

WHEN INSECURITY BECOMES DIRE: AN X-RAY OF MILITIA GROUPS IN NASARAWA STATE AND MECHANISMS OF CONTROL ADOPTED BY GOVERNMENT.

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Abstract

Militia groups prevalence is increasing and spreading like wild fire. This is normally accompanied by attendant effect on the security of the country. The scenario of militia is not peculiar to one region in the country. Nasarawa State in North central Nigeria is not left out. The study x-rayed the various militia groups in Nasarawa State as well as the various mechanisms adopted by government to control the activities of the militia groups. The objectives of the study include; to find out militia groups that are present in Nasarawa State, to ascertain the mechanisms of control adopted by government to control militia groups activities in Nasarawa State, assess the effectiveness of mechanisms of control adopted by government in controlling militia activities in Nasarawa State. The study used the General strain theory of Robert Agnew for theoretical framework. The survey research design was used. A sample size of 200 respondents were sampled and given copies of questionnaire. However, only 180 were retrieved for analysis. The method of data analysis was through the use of pie chart and bar charts. This is for easy comprehension by readers. Findings revealed that the militia groups that exist in Nasarawa State are Ombatse and Fulani militia. It was also revealed that the mechanisms adopted by government in controlling the activities of militia groups include; proscription(outlaw) arrest and prosecution, persuasion or co-optation, imprisonment of leaders. Findings further revealed that the mechanisms of control are effective. The study hereby recommend that the welfare of citizens should be the priority of government so as to discourage the wide ethnic agitations which mostly later results to emergence of ethnic militias. It was also recommended that Jeremy Bentham's philosophy of "let punishment fit the crime" be imbibed in the punishment of arrested members and leaders.

Keywords: Government, Insecurity, Mechanisms of Control and Militia Groups,

Introduction

The ultimate pursuit for peace and stability in any nation is for the purpose of development. Peace and stability correlates highly when there is security. The role of security in ensuring peace, stability and development informs the worry of citizens and government whenever insecurity breaks out. Insecurity throws the society out of equilibrium, and if not checked breeds normlessness with a capacity for negative multiplier effect for internal displacement, poverty, unemployment and crime of all persuasions. In recent times, Nigeria has been plagued by a number of insecurity issues, arising from different militia groups. These include the militant groups formed in the Niger- Delta region to protest exploitation and environmental degradation due to oil exploration, the Boko Haram insurgency in the North Eastern part of the country, the Fulani militia, that is spreading like wild fire across the country, and pockets of other state localized militia. All these have been posing a variety of security threats to the country.

Opinion differs among scholars on the causes of militia groups. While some scholars believed that the nature of the Nigeria society give room for upshot of numerous militia groups (Okoli & Atelhe, 2014; Obi, 2002), several scholars explained militiaship in terms of Nigerian fault line – ethnicity and religion (Alubo, 2005; Ikoh, 2016), exploitation, inequality and political manipulations (Akinwumi, 2005). The need to defend one's ethnic group as a result of the failure of the state formal institutions of criminal justice system, has also been cited (Anugwom, 2001).

The existence of violence between ethnic groups provided the initial platforms for militancy. In the course of time, feeling of marginalization within ethnic groups by existing power structures have tended to result in militia groups that attacked state interest (Tersoo & Ejue, 2005). The scenario of these militias is tragic. The activities of militia groups in Nasarawa state and other parts of Nigeria are increasingly perceived by security agencies, security personnel, security experts and intelligence experts as posing serious threats to freedom of existence in the state.

Statement of the Problem

Historical narrative of the emergence and growth of militia groups in Nigeria can be traced to the internal contradiction of the Nigeria political economy (Okumagba, 2013). The nature of the Nigerian state has been a violent one and people do struggle to maintain the status quo, control resources and sustain dominance in the society. Over the years, the competition for ethnic domination has generated unhealthy crisis with attendant lose of lives and properties. In the Niger Delta region, for instance, the minority ethnic groups had causes to complain of exploitation by the Nigerian state before the 1967-1970 civil war. It resulted in the Isaac Adaka Boro led rebellion of 1966. After the judiciary execution of Ken Saro Wiwa, who championed the crusade against environmental degradation, subsequent protest by the ethnic groups led to formation of militia groups as a way to get

government attention. Similarly, the Yoruba's perception of the injustice against their group, stems from the annulment of the presidential election held on June 12, 1993; which was believed to have been won by a Yoruba man, chief Moshood Abiola. The Oodua People Congress (OPC) was formed to protect the Yoruba interest against state exploitation.

The activities of most of the militia groups are taking criminal dimensions. The use of arms by these groups is hardly restricted because there is tendency that the political society uses some of these violent militia groups members as an instrument for achieving political ends as well as settling scores with political enemies, and also to win elections. The formation of militia groups and the recruitment of adherents tend to take a new dimension since the return of Nigeria to democracy in 1999. Democracy had opened up the space for expression of suppressed ethnic demands bottled up by years of repressive military rule (Duruji, 2010). The expression of these demands has resulted in the emergence of ethno-nationalist insurgents and militia such as the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) in the Niger Delta region, the renewed demand for Biafra spearheaded by the Movement for Actualization of Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) and the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) as well as the increasing agitation of the Oodua People's Congress (OPC) in the South West, Nigeria. Additionally, widespread poverty in the country, social injustice in the distributive economy, state sponsored violence, insecurity and crisis are precursors of militia activities in the country.

Incessant clashes in the Middle Belt region between the Fulani militia and farmers, is also a case in point. The activities of the militia groups are not only resulting in the loss of human and material resources worth millions of naira but it is also breeding anarchy that threatens the unity and corporate existence of the Nigerian nation. The activities of militia groups in Nasarawa state follow a pattern of violence and are creating violent sub-culture. Many of the victims may be running away from their home as seen in the emergence of internally displaced people camps, but casual observation also suggests the formation of "defence groups" in the several communities, some in the name of vigilantes. It may not take long for these vigilantes to be armed into local militia groups for self defence. Several researches have been carried out on various militia groups in the country, the effect of militia activities on socio economic development of the areas concern in Nigeria, however, non has been extended to cover the mechanisms government adopt to control the activities of militia and how effective the mechanisms are. This study will therefore unearth the militia groups that exists in Nasarawa state and as well get the perception of the public on the available mechanisms adopted by government to control militia activities as well as the effectiveness of the available mechanisms.

The study is guided by the following research questions: (1) What militia groups are present in Nasarawa State? (2) What mechanisms of control are adopted by government to control militia groups activities in Nasarawa state? (3) Are the mechanisms of control

adopted by government effective enough to control militia activities in Nasarawa state? The objectives of the study are: (1) To find out militia groups that are present in Nasarawa State (2) To ascertain the mechanisms of control adopted by government to control militia groups activities in Nasarawa state. (3) To assess the effectiveness of mechanisms of control adopted by government in controlling militia activities in Nasarawa Stat

Literature Review: Militia Groups in Nigeria

There are different militia groups in Nigeria. These militia groups cut across all the regions of the country. The militia groups emerged basically to protect the interest of the groups they represent. This subsection review literature associated with their emergence.

The Oodua people's Congress (OPC) The philosophy behind the formation of OPC is to identify with the historical and cultural origin of the Yoruba so as to relieve the glory of the Yoruba past for the purpose of posterity (Duruji, 2010). In this context, the group emerged to mobilize the descendants of Oduduwa to integrate the aspirations and values of all the descendants of Oduduwa into a collective platform of an Oodua entity. This is to be achieved through a struggle that aims to protect the Yoruba interests by advancing Oodua civilization, promoting Oodua values "for sustainable transmission from generation to generation" (HRW, 2003, p 4). Despite the fact that the above stated objectives are captured in OPC's constitution as reasons behind its formation, the peculiarities and dynamics that played out in Nigeria during the 1990's were the immediate condition that led to the formation of OPC (Gurchaova, 2006). The OPC emerged in 1994 as a response to the action of the Ibrahim Babangida's military administration which annulled the June 12, 1993 presidential election of which Moshood Abiola was the winner. The act was interpreted by the Yoruba as a deliberate attempt by the Hausa Fulani to continue their hegemony. Adejumobi (2002) stated that it was in response to the Babangida and Abacha regimes that seek to annihilate individuals or groups that threatened their administration that compelled marginalized Yoruba elite to form the OPC. According to Faseun (2008), OPC was formed to defend, protect and promote Yoruba interests as well as to ensure that justice is done to other ethnic nationalities in Nigeria. Faseun went further to maintain that the OPC emerged to end Hausa-Fulani domination of the country. The group emerged ab initio as a peaceful group but later transformed into a violent militia group. Albert (2001) pointed out that the detention of Dr. Faseun, the leader of the group was the catalyst that transformed the organization into a violent militia around 1996. According to him, the OPC members felt that the change they were seeking within the framework of the Nigeria policy would not occur through peaceful means and so the idea of a possible option of matching force with force started to reverberate (Albert, 2001). The Oodua people's Congress has an organized structure that is hierarchically designed.

Movement for the Actualization of Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) The Movement for the Actualization of Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) was founded on the 13th of September, 1999 by Chief Ralph Uwazurike, an Indian trained lawyer and businessman, based in Lagos. Uwazurike who claimed he under studied Mahatma Gandhi's non-violent approach to political struggle in India argued that the necessity for a Biafra State stems from the perceptions that the Igbo are not accepted in Nigeria. The motto of the organization which is 'non-violence, non-exodus' was created out of the experience of the failed attempt in the 1960s to create Biafra which took violent dimension and caused untold hardship to the Biafrans particularly the Igbos who suffered most when violence escalated in the build up to the war (Onuegbu, 2008). The emergence of MASSOB is an attempt to resurrect the struggle for self-determination.

MASSOB therefore originated out of a burning feeling of condemnation and marginalization. These growing grievances were itemized by Obianyo (2007) to include; the conspiracy never to allow an Igbo head in Nigerian State as a President, the non-establishment of federal institutions namely parastatals, industries, seaports, the dilapidated nature of federal roads in the South-East, which has turned out to become death traps for the teeming mass of easterners plying these roads, the under representation of the Igbos in top positions of the Nigerian state structure. The major strategy of the group was the mobilization of people of the South-East through persuasion (Onu, 2001). Some of the activities of the MASSOB which contradict the laws of the Nigerian State include vandalization. These activities patched the organization against security operatives and resulted to arrests, arraignment and killing of MASSOB members by security operatives (Jason, 2006).

The Egbesu Boys of Africa The Egbesu Boys of Africa is the militia group of the dominant Ijaw ethnic group in the Niger Delta region. The Ijaws are scattered across six states: Bayelsa, Rivers, Edo, Delta, Ondo and Akwa Ibom. Egbesu is their mythical god of revenge. The Egbesu Boys of Africa are considered the military wing of the Ijaw National Congress which vowed to fight against the exploitation of the people of the Niger Delta by oil multi-nationals and the Nigerian government. The activities of the Egbesu Boys consist of kidnapping foreign oil workers for ransom, sabotaging oil institutions and attacking security agents. Lately, wealthy individuals in the Niger-Delta region have also used them as private armies (Mbahi). The Egbesu Boys are popular for the ultimatum they issued in December 1998, called the Karama Declaration which demanded the immediate withdrawal of all military personnel from the Niger Delta. The Youths declared that any oil company that employed the services of the armed forces of the Nigerian Government to protect its operation would be viewed as an enemy of the Ijaw people.

Egbesu Boys of Africa first emerged in the early 1990s. The group which began as a religious and cultural group of the Ijaw people subsequently took up arms in order to challenge perceived injustice caused by the exploitation of oil resources in Ijaw land and

the Niger Delta by the Nigerian State and multinational corporations. According to the Centre for Development and Conflict Management Studies (CDCMS 2003) report, the head of Egbesu is the Chief priest of the Egbesu shrine. But Contrary to the findings of the CDCMS, the Small Arms Survey (SAS,2005) research paper reported that, although the chief priest may be consulted regarding operatives of the Egbesu Boys, he is not necessarily the leader of the group. Two sources consulted by the Research Directorate identified Dokubo Asari as the leader of the Egbesu Boys. Membership and recruitment is opened to all Ijaw person.

Yan Kalare Yan Kalare is a political militia based in Gombe state of Nigeria. The history of this militia group is not hidden. Yan Kalare militia started some years ago as an organized group of hunters moving in groups. With the inception of democratic rule, they were recruited for political activities, to intimidate and harass perceived political opponents and even to snatch ballot boxes at gun point. On assumption of office in 2011 however, Governor Ibrahim Hassan Dankwambo banned their activities in the state. He rolled out a plan to rehabilitate and empower over 1,000 youths, most of them Yan-Kalare members to make them useful to the society. The group however resurfaced on the streets of Gombe with little difference from their former modus operandi. They hence move about freely with small arms and are known have destroyed houses, shops and cars in many parts of the state capital. In some cases, they break into people's houses, beat them and snatch some valuables.

The activities of dreaded "Yan-Kalare" militia group consumed the lives of several innocent people of Gombe more than any other phenomenon in the recent history of the state, considering the turbulent wave at which people perished in one form of a mayhem or the other purportedly perpetrated by the notorious Yan-Kalare gangsters. Notorious Kalare, though reached its climax between 2003 to 2007, began in 1999 when the two rival gubernatorial candidates, Alhaji Ibrahim Yarima Abdullahi and Alhaji Abubakar Habu Hashidu recruited youth with "Daba" and "Farauta" background as their political party vanguards. Some of the atrocities that are synonymous with the social miscreants are unlawful carnage, sexual violence and drug abuse.

Mechanisms and Assessment of the Effectiveness of Mechanisms of Control

There are avalanche of mechanisms or strategies for militia control. This has to do with mechanisms for management and control of militia activities within a legal framework. Some of these mechanisms or strategies are discussed below.

The first is proscription (outlaw): Ross (1993) view proscription as a decree of condemnation or banishment. By so doing, it becomes a criminal offence to be a member of the proscribed militia or invite support for it. The above indicates that proscription of militia activities in all its forms, means the government is sending a clear signal that its destabilizing activities are totally unacceptable and detrimental to national security.

According to Ross (2003) the UK government for instance sent this signal to the Hezbollah by proscribing it. After Hezbollah was involved in operations targeting British forces and civilians in Iraq, the UK added Hezbollah to the list of proscribed terrorist organizations. Under the terrorism Act 2000, an organization can be proscribed if the group is believed to be concerned in terrorism. For the purposes of the Act, this means that the organization commit or participates in acts of terrorism, prepares for terrorism, promotes or encourage terrorisms or otherwise concerned in terrorism.

There are other factors that will be taken into account when deciding whether or not to exercise the discretion to proscribe. As put by Imobighe (2003) these factors are; the nature and scale of an organization's activities, the specific threat that it poses, the specific threat that it poses internationally , the extent of the organization's presence. Imobighe (2003) went further to outline the proscription offences. (a) Proscription makes it a criminal offence to belong , or profess to belong , to an outlawed organization (b) invite support for a proscribed organization, arrange , manage or assist in arranging or managing a meeting in the knowledge that the meeting is to support or further the activities of a proscribed organization (c) wear clothing or carry or display articles in public in such a way or in such circumstances as arouse reasonable suspicion that an individual is a member or supporter of the proscribed organization. In spite of the use of proscription as a mechanism to control militia and terrorist groups, Varynen (1991) asserts that this mechanism sometimes fails in yielding positive result in the control majorly sometimes because of saboteurs from leaders and individuals who benefit from such groups.

Second, arrest and prosecution: According to Vayrynen (1991) an arrest is the act of apprehending a person and taking them into custody, usually because they have been suspected of committing or planning a crime. After the person is taken into custody, they can be questioned further. Prosecution as put by Imobighe (2003) refers to legal proceedings in which a person accused of a criminal offence is tried in a court by the government (state). Arrest and prosecution as mechanisms for the control of militant groups are realist perspectives that emphasizes the role of power and contravening power (Vayrynen, 1991). Imobighe (2003) posits that it is mostly a repressive means in order to put pressure on armed groups. The overall objective is to combat, to deter, to contain and to marginalize armed actors. According to Aboki (2004) several measures are used to keep armed actors including militia away from its activities. This to him include coercion, including the use of force and coercive diplomacy. Typical instruments used here are military or police operations aimed at arresting and prosecuting members of armed militia actors. This approach is often accompanied by law enforcement measures at national and/ or international level (Aboki,2004). Aboki (2004) further argued that arrest and prosecution as mechanisms for militia control aims at systematically controlling and containing the activities of armed actors, thereby reducing their freedom to maneuver and communicate. The objective is to maintain a certain status quo and to put these actors under strict

surveillance. Arrest is also concerned with reducing the political and ideological influence of armed actors. Arrest and prosecution cannot be said to be a perfect control mechanism because it sometimes aggravates the crisis or violent activities of militia because of aggrieved arrest of leaders and sometimes members.

Third, persuasion or co-optation: Ross (1993) defines persuasion as a process aimed at changing a person's or a group's attitude or behaviour towards some ideas by using written, spoken words to convey reasoning. It involves a situation where a third party takes the initiative to manage a crisis or violence situation. A number of tactics used in this regard include, light tactics as ingratiation, persuasion and promises (Ross, 1993). This in a way is synonymous to the power -politics approach which is concerned with specific tactics such as flattery, agreeing with the other party's opinions, and doing them small favours (Imobighe, 2003). Persuasive mechanism according to Ross (1993) are overt attempts to induce the other party to lower their aspirations. A party usually argues either that they have legitimate right to their desired outcomes, or that it is in the other party's best interests to lower their aspirations. Promises and threats, seek to induce the other party to act in some particular way, by attaching further consequences (Vayrynen,1991). Imobighe (2003) argues that the advantages of persuasion are generally effective, relatively nice and may create a sense of indebtedness. For example, the amnesty given to the Niger Delta militants is a case in point of the persuasion mechanism for control of militant activities.

Persuasion is majorly adopted by government in order to avert further violent confrontations which may be bloody and result to violent murder of individuals. Persuasion is more of a nonviolent approach in the control of violent, terrorist and militia movements (Ross, 1993). Ross (1993) contend that persuasion can come through negotiation with a third person to facilitate negotiation disputants and mediation a process in which an outside, impartial neutral party works with disputants to assist them to reach a satisfactory negotiated agreement. Imobighe (2003) states that this mechanism or strategy has severally been adopted by government in addressing militant movement but sometimes end in one party betraying the agreement. However, Vayrynen (1991) affirms that in the case of co-optation, the basic idea is that armed actors, and in particular their respective leaderships, can be co-opted and slowly integrated into a political setting. The mechanism or strategy of militia control therefore involve leaders of militia groups in day-to-day politics. In other words, the attempt would be to give them a role to play, which might then change their attitude and preferences. Ayuba (2014) cited good illustration over the appointment of the legal adviser of Ombatse militia group Z Z Alumaga as the Executive secretary of the Nasarawa state Emergency Agency by former Governor Almakura. It cannot be concluded however that this mechanism can absolutely control militia activities and avert future reoccurrence and possible emergence of other militia groups.

Imprisonment of leaders: Based on the views of Vayrynen (1991) imprisonment in law is the specific state of being physically incarcerated or confined in an institutional setting such as a prison. It mostly has to do with restraint of a person's liberty, for any cause whatsoever, by authority of the government. Imprisonment of militia leaders according to Aboki (2004) is to achieve conformity and norm diffusion. Aboki (2004) further argued that the ultimate aim of imprisonment of militia or terrorist leaders is to persuade armed militia leaders to accept, respect, and eventually internalize norms, thereby fostering long-term transformation processes that involve not only conformity of behaviour for tactical reasons but also a genuine and sustainable change of the actors' (leaders) policies and self-conception. According to Aboki (2004) this mechanism or strategy for control of militia activities generally focuses on engagement with armed militia leader with the intention to diminish their influence and spoiling potential quickly and effectively. Arguably, the long term purpose of the imprisonment of leaders is the hope that they can, over time, be co-opted and socialized into conformity. This medium in spite of serving as control strategy sometimes trigger more dangerous manifestations of militia.

Theoretical Justification: General Strain Theory

General strain theory is a theory of criminology developed by Robert Agnew in 1992. Agnew recognized that strain theory originally put forward by Robert K Merton was limited in terms of fully conceptualizing the range of possible sources of strain in the society, especially among youth. Merton had hypothesized that innovation occurs when society emphasizes socially desirable and approved goals but at the same time provide inadequate opportunity to achieve these goals with the legitimate institutionalized means. In other words, those members of society, who find themselves in a position of financial strain yet wish to achieve material success, resort to crime in order to achieve socially desirable goals. Agnew supports this assumption but he also believes dealing with youth there are other factors that incite criminal behavior. He suggests that negative experiences can lead to stress not only that are financially induced. Agnew went further to highlight three categories of strains which include the inability to achieve positively valued goals, the removal, or threat to remove, positively valued stimuli, to present a threat to one with noxious or negatively valued stimuli. Going by the tenet of general strain theory one can say that militia emergence in Nigeria and Nasarawa state in particular is not only a function of financial inducement but exist and persist because of other negative experiences.

Militia formation and activities flourish because of certain factors that produced strain on the perpetrators. Just like the argument in Agnew's first category of strain, militia formation result when certain individuals or a group is not able to achieve positively valued goals. In the case of the Ombatse the valued goal here may be the Governorship seat to control affairs of government. Because the ethnic group has been deprived of this

positively valued goal they feel they are marginalized and therefore formation of a militia group. Other militia groups emerged as a result of removal of positively valued stimuli. The case of the Niger Delta Avengers may be under this category of strain because they feel their resource which in this case is the positively valued stimuli is removed and that led to the formation and perpetration of militia activities. The emergence of the Boko Haram can partly be attributed to this category of strain because they felt leadership which valued in the north which one can say a positively valued stimuli was removed at that time and therefore formation of the deadly group. In Nigeria, just like argued by Agnew, not only condition of financial strain result to militia formation and perpetration but other categories of strains like the ones put forward by Agnew are actually behind militia formations and perpetration.

The Ombatse and the Fulani militia are result of marginalization, frustration and strain. Also, the theory has also explained why militia groups operate in a violent pattern which indicate that aggrieved, marginalized and people presented with strain will act in a violent pattern. Within the context of this work, it means a society free from marginalization, deprivation as well as not presented with strain will experience limited or no militia formation and activities. This therefore means the control of militia groups partly depend on addressing the issue of marginalization and deprivation. The theory is relevant as it has attempted to justify some issues of militia taking into consideration the mechanisms of control.

Methodology

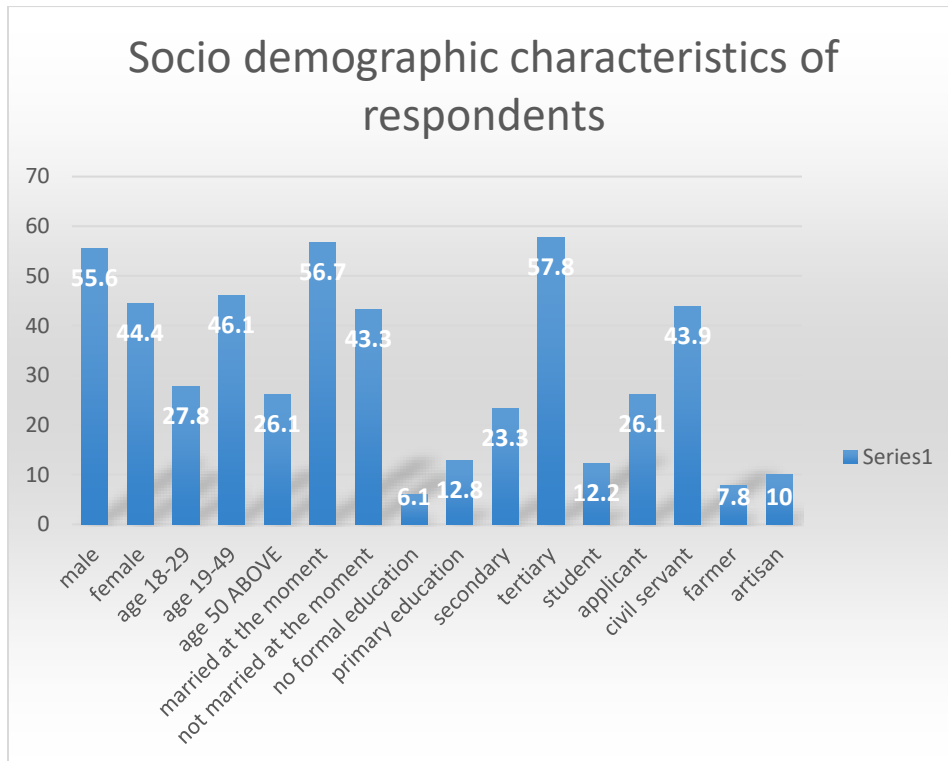
The study adopted the survey research design which allows for representative samples in the collection of data and allows for generation of certain primary information from their original sources. A sample size of 200 respondents were drawn using multi stage sampling method and given questionnaires to fill, however, only 180 questionnaires were retrieved for analysis. Data was analyzed through the use of pie chart and bar charts.

Results and Discussion

The figure above is an analysis of the socio demographic characteristics of respondents in the study. With the total of 180 questionnaires retrieved and correctly filled out of the 200 sent out, a greater percentage of the respondents are male, specifically 55.6% while the remaining are female specifically 44.4%. In the age category those within the age of 18-29 are 27.8% while those within the age of 29-49 are 46.1% and those within the age of 50 above 26.1%. This shows a greater number of youths as respondents. Marital status recorded as follows, married at the moment 56.7% and not married at the moment 43.3%. This shows a greater number of married as respondents. On educational characteristics 6.1% had no formal education, 12.8% had primary education, 23.3% had secondary education, 57.8% had tertiary education. Data shows greater number of those

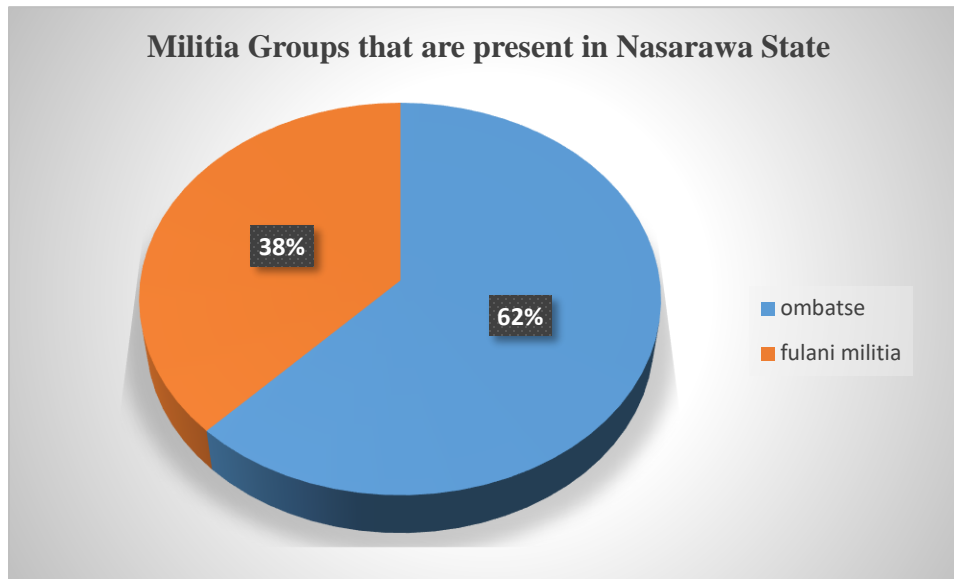
with tertiary education as respondents. On the occupation of the respondents, 12.2% were students, 26.1% applicants, 43.9% civil servants, 7.8% farmers and 10% artisans. Majority of the respondents are civil servants from the analysis of the data.

Figure 1: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESEPONDENTS



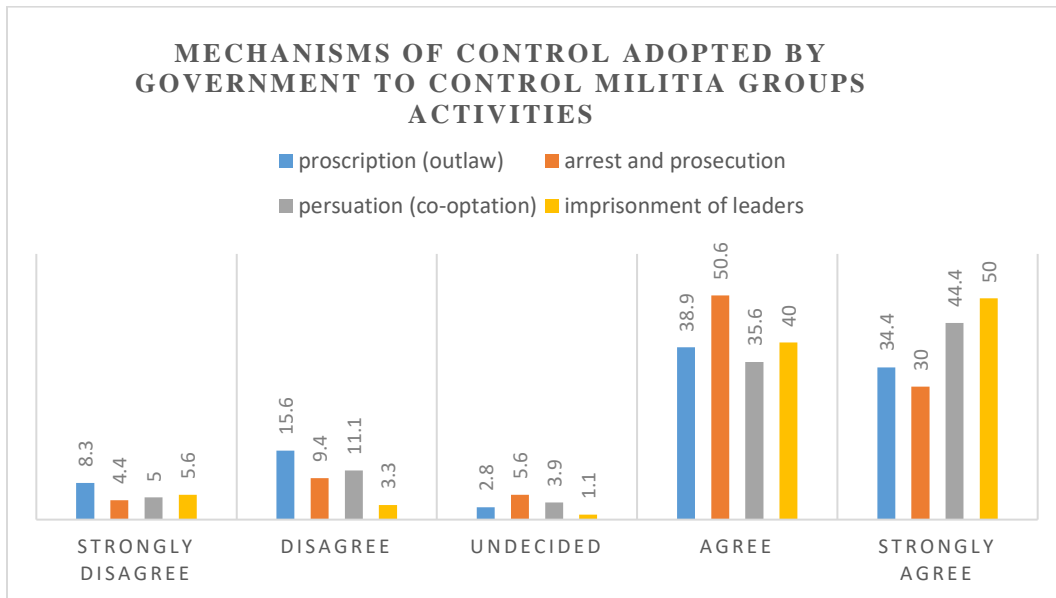
Source: Field survey, 2020

Figure 2 shows analysis of data on the militia groups that are present in Nasarawa state. The analysis of data shows majority of the respondents indicated that the militia group that is present in Nasarawa state is Ombatse specifically 62%. Analysis of data also revealed that 38% of respondents indicated that Fulani militia is present in Nasarawa state. This suggests the presence of both Ombatse militia and Fulani militia in the state. However, majority indicated the presence of Ombatse.

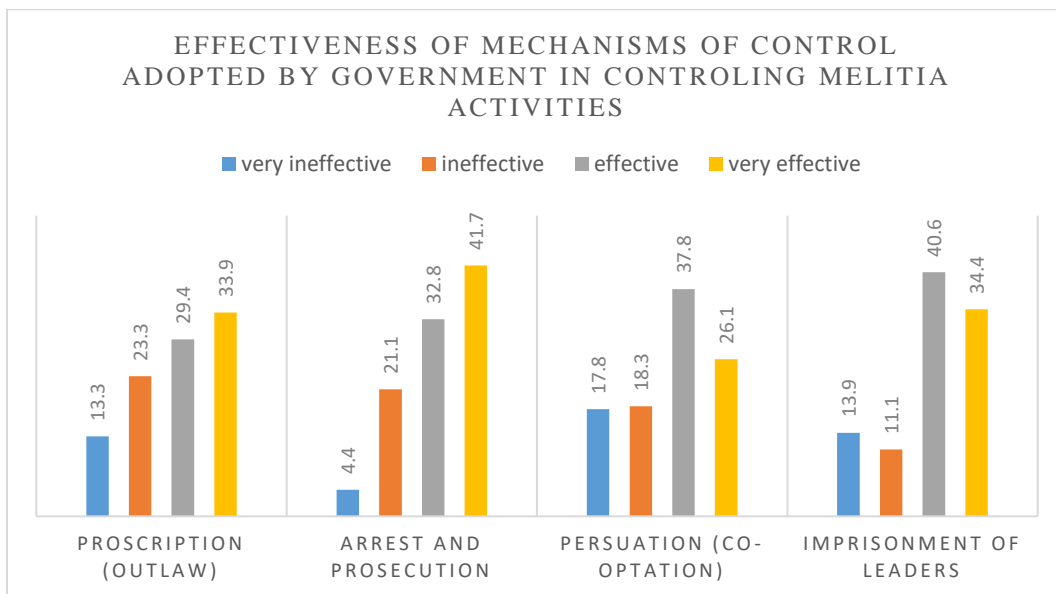


Source: Field survey,2020.

Figure 3 is an analysis of data on mechanisms of control adopted by government to control militia groups activities. Analysis of data above shows 8.3% of respondents strongly disagreed that proscription(outlaw) is a mechanism adopted by government for control of militia activities, 15.6% disagreed, 2.8% were undecided, 38.9% agreed and 34.4% strongly agreed. The analysis of data shows majority agreed that proscription(outlaw) is a mechanism for control of militia activities. On whether arrest and prosecution are mechanisms too analysis of data reveals 4.4% strongly disagreed,9.4% disagreed, 5.6% were undecided, 50.6% agreed and 30% strongly agreed. This shows majority agreed arrest and prosecution are mechanisms for the control of militia activities. Next is result if persuasion (co-optation) is equally a mechanism for control of militia activities. Analysis of data shows 5% strongly disagreed, 11.1% disagreed,3.9% were undecided, 35.6% agreed and 44.4% strongly agreed. Data reveals majority of respondents strongly agreed that persuasion (co-optation) is a mechanism adopted by government for the control of militia activities. On imprisonment of leaders 5.6% of respondents strongly disagreed, 3.3 %disagreed, 1.1 were undecided, 40% agreed and 50% strongly agreed. Analysis of data shows majority strongly agreed.



Source : Field survey ,2020.



Source :Field survey,2020.

Figure 4 is an analysis of data on the effectiveness of mechanisms of control adopted by government in controlling militia activities. Analysis of data shows 13.3% indicated that proscription is very ineffective, 23.3% ineffective, 29.4% effective and 33.9% very effective. This shows proscription is very effective. On the effectiveness of arrest and prosecution 4.4% indicated very ineffective, 21.1% ineffective, 32.8% effective and 41.7% very effective. This shows arrest and prosecution are very effective. On the effectiveness of persuasion (co-optation) 17.8% indicated that it is very ineffective, 18.3% indicated that it is ineffective, 37.8% indicated that it is effective and 26.1% indicated that it is very effective. Analysis of data therefore shows persuasion (co-optation) effective in the control of militia activities. Analysis of data on the effectiveness of imprisonment of leaders shows 13.9% indicated that imprisonment of leaders is very ineffective, 11.1% indicated ineffective, 40.6 indicated effective and 34.4 very effective. Analysis of data shows majority of respondents indicated that imprisonment of leaders is effective. This shows that imprisonment of leaders is an effective mechanism for the control of militia activities.

Summary and Conclusion

From the study it was revealed that Ombatse and Fulani militia are the known militia groups that exist in Nasarawa State. The scenario needs to be checked so as to prevent the emergence of further militia groups in the state. The two known militia groups it was discovered are ethnic based. One which is Ombatse is of Eggon ethnic group and the Fulani militia is of Fulani ethnic group. The activities of these militia groups should be quashed so as to deter other ethnic groups from further emergence of similar ethnic militia.

It was further revealed that the mechanisms of control adopted by government to control militia activities include proscription which can also be referred to as outlaw, arrest and prosecution, persuasion and co-optation as well as imprisonment of leaders. In as much as these mechanisms have not completely put a stop on their activities, it has yielded reasonable result and therefore should be upheld and strengthened. This can be done if and only if sentiment, politics, nepotisms and other factors that continue to make the security situation of the place worse are put aside.

It was also discovered that the aforementioned mechanisms are relatively effective in the control of militia activities. However, more needs to be done to make the mechanisms more viable and yield better results in the fight against the insecurity of militia disturbances.

Recommendations

The study has six recommendations. (1) The problem of militia formation is now a national problem and so government need to put drastic measures in place to hinder the emergence of further militia. (2) The welfare of citizens should be the priority of government so as to discourage the wide ethnic agitations which mostly later results to emergence of ethnic militias. (3) Security agencies should beef up security to immediately arrest emerging

ethnic agitations. (4) Militia leaders who are under detentions and serving jail terms should be dealt with severely to deter intending people. (5) Jeremy Bentham's philosophy of "let punishment fits the crime" should be imbibed in the punishment of arrested members and leaders. (6) Government should uphold, strengthened and modify the various mechanisms adopted in the control of militia activities to cover some lapses and as well explore more mechanisms of control.

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