

THE ROLE OF TRADITIONAL RULERS IN CURBING INSECURITY IN RIVERS STATE OF NIGERIA

Justice Ferdinard OKPO

Department of Political Science

Faculty of Social Science

Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Nigeria.

ABSTRACT

On daily basis, insecurity in Nigerian State is on the rise, lives are lost, properties worth billions of Naira destroyed with adverse effect on the nation's economy. The President and State Governors allocate to themselves millions and even billions of naira on monthly basis as security votes yet insecurity is on the rise. This study was conducted to ascertain the role of Traditional Rulers in combating insecurity. The study employed both Primary and Secondary data, the Secondary data was generated from textbook, journal and news letter relevant for the work, the Primary data was generated from an instrument title "Monarchical insecurity Control Scale (MICS). The study revealed that the Traditional Ruler if properly trained and motivated through adequate remuneration from security vote, have the potency of combating insecurity in Nigeria. The paper as aimed at prescribing the recipe towards strengthening national security vis a vis, the objectives which are to examine the role of Traditional Rulers in combating insecurity.

Keywords: Traditional Rulers, Role, Curbing, Insecurity, Nigeria

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INTRODUCTION

As insecurity continues to rise, with its attendant loss of lives and destruction of properties that worth billions of Naira on daily basis, Nigerians have called to question the relevance of security votes for the President and the State governors because there is no record of concrete achievements arising from security votes (Editorial Comment, the Business Newspaper May 22, 2012). The Nigerian State is currently facing serious security challenges as the insecurity in Nigeria has graduated from petty crimes such as assault, stealing etc to heinous crimes such as Bomblast, Highway robbery, Burglary, Arson, Murder, Rape etc.

Violent crime in Nigeria has become endemic. The Nigeria Police have recorded consistently rising cases of murder, bomblast, armed robbery over the last twenty years. Whatever the accuracy of crime statistics; the perception of growing danger has generated widespread anxiety. (Giana, 2011). Nigerians are however worried that despite the rising budgetary allocation to security in the last few years, they are yet to experience stable peace

and security capable of engendering social, political stability and economic growth and attracting foreign investment into the nation (Giana, 2011). The major if not the worst challenge facing the corporate existence of Nigeria beside the Civil war is the astronomical rising insecurity now pervading the nation. Agomuo (2012) noted that since the return of Nigeria to Civil rule in 1999, security challenges have posed a serious threat to smooth governance. Different militia groups at one point or the other have held the country to ransom; there is The Egbesu Boys in the Niger Delta, the Odua People's Congress in the Western Nigeria and The Boko Haram in the Northern Nigeria. In each of these different times, the group reigned supreme as the security agencies were unable to contain them.

Shankafi (2012) observed that, the potency of intelligence gathering and dynamic pro-active engagement in combating insecurity, are assuming greater consequences over the previous emphasis on numerical strength. These prevailing challenging circumstances in curbing insecurity in Nigeria demand a new strategy such as harnessing the potentials of Traditional Rulers in curbing rising insecurity in Nigeria. The main objective of this paper therefore, is to examine the role of Traditional Rulers in combating insecurity in Nigeria.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Traditional Rulers

Egwurube (1988) in James (2015) described a Traditional Ruler as an individual who occupies a communal political leadership position through the consent of members of a community. Dasuki (1988) regarded a Traditional Ruler as the person who by virtue of his ancestry or selection occupies the throne or stool of an area in accordance with the customs and traditions of the area. This paper conceives a Traditional Ruler as an indigenous political and administrative head either by inheritance or selection to govern an autonomous community or group of autonomous communities in accordance with the laws and customs of the people.

Insecurity

Beland (2005) defined insecurity as a condition of fear or anxiety as a result of absence or lack of security. Olabanji and Urlue (2004) conceptualized insecurity as threat to peace and security, whether historical, religious, ethnic-regional, civil, social, economic and political that sustains conflicts and promotes wanton destruction of lives and properties. This paper sees insecurity as a state of being that is characterized by fear occasioned by threat or actions taken by a person or group of people that are enimal to public safety.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored on the belief that there is a relationship between organization and management. This paper adopted the contingency theory as propounded by Lawrence and Lorseh (1969). Lawrence and Lorseh (1969) in Cole and Kelly (2011) in their reasoning suggested that, there is no one best way to structure or mange organizations rather managing an organization must be dependent upon the contingencies or situation. Contingency theory helps us to consider the volume of uncertainty and the role of change in order to determine the best method of managing a particular situation. Lawrence and Lorseh continue that internal organization responses are wholly or mainly shaped, influenced or determined by external factors.

Contingency theorists argued that effective organization management is contingent on the right technology plus the right environment. The rising insecurity in Nigeria has been distorting the nation's stability, the state-run security agencies have not been able to reverse the trend due to the absence of right technology, poor motivation, lack of functional modern security equipments married with uncooperative civil society, "thus the need for a contingency plan to take cognizance of the potentials of traditional rulers in combating rising insecurity in Nigeria.

Review of Related Empirical Studies

Otuya's (2015) in his study of "Human security; a panacea to sustaining national security in Nigeria" found that, the promotion of human dignity, welfare and development or empowerment of the individual will reduce the rising insecurity facing the nation. Though conditions such as injustice, poverty, ignorance and bad environment may be responsible for the raising insecurity but insecurity cannot be eliminated through improved human security. This study is analogous to Elias (2000) economic system which evinced that capitalist economic system like ours produces poverty, inequality, homelessness, hunger and other victimization which push many poor people to take actions that undermine national security for economic gain or merely to vent their frustration.

Angaye's (2014) major contribution to curbing insecurity in Nigeria is by "harnessing Information and Communication Technology". The study outlined handling of tools in adequate legislation, lack of sustainability of initiatives, inter-service rivalry and reluctance to share information as some of the challenges militating its success. For ICT to succeed in the fight against insecurity. Angaye further recommended human resources development, infrastructure, funding and an implementable public policy that will address the identified challenges associated with the use of insecurity in curbing insecurity.

Kukali's (2011) work on, "Re-awakening National security consciousness in Nigeria, the basic issues" noted that, the idea of cooperation with security agencies is unattractive to citizens as the security agencies seems to be protecting government and its projects to the neglects of ordinary Nigerians, he advice that for citizens to collaborate with the security agencies in curbing insecurity, the government security agencies should embark on a programme of re-inventing their identity, shun corruption and publicly prove that their citizens and the security agencies are championing the same course.

Abubakar's (2013) theoretical insight was that, the nature of threats in Nigeria has evolved over time as insurgents have become more sophisticated and aggressive necessitated the involvement of the Nigeria military in combating rising insecurity, in the nation, he noted that military involvement does not offer concrete solution. Besides these studies, there have been several studies conducted on combating rising insecurity, in the nation, most of the studies focus mainly on the use of the state machine with total neglect of the critical role of the Traditional Rulers in combating insecurity; traditional rulers grew and lives amongst their people, they are in a better position to spot in the bud persons within their domain that pose security risk before such persons or group or persons would run a mock.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. This survey was conducted in Rivers State. Rivers State consists of 23 Local Government Areas. It has an estimated population of 3,187,864 persons (National Population Commission, 2006). A sample size of 240 respondents was drawn from the population, using; purpose sampling technique. Research data were generated, using; a researcher made instrument titled; "Monarchical Insecurity

Control Scale, MICS)”. The instrument is a validated dichotomous scale. The general data were analyzed, using; simple percentages for the research question and Chi square for the hypotheses.

RESULTS

Research Question: How are Traditional Rulers role relevant in combating the upswing of crime in Rivers State?

Table 1: Frequency distribution of the perceived relevance of traditional rulers in combating the upswing of crime in Nigeria.

S/N	Items	Yes	%	No	%
1.	Traditional rulers implement enacted laws against criminality.	70	29.2	170	70.8
2.	The resolutions or adjudications of traditional rulers are binding on suspects within their domain.	110	45.8	130	54.2
3.	Traditional rulers foster equity and tranquility in Nigeria	107	45	133	55
4.	Traditional rulers can help combat the upswing of crime in Nigeria because; they uphold sacred customs and traditions.	200	83	40	17
5.	Traditional rulers help in combating insecurity collaborating with governmental and non-governmental agencies to provide welfare services for indigent (very poor) indigenes	80	33.3	160	66.7
6.	Traditional rulers collaborate with security agencies to fish out suspects	150	62.5	90	37.5
7.	Traditional rulers pass valid verdicts on convicts under their jurisdiction within their domain.	126	52.5	114	47.5
8.	Traditional rulers sanction convicts to deter intending offenders using traditional, negative reinforcements such as; ostracism, seizure of properties and imposition of fines	190	79	50	21
9.	Traditional rulers combine both spiritual and carnal weapons in fighting insecurity.	200	83	40	17
10.	Traditional rulers can checkmate insecurity using their words, actions and reactions.	180	75	60	25
	Average	141.3	58.8	98.7	41.1

Table 1 shows the perceived relevance of Traditional Rulers role in combating the rising insecurity in Nigeria. An overview of the table reveals that a greater proportion of the respondents (58.83%) are of the view that Traditional Rulers role is relevant in combating the upswing of crimes; while, a lesser proportion of the respondents (41.1%) are of the view that Traditional Rulers role is irrelevant in combating the upswing of crime. By this result shows that Traditional Rulers role is relevant in combating the upswing of crime in Rivers State.

TEST OF HYPOTHESIS

Hypothesis 1: Societal stratification of traditional rulers has no significant influence on their relevance in combating insecurity. The analysis is presented below:

Table 2: Chi square analysis of the social stratification of Traditional Rulers on their relevance in combating the upswing of crime.

Variables	Yes	No	
First class Chiefs	30(39)	43(33)	72
Second class Chiefs	60(59.6)	50(50.4)	110
Third class Chiefs	40(31.4)	18(26.6)	58
Total	130	110	240

Calculated Chi value = 9.7019

Critical Chi value at 0.05 level of significance = 5.99

D. $f = 2$

Since the calculated value (9.7019) is greater than the critical value of chi-square analysis (5.99). We reject the null hypothesis (H₀). This means that the social stratification of Traditional Ruler significantly influences their relevance in combating the upswing of crime.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant age influence of the Traditional Rulers relevance in combating rising insecurity. The analysis presented below:

Table 3: Chi square analysis of the influence of age of the Traditional Rulers relevance in combating rulers in combating the upswing of crime.

Variables	Yes	No	
18-51	57(58)	50(49)	107
51-81	73(72)	60(61)	133
	130	110	240

Calculated Chi value = 0.0672

Critical Chi value at 0.05 level of significance = 3.84

D. $f = 1$

Since the calculated value (0.0672) is less than the tabulated value (3.84), we retain the null hypothesis and reject alternative. This attest that age has no significant influence on the relevance of Traditional Rulers in combating insecurity.

Hypothesis Three: Religion has no significant influence on the relevance of Traditional Rulers in combating of combating insecurity.

Table 4: Chi square analysis of the influence of religion on the relevance of traditional rulers in combating the upswing of crime.

Variables	Response		
	Yes	No	
Christianity	36 (31.4)	22 (26.6)	72
Islam	48 (55.3)	54 (46.8)	110
African Traditional Religion	46 (43.3)	34 (36.6)	58
Total	130	110	240

Calculated Chi value = 3.897

Tabulated Chi value = 5.99 at 0.5 level of significance

D. $f = 2$

Since the calculated value 3.897 is less than the tabulated value 5.99, the null hypothesis is retained and its alternative is rejected. Thus, one can deduce that religion has no significant influence on the relevance of Traditional Rulers in combating insecurity in Rivers State.

Discussion

The research question's result revealed that Traditional Rulers role is relevant in combating the upswing rising insecurity in Rivers State. This is so, because; they command great respect in their community. The respect accorded to them enables them to implicate suspects, adjudicate during crises and sanction culprits. The respect accorded to Traditional Rulers

could be as a result of their charisma. It could equally be as a result of the fact that they uphold the people's cherished customs and traditions. Be that as it may, traditional rulers are highly relevant in combating insecurity in Rivers State. Thus, the finding do in agreement with Otuya's (2015) in his study of "Human security; a panacea to sustaining national security in Nigeria" found that, the promotion of human dignity, welfare and development or empowerment of the individual will reduce the rising insecurity facing the nation. Though conditions such as injustice, poverty, ignorance and bad environment may be responsible for the raising insecurity but insecurity cannot be eliminated through improved human security.

The result of hypothesis one revealed that social stratification significantly influences the relevance of Traditional Rulers in combating insecurity in Nigeria. This could be as a result of the fact that most people hold first class chiefs in very high esteem at the detriment of their second class and third class counterparts. A closer look at most first class chiefs shows that, they are financially flamboyant; we all know how most Nigerians worship the bourgeoisies. Hence, this result could be attributed to socioeconomic influence. More so, the result is equally attributed to the fact that first class chiefs are recognized by federal and state governments and they are believed to poses mystical prowess or power. This finding is in agreement with Elias (2000) economic system which evinced that capitalist economic system like ours produces poverty, inequality, homelessness, hunger and other victimization which push many poor people to take actions that undermine national security for economic gain or merely to vent their frustration.

The results of hypothesis two revealed that age has no significant influence on the relevance of Traditional Rulers in combating insecurity. This consolidates the fact that, the old age of Methuselah, has nothing to do with the wisdom of Solomon, in fact, this is indicated by the disparity between the chronological age and the mental age of an individual. One can poses knowledge through experiences over time, but he/she does not know how to apply or employ his/her knowledge in real life. Thus explain why age has no significant influence on the relevance of Traditional Rulers in combating insecurity. This finding is in agreement with Angaye's (2014) major contribution to curbing insecurity in Nigeria is by "harnessing Information and Communication Technology". The study outlined handling of tools in adequate legislation, lack of sustainability of initiatives, inter-service rivalry and reluctance to share information as some of the challenges militating its success. For ICT to succeed in the fight against insecurity. Angaye further recommended human resources development, infrastructure, funding and an implementable public policy that will address the identified challenges associated with the use of insecurity in curbing insecurity.

The result of hypothesis three revealed that; religion has no significant influence on the relevance of Traditional Rulers in combating insecurity. This could be as a result of the fact that most traditional rulers are not of the same faith with their subjects. This is so, because Nigeria is a secular state. The 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria gives Nigerians the right or freedom of worship, in any religion of their choice. Hence, the religion of a Traditional Ruler has no significant influence on his/her relevance in combating the upswing of crime in Rivers State. This finding is in agreement with Abubakar's (2013) theoretical insight was that, the nature of threats in Nigeria has evolved over time as insurgents have become more sophisticated and aggressive necessitated the involvement of the Nigeria military in combating rising insecurity, in the nation, he noted that military involvement does not offer concrete solution. Besides these studies, there have been several studies conducted on combating rising insecurity, in the nation, most of the studies focus mainly on the use of the state machine with total neglect of the critical role of the Traditional Rulers in combating insecurity; traditional rulers grew and lives amongst their people, they are in a more better position to spot in the bud persons within their domain that pose security risk before such persons or group or persons would run amock.

CONCLUSION

The study's main objective is to examine the relevance of traditional rulers in combating insecurity in Nigeria; it submits that no nation can develop if enmeshed with security challenges, the results of the study shows that given traditional rulers strategic position they can become a beckon of hope as they combine both spiritual and carnal knowledge in combating insecurity in their domain, the study recommends that every traditional ruler or village head should be incorporated in the state security vote through training on security tips and monthly allowance, only then will the potentials of traditional be harness in curbing insecurity in Rivers State and by extension.

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