

A Philosophical Analysis of the Effects of Insurgency on Economic Development in Africa: A Case of Nigeria

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Abstract: This paper aimed at explicating the effects of insurgency on economic development in Africa and particularly in Nigeria. Using historical and hermeneutical methods, the paper studied insurgency in its length and breadth and thoroughly investigated into the devastating effects of insurgency on the economic development of Africa and particularly Nigeria. For the fact of the particular interest of this paper as stated, the paper critically studied narratives on insurgency in African countries with particular attention to Boko-Haram in Nigeria. Also, it studied the economic downturn warranted by these manifestations of insurgency in Africa and most importantly in Nigeria. Our finding revealed that the economic growth status of Nigeria since the inception of insurgencies has remained, tepid, damned and hopeless minding the insincerity and unreadiness of the political class to quell insurgency. On appraisal, the paper boldly opined that economic development and insurgency are negatively co-relational while economic development is positively co-relational to peaceful state so much so that economic development becomes a mirage in the crisis stricken nations of African especially Nigeria. Therefore, the implication of the study showed that insurgency is an enemy to be eschewed and uprooted by everyone; the government and the masses in order to make the nation fertile enough for economic development.

Key words: Insurgency • Economic development • Boko haram and insincerity

INTRODUCTION

Insurgency can be referred as the state of insurrection, rebellion or sedition to a constituted authority or government. With this definition, it is obvious that insurgency imposes a great threat to the general security of a nation [1, 2]. This threat to the general security impedes and cripples every form of economic development by shifting attention away from national economic developmental plans to a worrisome chaotic situation. Hence insurgency can be said to be an enemy to economic development. It is very obvious that economic development and insurgency are negatively co-relational such that economic growth is a mirage in crisis stricken nations. It is therefore the interest of this paper to research thoroughly on the impact of insurgency to economic development in African and with special attention to Nigeria and to suggest ways of mitigating such adverse effects on our economy [3-5].

It is quite unfortunate that African nations suffer the fate of insurgency to a superlative degree. Most unfortunately, Nigeria is one of the countries of Africa

which has the highest brunt of insurgency as warranted by Boko-Haram sect [6]. The name as Boko-Haram simply means, 'western education is sin'. This sect advocates for total repudiation of western education and civilization. Their argument was that unemployment, imposed western education, underdevelopment, non-availability of basic infrastructure and the general high poverty level in the area are results of bad government [1]. This ideology gave them the support of the youth especially school dropouts, women and children who became the suicide bombers and the incessant attack on the innocent citizens of Nigeria especially in the Northern Nigeria. It is on record that this menace led to the death of uncountable Nigerians and expatriates and destruction of properties worth billions of naira such that besides the Nigerian civil war of 1967-1970, Nigeria has never had it so bloody than the time of Boko-Haram [1, 2].

The economic growth status of Nigeria since the inception of insurgencies especially since 2009 has remained, tepid, damned and hopeless. Nigerian nation has been very much distracted from development strides as the ample time and socio-economic and political

resources that ought to have been channelled to the development of the entire country is being wasted on various efforts geared towards checkmating and possibly, annihilating insurgency in Nigeria especially the Northern Nigeria. Hence the 2011 World Investment Report of the United Nations Conference on Trade Development showed that Nigerian economy lost about N1.3 trillion which is an equivalence of 6 billion dollars, as a result of Boko Haram insurgency in Kano and Kaduna states. Insurgency has led to the collapse of business activities in the Northern cities of Nigeria and beyond, lost of lives, arbitrary immigration, religious tension, mutual mistrust [3, 4].

This situation is most disheartening minding the insincerity and unreadiness of the political class to quell insurgency and for the fact that some politicians use the insurgency as a political tool towards their selfish political ambitions. It is also very disquieting that the national security agents who should be a source of refuge in insurgency compromise their work. Hence this paper insists that insurgency is an enemy to be eschewed and uprooted by everyone both the government and the masses in order to make the nation fertile enough for economic development. Hence this is a wakeup call on all and sundry towards uprooting the menace of insurgency in Africa and particularly Nigeria [5, 6].

Understanding Insurgency in Africa and Nigerian Experience: Insurgency can be defined as the act of rebellion against a constituted authority. In most cases insurgency arises when the constituted authority is seen as illegitimate or unfavourable by a fraction or group of persons [1]. According to Powell and Abraham, Insurgency refers to a violent move by a person or group of persons to resist or oppose the enforcement of law or running of government or revolt against constituted authority of the state or of taking part in insurrection. It can be referred as the state of insurrection, rebellion or sedition.

Insurgency if not controlled early enough unleashes mayhem on the people as Powell and Abraham described:

insurgency constitutes an attack on defenseless citizens and other property resulting into injuries, loss of lives and properties as well as forced or massive internal displacement of people out of their habitual places of residence. It drives business/investors away from an insecure area and also when it constitutes domestic and international

crimes punishable by law such as treasonable felony, terrorism, murder, crimes against humanity and genocide [2].

It is worth noting that not all rebellions are insurgencies and insurgency must not always be violent. Hence civil resistance can be a means of insurgency. A good instance of a non-violent insurgency is the People Power Revolution in Philippines in the 1980s that ousted President Marcos. A second example to this regard is the Egyptian Revolution of 2011. The Egyptian Revolution of 2011 was occasioned by the increasing brutal policies of president Mubarak's Government [1].

There is a strong relationship between terrorism and insurgency. The US Department of Defence made a distinction between the two as follows. That terrorism is a calculated use of violence or threat of violence to inculcate fear, intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious or ideological. The American Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), on its part, defines terrorism as "the unlawful use of force and violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives". Similarly, they defined insurgency as an organized resistance movement that uses subversion, sabotage and armed conflict to achieve its aims. Insurgencies normally seek to overthrow the existing social order and reallocate power within the country¹. Hence they can be said to have the following objectives;

- Overthrow an established government.
- Establish an autonomous national territory within the borders of a state.
- Cause the withdrawal of an occupying power.
- Extract political concessions that are unattainable through less violent means.

Insurgency is one of the hard experiences prevalent in Africa. This is manifest in very many countries of Africa. The high degree of insurgency in Africa is one of the major reasons for the slow pace economic development of African nations and Nigeria in particular [1, 2]. A classical example of insurgency in other African countries is 'The Lord Resistance Army' of Uganda. The Lord Resistance Army of Uganda dates as far as 1987 and has denied the people of Uganda calm and stable government. It has been an ideological apocalyptic Christian group that opposes the central government and uses coercion, violence and intimidation to instil fear to

the Ugandan populace especially the Ugandan Acholi ethnic group.

After about three years, The Lord Resistance Army' of Uganda began, a resonance of insurgency sprang up in Sierra Leone with the name 'Revolutionary United Front'(RUF) in 1990s. This was a rebel group that had constituted members who ensued that there was no proper boundary between Sierra Leone and Liberia. This was for the selfish purpose of the illegal trade of smuggling diamond from Liberia. Also, this group had other political agenda leading to incessant attacks on the local communities [3].

Down here in Nigeria, insurgency has become a domestic name. This is always manifest in different forms of militancy by different sects or groups towards upturning the political structure of the nation. These groups include: the Maitatsine Islamic fundamentalist sect in North-east and North-west Nigeria, Odua People's Congress (OPC) from the Yoruba ethnicity in South-west Nigeria, Bakassi Boys and Movement for the Actualization of Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) and Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) from the Igbo ethnic group in South-east Nigeria and the Niger Delta militants from the minority ethnicities in South-south Nigeria [4].

Historically, the most popular insurgent group in Nigeria is the Boko-Haram sect because of its use of violence. It is on record that Boko Haram has been operating under the name Shabaab Muslim Youth Organization with Mallam Lawal as the leader since 1995 but the leadership of the group shifted to Mallam Mohammed Yusuf when Mallam Lawal left Nigeria to continue his education in Saudi Arabia. It is the leadership of Mallam Mohammed Yusuf that allegedly opened the group to political influence and popularity. Hence it can be said that Mallam Mohammed Yusuf is the official founder of Boko Haram in 2002 in Maiduguri with the aim of establishing Sharia government in Borno and neighbouring states [5].

Nevertheless, their violent tendencies grew to well-coordinated virulent terroristic attacks after the death of Yusuf while in police custody, as well as his father in-law and sect financier, Ustaz Buji Foi and the incarceration of members by state authorities. The level of radicalization and terrorism is perhaps, a function of the death of its initial leadership and the subsequent clampdown of Abubakar Shekau a Kanuri native who once boasted "I enjoy killing any one that Allah commands me to kill-the way I enjoy killing chickens and rams [3]. Gilbert posited that the new leadership turned to the use of lethal weapons such as: rocket propelled grenades (RPGs), anti-

tank missiles, Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), surface-to-air missiles, armoured tanks, A-K 47 assault rifles, as well as machetes and daggers [2].

Besides the Nigerian civil war of 1967-1970, Nigeria has never had it so bloody until the advent of Boko-Haram. Since its advent, Nigeria became a warfare between the Boko-Haram and the Nigerian Army marked with the blood bath of innocent Nigerians through their suicide bombers and during the exchange of gun shots. Nevertheless, a brutal crackdown leading to the death of over 800 Boko Haram members in 2009 made them become so disorganized and went underground to regroup themselves. Hence coming out again in 2010, they were full-blown terrorists with attacks on police, their stations and military barracks to avenge the supposed killings of Yusuf and other comrades. Furthermore, the group carried out jailbreaks to free members and demanded prosecution of Yusuf killers, release of detained colleagues, restoration of its destroyed mosque and compensation for members killed by troops [6].

Mohammed Yusuf began as a preacher and leader in the youth wing of Shababul Islam of Ahl-Sunnah, a Salafi group. His literal interpretation of the Quran led him to advocate that aspects of western education he considered in contradiction to that holy book, such as evolution, the big bang theory of the universe, development and elements of chemistry and geography should be forbidden. While critical of the government, Yusuf was involved in official efforts to introduce and implement Sharia in several northern states in the 2000s [2].

It is to be noted that Boko Haram had the major purpose of creating a very strict Islamic state in the north that it believes would address the ills of society, including corruption and bad governance [2]. The sects' core beliefs are strict adherence to the Quran and the Hadith. Although from the outset the sect's mission was to impose Sharia on Nigeria, the leadership went about its preaching and interpretation of the Quran as a recipe for violence and an affront to constituted authority [3].

The Boko Haram in the early stage was a mobilization of women and children, school dropouts and unemployed university and polytechnic graduates and most of whom were encouraged to tear their certificates. Their argument was that unemployment, imposed western education, underdevelopment, non-availability of basic infrastructure and the general high poverty level in the area are results of bad government. It is also from this perspective that the name got its root thus "Boko-Haram" which means, 'western education is sin' [1]. Consequently, they used food, money and employment to attract youths to their

fold and created the impression that their fundamentalist Islamic viewpoint of societal organization is better and more profitable than the western capitalist mode of production. This ideology gave them the support of the youth who became the suicide bombers.

Gathering records from different sources, some of the incessant attacks of the Boko-Haram sect include the following:

- Christmas Eve 2010-half a dozen bombs were detonated near churches and markets in two districts of Jos, Plateau state killing scores of people.
- Christmas day in 2011, several bombs were detonated in three states, Niger, Plateau and Yobe, killing 45 people.
- April 15, 2011 - The Independent National electoral commission was bombed in Maiduguri.
- May 29, 2011 - Multiple bombing in Borno State, north eastern Nigeria, killing 4 people.
- June 26, 2011 - Bombing of a social and relaxation center in Maiduguri, 25 people died.
- November, 2011 – Coordinated bombing and shooting attacks on police facilities in Potiskum and Damaturu in Yobe State, 150 died.
- April 30, 2012 – Suicide bomb blast hit a convoy of a commissioner in Taraba State killing 10 people and injured 22 people.
- September 16, 2013 – Bomb blast on school of Agriculture Yobe State killing 60 students.
- December 2, 2013, about 200 insurgents dressed in military uniform and armed with rocket launchers and explosives attacked the Nigerian Air Force base and military barracks.
- December 20, 2013, several hundred fighters stormed military barracks outside Bama town close to the Cameroonian border in a predawn raid, torching the compound and killing many soldiers, their wives and children.
- April 14, 2014, a bomb blast in Nyanya District of Abuja killing about 75 people and leaving not less than 215 others injured.
- April 14, 2015, over 250 school girls were abducted by the Boko-Haram group from Government Girls Secondary School in Chibok, Borno State.
- May 1, 2014 after the workers day celebration, another bomb blast rocked Nyanya area of Abuja killing about 71 persons and injuring several others.
- October 31, 2014– Bomb blast in Gombe State central bus station killing 8 people, injured 17 people.
- November 7, 2014 – Bomb blast in Azare town, Bauchi State killing 8 people.
- November 10, 2014 – Suicide bomber bombed government secondary school Potiskun, Yobe State killing 49 students and injured 69 students with 6 teachers.
- November 15, 201 –Attacks on Hong town of Adamawa State killing 4 people.
- November 16, 2014–Attacks on Gombi town of Adamawa State killing 10 people
- November 26, 2014–Suicide twin bomb blast in Monday market in Maiduguri killing 15 people and injured 45 people.
- November 1, 2014–Bomb blast occurred in Monday market in Maiduguri, Borno Sate.
- November 25, 2014–Another twin bomb blast in Monday market killing 60 people, 120 people injured. Monday market is the main Maiduguri crowded market.
- December 5, 2014 – Raid on Lafarge Cement Company with Sporadic shooting in Gombe State.
- December 7, 2014 – Abduction of 20 girls in Lassa town, Borno State.
- December 18, 2014 – Boko Haram abducted 40 girls in a village near Chibok town, Borno State.
- December 19, 2014 – Attacks on Damagu town in Yobe State, destroying properties and houses.
- December 21, 2014 – Attacks on Geidam town in Yobe State, killing 8 people.
- December 22, 2014 – Suicide bomb blast attack in Dukku car station, central Gombe State killing 19 people and injured 8 people.
- December 22, 2014 – Coordinated suicide bomb blast attack in Bauchi State central market, destroying goods worth millions of Naira.
- January 10, 2015 – Female suicide bomber blast Monday market in Maguduri killing 4 people.
- January 12, 2015 – Bomb blast in Potiskum in Yobe State, killing 2 policemen on duty.
- January 13, 2015 – An insurgent killed 3 people outside Mosque in Gombe State.
- January 14, 2015 – Military repel insurgent attack in Biu town, Borno State.
- January 17, 2015 – Insurgents razed down 80 houses in Gombi town, Adamawa State.
- January 25, 2015 – Attacks on Monguno town in Borno State, killing 8 people.
- February 15, 2015 – Bomb blast killed 10 people in a bus station in Damaturu, Yobe State.

- April 14, 2015, over 250 school girls were abducted by the Boko Haram group from Government Girls Secondary School in Chibok, Borno State.
- January 7, 2017, -Boko-Haram militants attacked a Nigerian Army base in Yobe State killing 5 soldiers.
- March 18, 2017, female suicide bomber killed six people and wounded 16 in Maiduguri.
- September 2017 -Boko Haram militants kidnapped about 40 young adults, women and children and killed 18 in the town of Banki, 130 km south east of Maiduguri.

Insurgency and Economic Toll in Africa and Nigeria: It is very obvious that no nation can afford to treat with levity the security of its territorial integrity and of its people. Indeed every aspect of human endeavour, be it health, environmental, food, economy, political, social or physiological e.t.c, stands to be greatly affected by the state of security or insecurity of the nation. It is no longer news that in recent time, Nigeria has been bogged down with challenging security issues championed by the Boko Haram insurgency so much so that Nigeria has witnessed unimaginable loss of lives and properties that have attracted the attention of the international community. As already mentioned, besides the Nigerian civil war of 1967-1970, Nigeria has never had it so bloody than the time of Boko-Haram leading to incessant killings and clashes between the Nigerian Army and the insurgent sect.

Unfortunately, this experience has brought national and international disgrace to Nigeria as a country. The emergence of Boko-Haram and their worrisome activities have continued to reign terror in different parts of Nigeria. Thus the Nigerian nation has been very much distracted from development strides as the ample time and socio-economic cum political resources that ought to have been channelled to the development of the entire country is being wasted on various efforts geared towards checkmating and possibly, annihilating the insurgency in Nigeria especially the Northern Nigeria. Even though the worst hit and epicentre of Boko-Haram is in the North-east, its effect reverberates through the entire country and has constituted a major source of economic underdevelopment to Nigeria.

The prevailing insecurity and insurgency in Nigeria especially the Northern Nigeria has brought untold economic hardship facing the country and reluctance of foreign investors to invest in Nigerian economy. Very painful and sad too, this experience has led to closure or abandonment of peoples business activities within the

regions that were mostly affected by the insurgency. It has also led to incessant immigration of people from the north to south. The mass exodus of people from the Northern Nigeria warranted increase in population overflow in many cities of Nigeria such as Abuja, Lagos, Port Harcourt, Enugu, Owerri e.t.c. This automatically led to increase in house rent in these new areas. More so this experience also led to the reduction of patronage of products from northern region following the mutual mistrust existing between the north and other regions of Nigeria so much so that the people rumoured that Boko-Haram had poisoned products from the Northern Nigeria to other parts of Nigeria.

It is important to note that insurgency of Boko-Haram has reduced drastically government developmental projects, investment and growth in private business in the affected places. Little wonder the report of 2011 World Investment Report of the United Nations Conference on Trade Development showed that Nigeria economy lost about N1.3 trillion which is an equivalent of 6 billion dollars, as a result of Boko Haram insurgency in Kano and Kaduna.

Similarly, it is on record that Boko Haram insurgency has discouraged Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Nigeria. Investors all over the world are afraid of coming to do business in Nigeria. Other foreign Countries on daily basis warn their citizens to stay off Nigeria and northern Nigeria in particular. United States warned American citizens of the risks of coming to Nigeria, with particular emphasis to Gombe, Yobe, Borno, Adamawa, Kano, Kaduna, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Delta, Rivers, Abia, Edo, Imo, Jos, Bauchi, states; and the Gulf of Guinea. This is a very bad signal to economic growth and development. It is on record also that the poverty rate in Kaduna before the emergence of Boko-Haram was 42% but it rose to 55% in 2014 December [2]. In the same vein, customer's patronage in business and trade reduced by 30%.

Unequivocally we claim that terrorism has always imposed huge financial implications and burden to the affected country. It is on record that globally, the world GDP decreased by US\$3.6 trillion in 2002 as a direct and indirect consequence of terrorist activities in 2001. Also, it has been estimated that the city of New York alone lost US\$21 billion as a result of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. In a similar way, the budget of N921.91 billion earmarked to combat terrorism in Nigeria in the year 2012 alone, could have been deployed to development programmes that the nation desperately need. Also, statistics obtained from the 2010 annual report by the Central Bank of Nigeria

(CBN) showed that the total foreign capital inflow into the Nigerian economy in 2010 was \$5.99 billion². The record showed that FDI represented about 78.1 per cent drop from \$3.31 billion in 2009 [2].

It is worrisome that some foreign investors like the Lebanese and Indian expatriates who have established businesses in Kano very many decades ago have relocated to Abuja, Lagos and the south. Regrettably, a good number of those companies have left the country [3]. Following this colossal collapse of the system, very many Hotels, banks and other business sectors have witnessed significant reductions in business activities. The border towns that have thrived on trade with neighbouring countries have also seen their businesses collapse such that in Kano alone, an estimate of about 126 industries have recently closed down following insurgency and instability especially Kano's Kanti-Kwari textile Market which is the oldest and biggest textile markets in the Sub-Sahara Africa [4]. Unfortunately, following the immediacy of insurgency report by the media at its occurrence in a particular Northern state, the whole world believed the whole of Nigeria has become unsafe for investment and habitation [6]. Even the little companies still struggling to function have been forced to reduce the quantity of product which tells devastatingly in the profit of the company [5].

CONCLUSION

The effort so far has been to establish that the presence of insurgency in any environment constitutes threat to lives and properties, hinders business activities and discourages local and foreign investors, all of which stifle and retard socio-economic development of a country. Following the fact already laid down in this essay, we declare that African economy has experienced a great plummet and nosedive since the inception of insurgency especially in Nigeria with special consideration to Northern Nigerian. It is an obvious fact that politically stable country is more likely to attract more foreign direct investment than terror-prone country [5].

This paper identified some notable activities of insurgents in Africa but these few ones were given attention such as 'The Lord Resistance Army of Uganda', 'The Revolutionary United Front'(RUF) of Sierra Leone and 'The Boko-Haram' of Nigeria. These have caused serious economic downturn on African nations. In Nigeria, the Boko-Haram insurgency has caused a lot of tension in the country since 2009 especially in most states

of Northern Nigeria having the worst hit in Adamawa, Bauchi, Bornu, FCT (Abuja), Kaduna, Kano, Plateau and Yobe³ and this situation has really tortured Nigeria economy [6].

It is time for the government to undertake the elimination of these threats as their number one goal since the nation cannot achieve any significant economic development amidst insurgency. Hence Government must be proactive and sincere in dealing with insurgency issues. It's unfortunate that the matters of insurgency are still on the rise in Nigeria because it is a political toll in the hands of some selfish and wicked politicians who have no regard for societal values. The federal government should formulate and effectively implement policies and programmes capable of addressing the root causes of insurgency in Nigeria such as poverty, unemployment, environmental degradation, infrastructure, uneven development, e.t.c. The government should work with the security agencies with sincerity of purpose towards fighting insurgency in Nigeria and other African nations. This will add more values in checking incessant bombings, robbery, kidnapping and violent crimes by the insurgents thereby creating a favourable environment to business activities [6].

Also, this paper is an invitation to enhance and standardize education in African nations especially Nigeria. Hence courses on Peace Studies, interreligious dialogue, intercultural studies and Security Management are very essential even in colleges and tertiary institutions. This will go a long way towards character formation of the youth and encouraging them to shun vices like insurgency. It is when these proactive measures are taken and well implemented with sincerity of purpose that the land becomes highly fertile for economic bounce back in Africa and particularly Nigeria.

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