

**DEMOGRAPHIC IMPACTS OF SECURITY CHALLENGES IN
NIGERIA: A QUALITATIVE PERSPECTIVE**

**Johnson Sogo Olaosebikan^{1*}, Opeyemi Dorcas Olodude², Timothy Abayomi
Atoyebi³, Kazeem Adebayo Sunmola⁴ & Oluwafemi James Olaifa⁵**

^{1,2}Department of Demography and Social Statistics, College of Management and Social
Sciences, Osun State University, Okuku Campus, Osun State, Nigeria

³Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences, Kogi State University, Anyigba, Kogi
State, Nigeria

⁴Department of Gender and Development Studies, Ekiti State University, Ado Ekiti, Ekiti State
Nigeria

⁵Department of Sociology, Criminology and Security Studies, Achievers University, Owo, Ondo
State, Nigeria

*olaosebikanj@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT: There is a growing concern among citizens about widespread insecurity in Nigeria. This study examined the demographic impacts of security challenges in Nigeria. The study is qualitative in nature and adopted desk review of published and scholarly articles. Relevant articles were extracted using Google Scholar and Research Rabbit platforms to filter relevant articles using keywords such as demographic implications, demographic impact, demographic effects, insecurity, armed conflict, armed struggles, security challenges and Nigeria. The study showed that ethnic and religious divisions, political instability, economic factors, and perceived marginalisation of sections of the country were causes of insecurity in the country. Other causes were corruption, youth unemployment, desire for secession, mass poverty and competition for resources especially between herders and farmers. The study further highlighted the demographic consequences of insecurity to be displacement of population and increase in internally displaced persons, recruitment of children as kid-soldiers, children not having access to education and healthcare, alteration in population dynamics of the conflict areas because of increased ill health, death and migration. Moreover, security challenges often lead to the loss of jobs and livelihoods in the conflict areas. The study concluded that to improve the security of the country, the government should provide employment opportunities for the unemployed youths, overhaul security apparatus, and employ, train and improve the welfare of security personnel to boost their morale. In addition, the government should collaborate with other countries to fight insurgences to reduce the influx of criminals across national boundaries. The government should prioritise the protection of citizens by ensuring that modern equipment needed by security forces is procured to combat criminals. The government should provide grazing reserves for animal rearing instead of allowing herders to roam their animals across the country. Also, criminals caught should be made to face the full wrath of the law to serve as a deterrent to others. The study expands the frontier of knowledge in the area of migration, conflict investigation, and development, creating a treasured addition to both academic and policy debates.

Keywords: Security Challenges, Demographic Impacts, Insecurity in Nigeria, Population Displacement, Conflict and Migration

INTRODUCTION

Until about four decades ago, Nigeria was relatively peaceful. People could move from one location or community to another and at any time of the day without any fear of being kidnapped or killed. However, this scenario changed with the emergence of militant groups such as Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force (NDPVF), movement for the emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) and Niger Delta Avengers (NDA) in Niger Delta region of the country as well as terrorist groups such as Boko Haram in Northern Nigeria (Chris et al., 2021; Elkaim, 2022; Omenma et al., 2023). These groups embraced violent behaviour such as the destruction of oil facilities, kidnapping of oil workers (expatriates and indigenous workers), disruptions of activities of oil firms, killing and maiming due to perceived marginalisation, religious reasons as well as rejection of Western education (Osewa, 2019; Tyndall et al., 2020a). However, the security situation has worsened because of the escalating activities of terrorists and the emergence of bandits in the northern part of the country. Added to this is the increasing activities of militant groups in North Central and South East as well as killer herdsmen in the country (Kugbayi & Adegbam, 2023; Ogunbode et al., 2021). Today, nobody is safe in the country, and it seems as if the security personnel saddled with the responsibility of protecting the citizens are already overwhelmed by the myriads of security challenges in the country. It is on record that many lives have been lost, people displaced from their ancestral homes, thousands of school children were kidnapped, some later released and some later recruited as kid-soldiers while girls among them were married off to terrorists unprepared for marital life. It is also noteworthy that these crises have also led to humanitarian emergencies at the refugee camps where hundreds of thousands of people displaced face different untold hardships. The cost of providing food and other materials for the refugees in the camp is huge. The security challenges in the areas have also led to the movement of people in large numbers out of the conflicts zone to a safer place to start life afresh. This migration has led to a redistribution of the population structure in the conflicts areas and the adjoining states, regions and towns. It was reported that between 2014 and 2024, due to the activities of Boko Haram, more than two million people were displaced, especially in the Northeast area. Report further confirmed that in 2014 alone, roughly 678,713 internally displaced persons were registered. Out of this number, approximately 461,527 were female while substantial number of children lost their parents to the conflicts (Badiora, 2017). United Nations Development reported that between 2006 and 2023, insurgencies claimed more than 300,000 lives with the majority of them being children while more than 2,000,000 people were displaced (Tyndall et al., 2020b). In the year 2021 there were 354 attacks by bandits with 2247 deaths while in the first half of 2022 there were 200 attacks with 1769 deaths. Further studies revealed that more than 490,000 deaths occurred between 2016 and 2019 in Northeast, Nigeria due to armed attacks, with roughly 47% of them being children under five (Checchi et al., 2023). The study further indicated that more than 12 million people have been affected and displaced by the crisis since 2009 (Checchi et al., 2023). (Aina & Ojo, 2024) reported that more than 2600 deaths occurred in Northwest, Nigeria in 2021 alone, with roughly 57,000 displaced from their communities while about 15,000 people were sheltering as refugees in the Madari and Yahoua part of Niger republic due to security challenges. The absence or migration of health workers in the conflict area for safety has also worsened health care delivery as there is little or no health workers to attend to the health needs of the people in the crisis area. It was reported that between 2015 and 2017, about 40% of Borno state healthcare facilities were destroyed with a third remaining fully functional (Karaye et al., 2022). During this period 48 health

workers were killed while more than 250 of them sustained different degrees of injuries (Karaye et al., 2022). About 35% of the health workers in the state relocated to other states where there was peace (Karaye et al., 2022). The security challenges have further worsened the socio-economic climate in the country, leading to loss of livelihood, relocation of businesses due to incessant and increased attacks by bandits and terrorists as well as widespread poverty occasioned by food shortage because farmers could not access their farms.

Despite various initiatives by the government to address multifaceted security challenges such as terrorism, banditry, kidnapping, herders-farmers crisis, ethno-communal clashes, militancy and others, the efforts seem unfruitful due to the increasing activities of the criminals. This study therefore, explores the demographic consequences of Nigeria's security challenges, emphasizing population displacement, mortality, and socioeconomic disruptions.

The theoretical foundations that explain the interrelationship between insecurity and demographic impacts are routine activity theory (RAT) and frustration aggression theory (FAT). The theories highlighted the possible reasons for security challenges, likely targets, consequences and remedies for security infractions in the country. The theories are discussed below;

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study employed two theories to achieve its objectives. They are routine activity theory (RAT) and frustration aggression theory (FAT).

The first theory is the routine activity theory which was first proposed by Marcus Felson and Lawrence E Cohen in 1979 in their study of crime rates in the United States of America between 1947 and 1974. Routine Activity Theory (RAT) states that for a crime to occur, three essential elements of crime must converge in space and time. These elements are motivated offenders (kidnappers, terrorists, bandits and others), suitable targets (individuals, communities, schools (secondary and tertiary institutions and other government institutions) and the absence of a capable guardian (lack of surveillance and compromised security apparatus). Routine activity theory sees the location of crime as a key factor influencing crime rate due to the convergence in time and place between motivated offenders, suitable targets, and the absence of adequate guardians. These elements explain the occurrence of crime as a result of criminals who were motivated by the desire for religious dominance, unemployed youths seeking survival (how to live a meaningful life in the face of economic hardship) and suitable target such as unarmed individuals, communities, institutions both private and public in the absence of security personnel, weak surveillance and compromised security apparatus.

In the past we have seen situations where boko haram sect members and bandits attack financial institutions, schools and other institutions for financial rewards to send strong signals to the government of their intention. These criminals were able to carry out their nefarious activities because of poor surveillance, shortage and compromised security personnel, which made them succeed most of the time. This theory is relevant to the study because people who feel marginalized and unemployed will be motivated to carry out attacks on the people and institutions as long as there is no adequate security personnel or apparatus to checkmate their unpatriotic attacks on the

people and the nation. The motivated offenders in this context are terrorists, bandits, kidnappers, killer herders and farmers as well as other militant groups disturbing the peace of the country. They were motivated by self-aggrandizement to attack their targets in the absence of capable guardianship, the security personnel.

This theory helps to understand that attacks from terrorists, bandits, ethnic militants, kidnappers, killer herders and other criminals lead to population displacement, leading to the creation of internally displaced refugee camps. It helps in understanding the disruptive impact of security challenges on socioeconomic activities in the conflict areas as farmers, students and other natives are vulnerable to attacks in the area. This vulnerability will make the natives to migrate from this conflict zone to safe zones. The theory also helps to understand that security breaches, as highlighted above, will lead to death both of adult and young ones, while the remaining native people may not be able to access quality health care due to the destruction of health facilities and as well migration of health workers to another place. In addition, people will massively migrate from the conflict areas to other regions thereby putting pressure on the existing facilities in the destination areas.

Frustration and Aggression Theory (FAT)

The second theory which succinctly explains and supports the above theory is the frustration and aggression theory (FAT). The theory was propounded by John Dollard, Leonard Doob, Neal Miller, Robert Sears and O.H. Mowrer in 1939. The theory states that when individuals find it difficult to achieve their aspirations in life, frustrations will come in, and if the frustrations are not properly handled or displaced, it could lead to aggression that will make the aggressors vent their anger on the perceived enemies through violent means. Frustration occurs when an individual recognises that it is becoming apparently impossible to attain their socio-economic aspirations because of the belief that he or she is being hindered from gratifying his dreams. This perceived frustration could lead to aggression ultimately resulting in violent behaviour. The theory states that when there is a difference between what the people expect and the attainment of their aspirations, they become frustrated and aggressive so much that they confront the people perceived as responsible for their misfortunes through violent means.

The theory is relevant to the current study because prolonged poverty, marginalisation, and unemployment could make people frustrated at the level of aggression, which may push them to take up arms against the nation and the people. The theory is relevant in that frustrations, especially by individuals in North East, North West and South East due to perceived marginalisation, mass poverty as well as religious reasons, prompted them to take up arms against the people escalating insecurity in the region. The security challenges have driven away people in the conflicts areas to safe haven where people can live peacefully. The forced migration or displacement has altered the population dynamics and structure in the affected regions and putting pressure on the adjoining states and regions. In addition, many businesses have collapsed in the conflict areas as a result of massive destruction of the areas. Moreover, insecurity arising as a result of communal and ethnic conflicts in places like Plateau and Benue states as well as other areas in the country, has led to the deaths of people and the displacement of large number of people, including children and women. These fatalities have altered the demographic composition of the conflict areas while worsening

the humanitarian situation in the region. In addition, youth unemployment and underemployment have made the youth a ready target for recruitment into criminal gangs because of the low quality of life they live.

METHODOLOGY

The study is qualitative in nature and adopted desk review of published and scholarly articles. Relevant articles were extracted using Google Scholar and Research Rabbit platforms to filter relevant articles using Keywords such as demographic implications, demographic impact, demographic effects, insecurity, armed conflict, armed struggles, security challenges and Nigeria.

To extract related publications using Google Scholar, the application of Boolean Operators such as “OR”, “AND”, double operator sign “ ” and the use of hyphen “ - “ which indicate exclusion from the needed publication is very important. Using the keywords stated above and the combination of the Boolean operators, the Google Scholar engine then extracted relevant publications from where we picked from. The Research Rabbit platform is an artificial intelligence (AI) platform that helps to generate relevant publications if the intended topic is fed into the platform. The platform then generates a list of works similar to the topic, previous studies on the topic and the latest studies on the topic. This platform can be used alone to generate the relevant studies from where researchers will pull out relevant studies. The beauty of Research Rabbit is that studies in the Zotero library can be synced to the Research Rabbit platform if the file name in Zotero and Research Rabbit are the same. Studies harvested thereafter can be updated consistently by clicking the update or sync key on the platform.

Conceptual Clarification

The section discusses the concepts relevant to the study.

Demographics

Demographics refers to the characteristics and features of a particular population, which could be a nation, a state, or a group of people. Such characteristics could be the age of the population, sex distribution, fertility, mortality and even migration patterns. The study attempts to discuss the demographics of security challenges such as the population of displaced people from the conflict region, number of deaths across different age groups and sex, the number of people forced to migrate as a result of the security situation, fertility implication whether increasing or decreasing as well as prevalence of morbidity due to famine and humanitarian crises in the crises area.

Security

Human security according to the United Nations Organisation (UNO) defines human security as a comprehensive, prevention-oriented and people-centred vision of security which seeks to address a wide spectrum of threats faced by individuals, communities, countries and the world at large (Gjørsv, 2023). In other words, this definition is all-encompassing. It covers all aspects of human endeavours, such as human rights, good governance, access to education and health care, as well

as a wide range of security that gives individuals opportunities and choices to fulfil his or her potential (Gjørsv, 2023). This definition goes beyond the absence of harm or injury occasioned by armed conflict. However, for the purpose of the study, human rights and good governance were not considered.

Security Challenges

This study considered only security breaches occasioned by armed conflicts such as terrorism, banditry, kidnapping, herders-farmers crises, ethnic-communal clashes and militant activities.

Types and Causes of Security Challenges in Nigeria.

There is virtually no nation or country in the world without a history of violence. This is because the presence of human beings in society will create room for disagreement among the various groups striving for common resources. This disagreement could lead to frustration and, ultimately, aggression that could lead to a crisis in the community. This is why, in any human society, it is difficult to rule out security challenges which will require interventions from individuals, communities, states and nations. As a nation, Nigeria has witnessed a lot of security challenges prior to and immediately after independence. There was the Kano riot of 1953, the federal election crises of 1964, the coup and the counter-coup of 1966 and the civil war of 1967-1970, which claimed the lives of millions of people(Ottuh & Onimhawo, 2023; Oyekanmi, 2021). There were several other military coups and other security challenges that have shaped the political landscape of the country(Eze et al., 2023; Ottuh & Onimhawo, 2023). However, since the commencement of the fourth republic, a new dimension of insecurity has been introduced to the Nigerian space. This new level of insecurity has worsened the security situation in the country. Some of the security challenges are discussed below.

Terrorism

The origin of contemporary terrorism in Nigeria is shown by the advent of numerous terrorist groups primarily motivated by religious fanaticism and socio-political grumblings(Joshua & Chidozie, 2021). Notable among the groups is the Jamaal Ahl-Sunnah Lid-Dawah wal-jihad, otherwise called Boko Haram. This criminal group started as a religious movement in 2002 and became violent in 2009 when the leader of the group, Muhammed Yusuf, was killed(Nnam et al., 2020a). The sect resorted to kidnapping, armed robbery, killing and destroying government properties, drug trafficking and other violent means to achieve their criminal activities (Nnam et al., 2020b). Widespread poverty, illiteracy, youth unemployment, religious extremism and socio-political grievances have been reported to be the causes of terrorism as witnessed today(Ajibola, 2015; Joshua & Chidozie, 2021).

Banditry

The emergence of bandits has compounded the security challenges in the country. Banditry emerged in the country in the early 2000s in response to criminal exploitation of the Fulanis by cattle rustlers and competition for resources (James, 2023; Ojo et al., 2023). However, the remote

causes of banditry in Nigeria have been reported to include, among other things, poverty, poorly managed borders, fragile security, ungoverned spaces and drug abuse (James, 2023; Ojo et al., 2023). The modus operandi of bandits is almost similar to that of terrorists. They kill, maim, kidnap and destroy property both private and public.

Kidnapping

Kidnapping is a major security threat that is affecting the entire country. No part of the country is protected from the activities of kidnappers. It is no longer news that people could no longer travel the way they used to as the consequences of such journey may be dire. Kidnapping started in Niger Delta in the late 1990s due to the perceived marginalization and environmental degradation associated with oil exploration in the area. The first known kidnapping took place in 1998 when a group of young Niger Deltans ceased some Chevron staff demanding employment opportunities and provision of electricity in the region (Nkemdilim Ogbuehi, 2018). More notable kidnapping activities were recorded in the region after the first episode, and the nefarious activities have spiralled to another part of the country. Anybody can be kidnapped now, irrespective of economic status. The causes of kidnapping can be attributed to many factors. They are perceived marginalisation, religious reasons, unemployment, greed and desire to be rich quickly, intolerance and societal divisions and economic reasons (Nkemdilim Ogbuehi, 2018).

Herders-Farmers Crises

The herders-farmers crisis is not a recent phenomenon. However, it has attained a worrisome dimension where herders, who are largely Fulanis, take up arms against the farmers and vice versa. This has led to an orgy of violence culminating in ethnic violence among different ethnic groups, especially in the northern part of the country. Herders-Farmers crises were caused by competition for resources, especially land, water and lush vegetables (Nwakanma & Boroh, 2019). In addition, climate change and desertification, the proliferation of small arms and organized crime, as well as economic survival on the part of both the herders and the farmers were identified as causes of the herders-farmers crises (Nwakanma & Boroh, 2019). Other causes reported by authors were ethnic and religious differences, cattle rustling, poverty and disregard for constituted authority by the herders (Baderinwa, 2019).

Ethnic and Communal Clashes

Ethnic and communal Clashes predate colonial rule in West Africa, especially in Nigeria. Communities and ethnic groups had taken up arms against each other, obviously for political control and territorial expansion (Falola, 2022). For example, It was reported that the Oyo empire in the Southwestern part of the country was so powerful that she was able to extend her territory to the present-day Borgu and Nupe in Niger state and Kogi state, respectively. It also extended her territory to Ekiti, Ijesa, and Dahomey through to the port city of Porto Novo, with other communities along the route like Egbado and Egba for the expansion of her slave trade (Falola, 2022). It is also documented that the Benin exerted great influence on their immediate neighbours through military conquest, such as the Ekitis, the Owos, and the Ijaws (Falola, 2022). Wars were waged against neighbouring communities for the expansion of territories, resource control,

especially trade routes and markets, political rivalries and cultural dominance. However, in recent times, there has been a preponderance of inter-tribal and ethnic violence in the country. Noteworthy among them is the Jukun and Tiv war, which has been on for many years. It was reported that colonial policies which favour the Jukun over the Tiv were at the root of this crisis where Tiv people believed that they were marginalized. Other reasons for the continuous hostilities between the two groups were administrative inequality and the perception of threat by the Tiv people (Ityavkase & Gimba, 2021). The Ijaw versus Itsekiri hostilities and Itsekiri versus Urhobo conflicts in the 90s have shown the evil of ethnic clashes. Many lives and properties were destroyed because of inadequate development and the inability of the Oil Mineral Producing Area Development Commission (OMPADEC) to satisfy the yearning of the communities resulting in feelings of abandonment among the communities (Avi, 2021). Other causes of the hostilities were ethnic strain and suspicion among the various groups as a result of perceived marginalization in oil activities. In addition, the proliferation of arms through involvement in illegal activities like bunkering and pipeline vandalisation also compounds the issues (Oguji & Okwuadimma, 2021). The crisis between Fulani herdsmen and Tiv farmers also deserves serious attention as the hostility between them has led to the displacement of thousands of people, killing and large-scale destruction of properties. In a study carried out in 2022 titled “resource scarcity and Fulani herdsmen/Tiv farmers crisis in Benue state, it was discovered that climate change and resource scarcity as well as failure of the government to effectively resolve the crisis were the causes of the crisis (Ekanem, 2022)

Militancy

Militancy is growing in the country. This may be due to growing frustration among the various ethnic nationalities about the perceived inability of the government to meet their aspirations. The emergence of militant groups such as the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) and Niger Delta Avengers (NDA) in Southsouth is a reaction to palpable poverty, environmental degradation and youth unemployment in the midst of God given wealth (Chris et al., 2021). Equally obvious is the emergence of militant groups such as the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) and Movement for the Actualization of Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) demanding for secession from Nigeria due to the perceived marginalisation of the Southeast region (Onuoha, 2024). In the southwest, there is also the emergence of the Yoruba nation's agitators demanding for secession from Nigeria. The agitators felt that their regions had been cheated for so long that they wanted independence for their regions. The reasons for the agitation by the various groups, despite peculiarities among them, were perceived marginalisation of the region, especially the Southeast, historical grievances and poor allocation of resources (Ayomola & Oketokun, 2021). Another reason is the perceived domination by Fulani Herders who in the process of roaming their animals about, maimed, killed, raped and destroy properties of host communities (Osisanwo & Akano, 2024).

In summary, this section discussed six types of insecurity prominent in the country, which are terrorism, banditry, kidnapping, herders-farmers crisis, ethno-communal clashes and militancy. Various causes of insecurities were identified, among them are widespread poverty, illiteracy, religious reasons, youth unemployment, competition for resources such as land and water, ethnic tension and distrust, poorly managed border, fragile security, ungoverned spaces and drug abuse.

Other causes of insecurity highlighted in the paper were greed and desire to get rich quickly, historical grievances, cultural preservation and perceived marginalisation. This elucidation calls for a holistic approach to solving the security challenges by looking at the causes identified above.

The Demographic Implications of Security Challenges in Nigeria.

Any nation or country facing security challenges always has consequences. In a war situation, people die, are displaced, and property is destroyed while people migrate to safer places for survival. This section is devoted to examining the demographic consequences of insecurity in Nigeria.

Population Displacement and Increased Incidence of Mortality

Security challenges have brought a lot of disoriented and disorganising situations in the country. Among these were displacement of population in the conflict areas, mass poverty, establishment of refugee camps, morbidity, mortality and movement of people from the conflict zone to peaceful areas, which has indirectly put pressure on the existing infrastructure of the destination host communities. It is reported that between the years 2014 and 2024, due to the activities of Boko Haram insurgency, more than two million people were displaced, especially in the Northeast area. The report further confirmed that in 2014 alone, roughly 678,713 internally displaced persons were registered. Out of this number, approximately 461,527 were female, while a substantial number of children lost their parents to the conflicts (Badiora, 2017). Further studies revealed that more than 490,000 deaths occurred between 2016 and 2019 in Northeast, Nigeria due to armed attacks, with roughly 47% of them being children under five (Checchi et al., 2023). Aina et al (2024) reported that more than 2600 deaths occurred in Northwest, Nigeria in 2021 alone, with roughly 57,000 displaced from their communities while about 15,000 people were sheltering as refugees in Madari and Yahoua part of Niger republic due to security challenges.

Impact on Health System

The outbreak of violence in the name of terrorism and banditry has resulted in the migration of health workers in the conflict area for safety. This development has also worsened health care delivery as there are or no health workers to attend to the health needs of the people in the crisis area. It was reported that between 2015 and 2017, about 40% of Borno state healthcare facilities were destroyed, with a third remaining fully functional (Karaye et al., 2022). During this period, 48 health workers were killed, while more than 250 of them sustained different degrees of injuries (Karaye et al., 2022). About 35% of the health workers in the state relocated to other states where there was peace (Karaye et al., 2022). This development has worsened the quality of life of the people as many are now vulnerable to sicknesses and diseases, which may aggravate the mortality rate in the area (Sani et al., 2024). It is reported in a study carried out in Bolori 2 Council in Borno state that about 60% of the residents benefited from health and nutrition services, with only about half gaining access to outpatient services in the period (Ahmed et al., 2024). The report further showed that more than 90% of the research subjects reported that it is always difficult to access health and nutrition services during emergencies, while more than 50% of women in the

area could not attend antenatal clinics, leading to poor maternal and child health results(Ahmed et al., 2024).

Forced Migration and Socioeconomic Implication of Security Challenges

Armed conflicts as witnessed in the country have forced people to move from the area of conflict to other areas in search of better life and safety. This occurrence has led to the disruptions of economic activities and means of livelihood; for example, farmers could no longer go to farm for fear of being killed, which invariably leads to a drop in agricultural production and food security, while herders face the challenge of cattle rustling, leading to economic loss(Sylvanus, 2023). This scenario has led to food shortages in the country, leading to mass poverty and the exacerbation of violence for survival reasons.

Inability to Access Education in the Conflict Zone

The security challenges in the conflict area have resulted in a large number of youths and children being unable to access education. It is reported that thousands of children of school age now live in internally displaced camps, as seen in Katsina, due to the activities of terrorists and bandits without access to formal education(Ezera & Oghenede, 2021). Many parents no longer have an interest in sending their children to schools to prevent the kidnapping and killing of their wards as the miscreants delight in targeting schools for their nefarious activities. Furthermore, children and young people are discouraged from attending schools due to the constant disruptions caused by the activities of terrorists and bandits. Additionally, internally displaced camps often lack suitable learning environments because of a significant shortage of teachers and facilities, compounded by the psychological trauma they have experienced (Ezera & Oghenede, 2021).

Panacea for Security Challenges in Nigeria.

It is glaringly clear that Nigeria is enmeshed with multilayered security situations that portend ominous signs not only for the country's economic growth and development but also for its cohesiveness and unity. In view of these realities, a concerted and holistic approach is needed to tackle the prevailing security challenges in the country frontally.

The first step in addressing security challenges is to alleviate mass poverty and youth unemployment in the country. Rising food prices have made basic sustenance increasingly unaffordable for many. Salary earners are struggling under the burden of skyrocketing food prices. Nowadays, the pay that civil servants bring home is insufficient for their needs. Compounding this issue is the high rate of youth unemployment in the country. Governments at various levels should go into mechanised farming, especially in crisis-free areas, to mass-produce agricultural products to enhance food security and make food available to bring the prices of foodstuff down. In addition, social amenities such as good roads, electricity and water should be made available to the populace. Moreover, jobs should be made available for teaming unemployed youths to be fully engaged to prevent them from joining criminal gangs.

In addition, the government should also develop areas that felt marginalised by ensuring that their grievances are taken care of. For example, the Southeast region believed that they had been sidelined in the scheme of things by not being considered for the topmost position in the country, making them demand secession from Nigeria. Furthermore, the government should free their perceived political leader, Mazi Nnamdi Kanu, to reduce the tension in the region. The region should adopt dialogue as a means to solve their perceived grievances.

Equally, to resolve the herders-farmers crisis, the government should revive the grazing routes for herders to roam their animals in the interim while building ranches in each state where animals can be reared without herders moving their animals around. In addition, any farmers or herders who engage in criminal activities should face the full wrath of the law.

The government and its agencies saddled with the responsibility of maintaining border security should be up and doing to prevent illegal immigrants from coming into the country. Also, to curb the activities of terrorists and bandits along the border towns and communities, Nigerian government should collaborate more with other governments in the sub-region to curb the activities of terrorists.

The government should provide the necessary military equipment for security personnel to fight insecurity. In contrast, security agents should be exposed to top-notch training on how to combat terrorism, banditry, and other criminalities. In addition, security agents should be highly remunerated to motivate them to do their jobs.

Corruption and a lack of patriotism on the part of both government and the people contribute to the security challenges we face in the country. Corrupt government officials and people should be made to pay for their crimes, while citizens should be enlightened through a public enlightenment campaign to be patriotic and avoid any acts that can destroy the country.

Conclusion

This study examined the demographic implications of security challenges in the country. It adopted two theories to explain the study objectives: routine activity theory (RAT) and frustration aggression theory (FAT). These theories are complementary in nature because frustrated individuals who feel unhappy about their inability to fulfil their aspirations and needs will become aggressive and may likely attack those responsible for their perceived misfortunes. Aggressive individuals become motivated to commit crimes by attacking the people or objects they perceive to be responsible for their predicament in the absence of capable guardianship (the security personnel) or compromised security personnel. The study is qualitative in nature and adopted desk review of published and scholarly articles. Relevant articles were extracted using Google scholar and Research Rabbit platforms to filter relevant articles using Keywords such as demographic implications, demographic impact, demographic effects, insecurity, armed conflict, armed struggles, security challenges and Nigeria.

The study identified terrorism, banditry, kidnapping, herders-farmers crisis, ethnic and communal crises and militancy as arms conflicts bedevilling the nation. The study further identified the causes

of security challenges as poverty, illiteracy, youth unemployment, cattle rustling, competition for resources, poorly managed borders, fragile security, and ungoverned spaces. Other causes identified were marginalisation of some regions and groups, environmental degradation, climate change and desertification, intolerance, desire to be rich quickly and societal division along tribal and religious lines, as well as proliferation of small arms.

The study further identified the demographic implications of security challenges in the country to be displacement and forced migration of the populations in the conflict areas and death of all categories of people: men, women, old, young and adults. A large number of children and youths could no longer attend school because the internally displaced camps are not conducive for learning. Destruction of health facilities and the killing of health workers have led to the worsening of the health status of the people, leading to the contraction of infectious diseases such as measles, polio and other diseases in the conflict zones. In addition, many businesses relocated from the war zones, leading to the loss of jobs and livelihood in the conflict zones.

The study proffers solutions to the lingering security breaches through the provision of amenities and job opportunities to the youths to prevent them from engaging in criminal activities. Governments at various levels should go into mechanised farming, especially in crisis-free areas, to mass-produce agricultural products to enhance food security. The government should also ensure uniform development of all the regions to prevent ethnic suspicions and a sense of marginalisation. Furthermore, to resolve the herders-farmers crisis, the government should, in the interim, revive the grazing routes for herders to roam their animals. In contrast, the government should develop ranches in each state where animals can be reared without herders moving their animals around. In addition, any farmers or herders who commit a crime should be made to face the full wrath of the law.

The government and its agencies saddled with the responsibility of maintaining border security should be up and doing to prevent illegal immigrants from entering the country. Also, to curb the activities of terrorists and bandits along the border towns and communities, the Nigerian government should collaborate with other governments in the sub-region to curb the activities of terrorists.

The government should provide the necessary military equipment needed by security personnel to fight criminals, while security agents should be exposed to top-notch training on how to combat terrorism, banditry, and other criminal activities. In addition, security agents should be highly remunerated to motivate them to do their jobs. Corrupt government officials and people should be made to pay for their crimes, while citizens should be enlightened through public enlightenment campaigns to be patriotic. Education should also be made compulsory from the elementary level to the secondary school level to prevent the mass recruitment of kids as criminals.

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