaganda, etc.

Effects of Terrorism
Political, religious or ethnic-based instability within a country has the potential to imperil peace, unity, economic and social development in Nigeria. Though the terrorist groups are mostly based in the north fighting for an unidentified cause at present, its potentials to disrupt the entire country are high. For instance, the activities of terrorist have paralysed almost all sections of the country. It had breached peace, threatened the unity and impeded economic progress and development of Nigeria.

A. Social Effect
Terrorism has had a negative impact on the people regardless of status and the society at large. It has disrupted and offset the normal social life and a good number of innocent lives have been lost. Terrorists' activities have dislocated people from their usual bases to different unintended locations. The mass movement of people creates refugee problems with substantial costs to the individual, host communities and the government. In addition, these episodes of violence has hit strongly against and disorganised the socio-cultural tranquillity, the fragile religious tolerance among the people and polluted the serene and spiritual based of the environment. The human costs in terms of lives and properties can hardly be valued and quantified since the upsurge of the violence began.

B. Political Effect
Since the rise of Boko Haram, the Islamic sect in spreading terror in the last three years, spreading clouds of fear across the country, and especially in many parts of the north where

law and order has collapsed. Different murderous gangs roam the nooks and crannies of the cities, streets and villages day and night exploding bombs, shooting and killing innocent people. They set homes and business premises on fire, destroying places of worship, and attacking security agents and institutions. The process has promoted anarchy by causing confusion and widespread panic among people in Nigeria. The civil rights of individuals and even their more basic civil liberties as guaranteed by the Constitution has been jeopardised. While the Islamic sects unleash terror on the people, the activities of the security agents have become deplorable as well hence the abuses of people's liberty have become the order of the day. They have deployed an unconventional and extra-judicial method of shoot at sight which is usually adopted by the government to tackle widespread public disturbances and terrible crimes. The security agents stop people at will, restrict people's movement by the day and especially at night and kill anyone at the least suspicion. The sects' activities have spread fear across the length and breadth of not only northern Nigeria but the entire country especially among the political elites. Given the ethnic sensitivity of the country, it has pushed further its political polarisation and raised the existing suspicion and distrust especially between the north and south.

C. Economic Effect
Extreme violence repels rather than attracts business investors as in the case of the activities of Boko Haram. When human, material and financial resources are channelled into the advancement of sectarian ideology, economic development is retarded. The violence afflicted in northern Nigeria has affected business and economic activities have slowed down. Moreover, the movement of people to these zones that would have buster economic activities have been stalled. Terrorism has already worsened the development space of the region as it has scared foreign and local investors alike and limited the earnings from tourism. Jos the capital of Plateau State that was once the pearl of tourism and a dream home for most people across Nigeria has become a shadow of itself. There is no doubt that wars, terrorism had led to political instability which in turn have a significant negative effect on the economies in which they take place. Terror attacks are known to cause decrease in aggregate private investments. The orchestrated attacks on vital government installations, infrastructure and investments have sent northern Nigeria to the brink of development. One of the most obvious effects is the distress it has caused to local businesses and the people who reside in that part of the country. The violence has caused the destruction of lives and property in the north thereby paralysing economic activities in the region in spite of its natural endowment in agricultural productivity.
It has succeeded in creating fear and terror that has hunted everybody and the productivity of people has been stalled. Most economic activities have come to a halt due to uncertainty in the country. It has paralysed economic activities especially in the northern parts of the country were these incidents are prevalent, thereby worsening the already bad situation. It also has disrupted economic activities because people fear to go to the markets to transact business because they do not know where the next attempt will be. The northern part of the country that used to be a major food supply to the entire country has been abandoned by people living in the

region. This has had adverse effect on food supply and prices as well. Northern Nigeria that is trying desperately to industrialised but with a dangerous group such as Boko Haram, investors either foreign or local cannot invest in an unstable environment.

Recommended Strategies for Eliminating Insurgency in Nigeria

The first challenge in finding solutions to the recurring insurgency in Nigeria is to clearly understand the phenomena in their proper context. The solutions can only be found if society understands the causes and the complex processes that generate the conditions for insurgencies. There is need for more detailed study of the situation and sensitization of the population of the effects of not reforming the system to be responsive to the aspiration of the people.

Creating a just and equitable society

A coordinated government effort to provide responsible, accountable governance to all Nigerians, while creating opportunities for economic growth, will diminish the political space in which insurgencies operate.

Creating a stable and just political system

Nigeria is still stumbling along the path of democratic development. Many will argue that the democratic process is still fraught with many dangers as autocrats masquerading as democrats and political platforms for grabbing of power rather than authentic political parties dominate the political scene.

Constitutional amendments

The various constitutions supervised by the military have imputed certain aspects of military rule aimed at enforcing the unity of the country. The issue of settler indigene has to be addressed immediately to guarantee every Nigerian the rights and privileges available to others in their locations. The land question has to be constitutionally addressed.

Strengthening the institutions to enforce constitutional provisions

The right and freedom of religion is enshrined in the constitution but not respected in various parts of the country. Overcoming the legacy of the military on Nigeria's political and economic spheres of the country is essential to reduce the space for conflict. The over-centralization of power and the mindset that force is needed to control society which breed violent response to government has to be addressed.

Empowering the Nigerian people for productive activities

The marginalization of a large segment of the Nigerian population due to their non-inclusiveness in the development process has resulted in part from their lack of access to productive assets.
Policies to ensure that Nigerian are productive and have access to productive asset is critical in addressing the pool of alienated citizens that have to faith in the Nigerian project.

Boosting the middle class

Capitalist development elsewhere has shown that the middle class is critical in driving economic growth and prosperity and giving society the hope of a brighter future. The destruction of the middle class in Nigeria since the mid-1980s by the military

has resulted in a major gap that has now been filled by a parasitic and unproductive political class that thrives on corruption and abuse of political power.

Growing the Nigerian economy at a rate that would make it inclusive

Reducing the level of corruption, Promoting education as agent of building capacities and reducing the misleading influences of vested interests.

Strengthen security outfits in the country

The current security challenges have exposed the weakness of the security infrastructure in the country. It is instructive that after decades of military governments in the country it was left without an effective internal capacity to defend it population from internal insurgencies. The gross failure of intelligence though not surprising given the decay of security infrastructure exposed the fragility of the Nigerian state.

Conclusions

Nigeria must face the challenge to nation building caused by persistent insurgency since independence. The country's history has been punctuated by a series of insurgencies which often threatened the very existence of the state. The inability to find lasting solution to these insurgencies has weakened the state and prevented it from attaining its development responsibility. We have argued in this paper that the current insurgency in Nigeria is driven by two major economic issues one local the other global.

These two issues have to be contextualized within the political developments in the country and the mechanism through which these issues play out in the country – religion. The production and promotion of an army of unemployed, marginalized masses in

Nigeria has proven to be a time bomb waiting to explode. The immediate post-independence leadership in the country through diplomacy and consensus building were able to contain some of the most divisive issues in nation building. Over the years the quality of leadership in these respects has faded and the country is less able to address them effectively.

The heart of strengthening weak nations must come from within, and that heart will fail if they deny that the real issue is the future of their civilization, if they tolerate religious, cultural or separatist violence and terrorism when it strikes at unpopular targets, or if they continue to try to export the blame for their own failures to other nations, religions, and cultures.

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