by Geopolitical Zones in Nigeria

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Abstract

T*he underlying idea of the study was based on the assumption that there is an intercourse between the perceived impotency of the country's security architecture such as the Nigerian police and armed forces in securing the lives and property of the people across geopolitical zones and the resort to alternative security measures by the affected regions in the country. The paper adopted the descriptive research technique and assembled relevant data largely from secondary sources. Building on the contemporary theory of securitization, the study probed the questions: what are the factors responsible for the groundswell resort to self-help in the area of security by some geopolitical zones in Nigeria? To what extent could it be argued that resorting to alternative security measures could correct the security imbalances across the country's geopolitical zones? What are the prospects for national growth through state and community policing in the country? Findings from the study revealed that it was the loss of confidence in the country's conventional security architecture that culminated in the proliferation of alternative security outfits across geopolitical zones in the country. The paper recommended that the decentralization of national security architecture through the creation of state and community policing is pertinent in addressing the loopholes in terms of adequate intelligence as well as manpower for effective national security; national security reforms should be carried out in order to check and regulate state police forces against abuses by state political forces; and that government should improve on providing for the welfare of the people through infrastructural development and poverty alleviating schemes in order to reduce the level of insecurity and banditry in the country.*

Keywords: National Security, State Policing, Federalism, Decentralization, Insecurity and Violent Crime, Good Governance

Introduction

Arguably, organized crimes such as terrorism, militancy, banditry, kidnappings among others constitute a major security challenge across countries of the world especially in developing countries. In recent times, Nigeria has been enmeshed in a turbulent security rattrap which has threatened both the unity and development of the nation, as well as led

to wanton destruction of lives and properties. Security challenges in the country is getting worse every day while the efforts of government in tackling the menace seems to be incommensurate and obsolete in the light of the present realities. Sadly, many political analysts are of the opinion that Nigeria is fast degenerating into the Hobbesian state of nature where life is solitary, brutish, nasty and short and living has become an issue of survival of the fittest (Adebakin and Raimi, 2012:11). Ethnic tensions, religious differences, limited economic opportunities, and numerous socio-political grievances are all fueling unrest in Nigeria and contributing to flashpoints of violence and recently, the quest for disintegration.

Sadly, as noted by Okechukwu and Anyadike (2013:13), "most Nigerians now sleep with one eye open as those who are lucky to escape burglars are kept awake all night by booming sounds of gunshots or dins of bomb explosions by those too powerful to be stopped" comprising kidnappings, banditry, herdsmen/farmers clashes, as part of the seemingly unending list of insecurity challenges in the country. Glaringly, these vices are happening almost on daily basis across the country's geopolitical zones despite the presence of its national security architecture. This questions the efficacy as well as the competency of the conventional national security architecture of the country. The internal security mechanisms appear to have broken down completely as the state no longer has the monopoly of the means of violence. The proliferation of sophisticated weapons, even more sophisticated in most cases than that of the conventional security apparatus of the nation instills questions in the minds of the citizens on the identities of the sponsors as well as the perpetrators of the crises.

Consequently, the quest for alternative security outfits across some geopolitical zones, most especially the South-Eastern and South-Western zones may be justified by the seemingly impotence of the national security architecture in securing the lives and properties of the people in the affected regions which is the primary responsibility of every government. Arguably, it is pertinent to note that the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended) has established the Army, Navy and Air force, including the Police and other numerous paramilitary organizations for the purpose of the defence of Nigeria. In the light of the above, as noted by Okodolor (2019:5), "no State Government, whether singly or in a group, has the legal right and competence to establish any form of organization or agency for the defence of Nigeria or any of its constituent parts" but what then happens when these conventional state security architecture fail in carrying out their functions; tends to be the bone of contention and a constitutional lacuna that is intended to be breached through the resort to self-help by the affected geopolitical zones. It is within this context that this paper probed the possible factors responsible for the groundswell resort to self-help in the area of security by some geopolitical zones as well as the extent to which resorting to alternative security measures such as state and community policing could correct the security imbalances across the country's geopolitical zones.

Conceptual and Theoretical Frameworks
National Security
National Security" is often used in the field of international relations, in a technical sense, implies the safety of a nation from danger and protection from internal, external attack or infiltration. In general, Braithwaite (1988:9) quoting the Encyclopedia of the social

sciences, defines national security as "ability of a nation to protect its internal values from external threat". National Security involves the measures taken by state actors to safeguard the nation from real or potential threats. It is that aspect of government policy which create enabling atmosphere necessary for the protection and promotion of vital national interest and values against known or potential enemies (Abdullahi and Hassan, 2015:17). Consequently, National security should be concerned with both domestic and foreign interests of a state (Trager & Simonies, 1973:14). National, regional, and global security issues are interrelated concepts. National security is a condition whereby a nation is free from internal, external fear or threat to its peace, stability and progress. There are other classifications of security - political security, the freedom from domination; economic and social security, the freedom from poverty and wants; cultural security, the freedom from ethnic and religious domination; and environmental security, the freedom from environmental destruction, degradation, and resource scarcity. National, regional, and global insecurity affect both the national economy and national development (Abdullahi and Hassan, 2015:48).

However, for many of the four billion inhabitants in the developing countries, security is conceived as the basic level of the struggle for survival (Okolodor, 2019:3), hence, security as a concept should be applied in its broadest sense to include economic security, food security, social security, environmental security, the quality of life security and technological security. The issues being raised by the contending views are that national security of any nation should, as a matter of necessity, go beyond mere amassment of military/police armaments, personnel and equipment; what Imobighe (1990:87) refers to as "pax armament" and stretched to cover the satisfaction of human needs. Thus contemporary national security thinkers and planners have gone beyond the confines of the military to incorporate non-military variables like food availability, high level of production and per capital income and employment generation (Abdullahi and Hassan, 2015:55). The above position lends credence to the fact that national security is more of socio-economic than military because where there is provision of basic infrastructure such as quality education, good roads, employment opportunities, shelter, quality health services etc., the threat to national security, most especially, internal security is minimized.

State Policing and Federalism

In recent times, the term "State Policing" has become a front-burner issue in Nigeria based on the worsening state of insecurity in the country. State policing could be described as an alternative and complementary security outfit organized and funded by member states of the federation for the purpose of assisting the already established national security such as the Nigerian Police, the Nigerian Armed forces, in securing the lives and properties of the citizens. It is an idea geared towards bridging the gap in the country's security operations. Conversely, The Nigerian Police Force (NPF), according to Section 194 of the 1979 constitution, is designated as the national police force with exclusive jurisdiction throughout the country (Egbosiuba, 2013). Section 215 of the 1999 constitution also states that before a state police commissioner carries out an order issued by his governor, he may "request that the matter be referred to the president or such minister of the government of the federation as may be authorized in that behalf by the president for his directions." Thus, the above implies that it is only the security outfit established by the constitution of the country that has the full backing of the law to operate within the confines of the country.

In contraposition to the above, Fashola (2014) affirmed that the call for state police is a subject of the wider clamour for "true federalism". Federalism implies a system of government whereby power and authority is shared between the central and component units. As captured by Wheare (1963), it denotes a method of dividing governmental legislative powers so that the general and regional (central and component) governments are each, within a sphere, coordinate and independent. Prominent lawyers in Nigeria have decried the over-centralization of the police, drawing out implications for public order and safety (Odey and Nanji, 2015). Sadly, governors are the Chief Security Officers of their states with 'security votes', yet they have no control over the police. Rather, it is the Inspector General of Police (IGP) in the FCT, through his Commissioners of Police (COPs) in each state, that has the sole power over this monolith command structure (Eboh, 2014). It is pertinent to note that the first republic had local, regional and central police institutions, in accordance with the tenets of true federalism. Unfortunately, this arrangement was eroded by the military and replaced with the unitary system which the country's democratic order has adopted over the years. Accordingly, Ochei (2014) held that a veritable way out of the current security quagmire would be the establishment of state police formations.

Good Governance
According to Nwekeaku (2015) the term "good governance" is a difficult concept, as it is not always easy to define. It is amenable to different definitions depending on the perception of the person. Specifically, good governance involves: enthronement of a democratic government, which guarantees equal participation of all citizens in governance; provision, promotion and sustenance of the rule of law; provision and protection of the constitution; promotion and protection of the fundamental human rights of the citizens; provision and sustenance of the freedom of the press; availability of a transparent, accountable and participatory governance at all levels of government; regular, free and fair elections; as well as provision of basic amenities, such as portable water, electricity, qualitative education, healthcare delivery, good roads, among others (Nwekeaku, 2015). Writing on personal liberty, freedom and equality of individuals as the essential elements of the rule of law and good governance, Laski (1982) argues thus: A state built upon the condition essential to the full development of our faculties will confer freedom upon its citizens. It will release their individuality. It will enable them to contribute their peculiar and intimate experience to the common stock. It will offer security that the decisions of the government are built upon the widest knowledge open to its members. It will prevent that frustration of creative impulse which destroys the special character of men.

Theoretical Framework
The paper adopts the securitization theory as its theoretical framework. The theory assumes that political issues are constituted as extreme security issues to be dealt with urgently when they have been labeled dangerous, menacing, threatening, alarming and so on by a securitizing actor who has the social and institutional power to move beyond politics (Buzan, Weaver, and Wide, 1998:24). Although the theory at its initial stage focused on international relations, but subsequently, it was modified to include human, national and regional security. The theory is of immense importance to this paper: first, its assumption is regarded as being applied and pragmatic in nature and its research is empirically oriented usually with an emphasis on procedural and institutional concern

towards international, national and human security; policy relevance and problem solving. Second, the theory recognizes actors within a society, representing diverse and often conflicting interests. In applying the theory to the security imbroglio faced by Nigeria where killings, kidnappings, rape, banditry, terrorism have become the rule rather than an exception, the theory explains the need for the country to adopt an alternative security approach that is appropriate in salvaging the country from the tightening grasp of insecurity.

Methodology
This study is basically descriptive and qualitative. The descriptive method seeks to unravel the major elements and characteristics as regards the failure of Nigeria's national security architecture, while qualitative method is used to gain a variety of insights so as to discover and identify decision problems and opportunities. The study relies heavily on the use of secondary sources, particularly documentary evidence, records from government agencies, interview reports, books, journal articles conference papers and other relevant materials derived from the Internet. The data were analyzed qualitatively, using the narrative analysis technique.

Contending Issues in the Formation of State Police in Nigeria
In recent times, there have been agitations for the creation of a state policing system in order to tackle the rising rate of insecurity in Nigeria. This agitation, according to Eme and Anyadike (2012), is based on the premise that "each state has its own peculiar security challenges which can only be better managed by the officers who are familiar with the terrain, culture and way of life of a particular people in a given locality." In other words, it is believed that only a decentralized police structure where people who hail from an area and are familiar with the terrain and the criminals in the neighborhood, are entrusted with the responsibility of policing that can carry out and effectively contain crime and criminality. Historically, in the pre-independence era, the Native Authorities were in direct control of their domains. It was the primary responsibility of the native police to maintain law and order in their respective localities. Through the Native Authority police departments, the native authorities were able to enforce local ordinances, byelaws, rules and regulations of the localities or municipalities over which they presided. It was the intervention of the military in the nation's body politics that foisted a centralized police force on the entire country (Eme and Anyadike, 2012).

Conversely, there are others who argue that creating state police at this stage of the present democratic experiment may be an invitation to chaos. Apart from the impunity of office and the possibility of abuse of power, state police could lead to the disintegration of the country, especially now with the fragile unity in the country. The opponents of state police further base their argument on fact of abuse of power by politicians who already use all manner of funny-looking guys as personal guards to terrorize the common man. In addition, they argue that state funds will be used to influence a handful of members of the security agencies to intimidate, harass, maim and in extreme cases, kill innocent citizens who perform their statutory duties (Egbosiuba, 2013). Some may resort to the use of security agents to force reporters to do their biddings. They argue on situations where Governors can order certain uncompromising members of the House of Assembly around for voicing their dissenting views on an election. It will be better imagined than not, if such governors have powers over the police in the name of state police (Egbosiuba, 2013).
In spite of the two contrasting view points, state policing is a prerequisite for the

attainment of true federalism in the country. Arguably, the Nigerian police formations could be remodeled to look like the American type where each state has its own police. The arrangement is even more diffused and decentralized going from the community/city police, to the County, State and the FBI. Furthermore, Eboh (2014) revealed that the state police usually take charge of highways and enforcement of state laws, while the cities have their separate police under the authority of a commissioner, who is an appointee of the mayor. In a related development, Britain, a unitary system, has several local and regional police forces under separate and independent Chief Constables such as the Metropolitan Police, Greater Manchester Police, etc. The Metropolitan Police (under the Home Office), which covers an area of 15 miles radius, does not have jurisdiction over London, which has its own city police (Eboh 2014). This arrangement has contributed immensely to the reduction of crime rate in both the United States and United Kingdom. Similarly, unitary systems like France also operate a decentralized police force. While the gendarmerie is supervised by the armed forces, the "Surete Generale" is under the authority of provincial prefects who are the equivalent of governors. Paris, the capital, has its own police, called the Paris Prefecture (Segun, 2014).

Interestingly, the current national security architecture such as the Nigerian Police seems to be helpless in the midst of rising rate of insecurity in the country. It is not unusual to see policemen collecting bribes from privately owned public transport vehicles on major highways all over the country (Odey and Nanji, 2015). In some cases, policemen delay transport companies on the highway for failure to give them bribe (Eboh, 2014). Some motorists and commuters have lost their lives for these reasons, to psychologically imbalanced, trigger-happy policemen. Also, a lot of these police officers are not adequately trained and are ill-equipped to fight crime. Some criminals are even more equipped than the police (Egbosiuba, 2013). The result is that many of them get killed in the line of duty. Others in 'reverence' of superior fire power allow criminals finish their operations before showing up at a crime scene, thereby leaving the populace vulnerable to the criminals. Instances abound in which states like Borno, Lagos, etc. have made diverse contributions in kind to the police formations within their jurisdictions. These comprised vehicles to boost rapid response, communication gadgets, armored personnel carriers, etc. to enhance the quality of policing. In the light of the above viewpoint, Odey and Nanji (2015) reiterates that "if states are given the constitutional backing to handle their police affairs, the quality and by extension, the confidence of the policemen, even those on the streets, will be boosted".

Insecurity and the eesort to Alternative Regional Security Outfits by Geopolitical Zones in Nigeria

The precarious security situation in Nigerian has shown very clearly that Nigeria is more threatened from within than from without or any external aggressor. It is on this note that Egbefo and Salihu (2014) list out the fundamental causes of insecurity in Nigeria: first, the issues of good governance and accountability. This issue has been a mirage and lacking among our leaders, be it at the local government, state government and federal level. The issue is also lacking in the private sector of the economy. (Azeez, 2005; Babawale, 2007 Akanbi, 2004; Asemota, 2004). However, the issue of bad governance has remained a cog in the wheel of national security and economic development. The second factor is the poor nature and scope of economic development. This centres on: first, what has been happening to poverty, second, what has been happening to

unemployment and lastly, what has been happening to inequality? (Seers, 1969, Alkali 1997, Artwood 1998, Boeniger, 1991, Muo, 2007). The third factor is the effects of rapid population growth on the economic development of Nigeria. This has been identified as a major cog in the wheel of economic development in Nigeria and reasons for internal security threat since 1960 (Balarinwa, 1987, Buhari 1997).

The growing rate of poverty and hunger among Nigerians, is the fourth factor. Poverty is a situation or condition of hopelessness and a condition of being poor and wretched. (Aliyu (1998) defined poverty as a situation in which people live below a predetermined standard value in terms of income and conditions of living, hence the rating and description of individual and nations as being poor. About 50% of Nigerians live below poverty line and about 70% live in rural areas with no infrastructure, food, shelter and so on. According to Aliyu (1998), most Nigerians are hungry and always aggressive and intolerant. The effect of poverty and lack of food makes the poor to indulge in violence and antisocial activities which threaten the security of the state. (Agbede, 2005; Eitzen 1980; Obasanjo, 1999; Olagbemiro, 1999).

High rate of illiteracy among Nigerians is the fifth factor. The rate of illiteracy is very high in the country and figures from various education departments show that education in some part of Nigeria has witnessed a progressive decline over the years. The implication is that social, political and economic mobilization policies of the government do not trickle down to the majority of the youths and other agents of peace (Alli 2006, Alphonsus, 2004, Suleiman 2008). Booth Nwolise (2008) and Ali (2006), thinking along the same line, posited that threats to national security can manifest in economic, political and social forms. McNamara (1968) also warns that coercive force alone cannot guarantee national security especially in situations of structural injustice and endemic poverty. Some scholars have adduced that other causes of insecurity in Nigerian include dysfunctional legal system, problem of job insecurity; greed capitalism practiced in the country; various classes of corruption; and the unemployment of the youth especially those with primary and secondary and university education.

The above factors, as earlier discussed above, have far reaching consequences on the safety of lives and properties of the citizenry, thus, the agitation for alternative security outfits by some geopolitical zones. Accordingly, there is a nexus between bad governance and insecurity of a nation. A nation where there is leadership failure tends to be at the cross fire of insecurity compared to nations where essential services such as good education, jobs, good health services, among other basic social amenities, have been put in place by the leaders. Sadly, what obtains in Nigeria overtime, has been humongous cases of embezzlements of public funds. According to Ngwube and Okoli (2013), corruption leads to the use of resources to finance elephant projects at the expense of infrastructural development such as schools, hospitals, roads, water supply and electricity supply. Osoba (1996) cited in Alemika (2012) posits that financial corruption dents a nation's capacity to provide the basic necessity of life for the populace. Political corruption is the main factor responsible for Nigeria underdevelopment in all sectors (Egharevba and Chiazor, 2012), hence insecurity is one of the symptoms of corruption and underdevelopment.

Consequently, there are state/community security groups in the states, even though they have not been officially designated as state police (James, 2014). In Kano State for

instance, it is called the Hisbah and is used by the state government to enforce the sharia legal system. In some south western states, there is an existence of a state security outfit codenamed "Amotekun". The initiative was decided after a security summit as a response to the rising insecurity in the region (Adibe, 2020). These insecurity challenges range from kidnapping to armed robbery, banditry, farmers-herders clashes and other crimes. At the end of the security summit, the six governors in the South West region – Oyo, Lagos, Ogun, Osun, Ekiti and Ondo – under the umbrella of Western Nigeria Governors' Forum (WNGF) – decided to form a uniform security outfit. This culminated in the launch of the outfit at an elaborate ceremony at the Government House, Ibadan. The

host governor of Oyo State, Seyi Makinde, the convener and chairman of the Western Nigeria Governors Forum (WNGF), Governor Rotimi Akeredolu of Ondo State and Governor Kayode Fayemi of Ekiti State were present. Governors Gboyega Oyetola of Osun State and Dapo Abiodun of Ogun were represented by their deputies (Mr Benedict Olugboyega Alabi and Alhaja Naimot Salako-Oyedele respectively), while the Lagos State governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu was neither present nor represented. In the south-eastern region, the current formation of a state security network codenamed Eastern Security Network (ESN) has remained a controversial issue which has heated up the polity. Glaringly, the formation of the above security outfits by geopolitical zones mirrors the failure of the national security architecture in protecting lives and properties across geopolitical zones.

Results and Discussion

The paper examined the nexus between the perceived failure of the national security architecture of Nigeria and the resort to alternative security measures by geopolitical zones of the country. From the foregoing, findings reveal as follows: first, it is the loss of confidence in the country's conventional security architecture that culminates in the proliferation of alternative security outfits in the country across geopolitical zones. This is evident in the formation of Amotekun in the South-West geopolitical zone, Eastern Security Network (ESN) championed by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). Second, leadership failure in the area of provision of basic amenities such as quality education, job creation, quality health services, constant electricity among others; has far reaching consequences on the security of lives and properties in the state. Put differently, bad leadership breeds bad and insecure nation. Third, the failure of the prevailing national security architecture in effectively tackling the issue of insecurity in the country is as a result of its centralized security network which makes its lack the needed intelligence, as well as the manpower in tackling the situation. Fourth, the fear of disintegration and possible abuse of the proposed state security outfit by respective states, has been the major teething and impeding factors to its formation.

Conclusion and Policy Recommendation

In conclusion, evidences from the analyses so far lend credence to the groundswell assumption that the perceived impotency of the country's security architecture such as the Nigerian police and armed forces in securing the lives and property of the people across some geopolitical zones is the chief determinant factor to the resort to alternative security measures by the affected regions in the country. However, in the light of the above realities, this paper recommends the following:

1. The decentralization of national security architecture through the creation of state and community policing is pertinent in addressing the loopholes in terms of adequate intelligence as well as manpower for effective national security.
2. National security reforms should be carried out in order to establish by an Act of the National Assembly as well as laws of the respective states; check and regulate state police forces against abuses by state political forces.
3. Government should improve on providing for the welfare of the people through infrastructural development and poverty alleviating schemes in order to reduce the level of insecurity and banditry in the country.
4. Stringent punishment should be meted on the perpetrators of heinous crimes such as kidnappings, arson, armed robbery and banditry in order to serve as deterrence to others who are contemplating committing same crimes.

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