

Inter-Agency Cooperation and National Security; an Assessment of Internal Security Operations in Nigeria

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Abstract

This research work attempts to appraise the impacts of inter-agency cooperation on national security, there is no doubt that maintaining internal security in any country is a collective responsibility and the need for synergy among these distinct security bodies cannot be overemphasized. After capturing a link between inter-agency cooperation and national security based on different levels, critical problems fundamentally as to aggregate the different perspectives to the complexities of internal security operations in Nigeria was explored, relevant literal contributions from scholars were presented while asserting that inter-agency cooperation has never been embraced in Nigeria as a results of inter-agency friction and quest for superiority among them, an effective security operation is recognized as an agent of progressive national security and development in all countries of the world, leadership and management of security institution should be re-assessed to be overly supportive in strengthening national security, this investigation made use of secondary sources for data and information from national tabloids, books, internet sources among others. At the end of the analysis, it was proffered that periodic performance evaluation should be conducted for assessing their impact assessments while regulatory interference in their operations should be strategic as it is expected that embracing structural reforms is one of the major ways of improving the quality of internal security operations in Nigeria.

Key Words: National Security, Inter-Agency Cooperation, Security Collaboration

1. INTRODUCTION

Maintaining national security is fundamentally anchored on maintaining cordial relationships and cooperation among security institutions. The conventional security service is not the only law implementation agencies, Collaboration and synergy is a vital mechanism for managing conflicts and containing insecurity. Several successes have been recorded in the sphere of cooperation, this is because each of the security agencies has a unique capability and operational skills that can complement one another and the Nigerian situation cannot be an exception. It is quite conspicuous that each of the component elements of security organizations in Nigeria has a different but complementary role to play. In every country of the world, the duties, functions and responsibilities of every agency have been spelt out in the act establishing it. The Collaboration in Nigeria has become necessary because one or more agency has not been performing its responsibilities effectively. The combination of two or more hands has become necessary, a government agency may be willing to perform its responsibilities effectively, but consequent upon the huge cost of running these agencies, their concerted efforts have not to produce maximal results.

While appraising the roles of these security agencies, it would be justified to state that if these constitutional roles are well played, especially in mutual cooperation with one another as envisaged by the society, violent conflict in the society will be minimal. While there has been a continuous emphasis on the essence of inter-agency cooperation, nothing appears to have changed in the level of un-cooperative and unity among the agencies. The situation appears to worry even the top echelon of the services, but the institutional roadblocks appear to be above their capacities (Nigerian Tribune, 2013). Core security institutions charged with responsibility for preserving the Nigerian national security challenges are listed below;

- Nigeria Police Force
- Nigeria Security & Civil Defence Corps
- Nigerian Army
- Nigerian Navy

- Nigerian Air force
- Department of Security Services
- Defence Intelligence Agency
- National Intelligence Agency
- National Drugs Law Enforcement Agency
- Nigerian Custom Service

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Security agencies are largely confronted with institutional problems some of which include, nepotism, ethnic ties, corruption, also corporate weaknesses such as inadequate workforce (both in strength and expertise), insufficient education and training, inadequate equipment and poor conditions of service of the average policeman, poor public relations between subordinate and superior officers, lack of public cooperation, Constitutional problem that put the whole country's security apparatus under the Presidency, and most recently, the poor perception of police by the general public, this research investigation discusses fostering inter-agency cooperation and national security; its justification and restraints in the Nigerian federal system

- i. Rivalry among the security agencies has resulted in clashes; several successes have been recorded in the sphere of cooperation.
- ii. Rising levels of political nepotism
- iii. Possibility of political interference
- iv. Constitutional limitations
- v. Inadequate essential equipment, coupled with poor conditions of service

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of this research work seeks to set out strategic analysis on fostering inter-agency cooperation and national security; its justification and restraints in the Nigerian federal system, in essence other specific objectives are;

- i. To assess the overall impact of inter-agency cooperation on ensuring national security.
- ii. To set out strategic analysis on fostering inter-agency cooperation adaptable for Nigeria's security challenges.
- iii. To examine the constraints of an effective inter-agency cooperation and its effects on Nigeria's security challenges.
- iv. To ascertain the level of professionalism among the existing policing force to justify additional inputs.

4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- i. What is the assessment of the overall impact of inter-agency cooperation on ensuring national security?
- ii. What strategy can be deployed to foster inter-agency cooperation for Nigeria's security challenges?
- iii. What are the constraints of an effective inter-agency cooperation and its effects on Nigeria's security challenges?
- iv. To ascertain the level of professionalism among the existing policing force to justify additional inputs?

5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

There is no doubt that inter-agency cooperation in issues of security is growing in importance over the years. In Nigeria, the number of criminal cases has increased tremendously and now occupies a central point of interest on the agenda of the government. These have necessitated increasing investments in the security agencies by the

government but in spite of these investments, the outcomes have been extremely poor. Many of these agencies have thus gained the reputation of constituting sources of waste and being inefficient coupled with a bad attitude to work, undue interference, corruption and low morale. It is therefore the objective of this study to determine the root cause of these problems and to proffer probable solutions or directions to follow. It is also hoped that workers, the society and especially scholars who might wish to conduct further research on the subject matter in the future will find it very reliable.

6. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Considering Onyeozili (2005), where he points out the allegations leveled against these security agencies and its personnel, most of which have been discovered to be true, which include; the flagrant abuse of power, stealing and corruption, delays in the administration of justice among others. Several factors have been identified as constituting a huge stumbling block to the efficient and effective administration of justice and the overall maintenance of law and order in the country. Many other factors noted were the shortage of workforce (both in expertise and strength), education, training, inadequate and obsolete equipment, coupled with poor conditions of service of the average officer. The general failure of the Nigerian authorities to eliminate bribery, extortion, and massive embezzlement threatens the safety needs of all Nigerians. Therefore, a strategic and workable policy is the crucial for achieving the rule of law and public security. In a poll conducted by Human Rights Watch among 145 respondents who witness to the prevalence of security corruption in Nigeria, most of these respondents included traders, drivers, sex workers, robbery and rape suspects, and sufferers of common crime in major cities. However findings based on the research shows “the gravity of corruption in Nigeria” and “also depicts how deeply rooted institutional decadence coupled with the lack of political will to reform these agencies which makes corruption deeply embedded problems”. Cases of extortion, bribery, embezzlement, and failure of oversight functions were obviously identified. Mammus (2010) asserted that the major challenge of inadequate security is the dearth of the workforce, shortage of funding, lack of logistic support and infrastructure, absence of technological equipment to cover all the areas of the state are responsible for the current state of the general national insecurity in Nigeria.

7. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The New Weberian Model

The prevailing Nigerian bureaucratic environment gives a level of relevance to the application of Weberian principles. The “Weberian Elements” describe the basis on which reforms should take place in order to ensure that they work well. According to Pollitt, Bouckaert (2004) they gave their description on the Webberian basis on the model in the following four points:

- Delineation of the role of the state as the main facilitator of solutions to the new problems of globalization, technological change, shifting demographics and environmental threat;
- Reaffirmation of the role of representative democracy (central, regional and local) as the legitimating element within the state apparatus;
- Establishment of the role of administrative law suitably modernized in preserving the basic principles pertaining to the citizen-state relationship, including equality before the law, legal security and the availability of specialized legal scrutiny of state actions;
- Preservation of the idea of public service with a distinctive status, culture and terms and conditions.
- In the work of Cepiku and Mititelu (2010), Neo-Weberian framework was summarized into four principles namely:
 - Bureaucracy can be viewed as a government-aided means to the fulfillment of public needs;
 - the strategic role of professional managers in the implementation of policies;
 - The Collaboration of public and private sector;
 - Participatory governance is supported by public consultation and public participation;

The Institutionalism Theory

The strong structural composition of the Nigerian public administration system is an important element in the process of institutionalization, Berger and Olsen, (1989), therefore advocated a more institutional approach in researching public service motivation. The regional differences found in public service values and the conceptions of public service motivation in its broadest sense only strengthen this plea for an institutional approach to managing the public administration system. There is a variety of institutional-inspired theories within the social sciences. Peters (2000) finds in his account of institutionalism theories within political sciences no less than seven different versions. Hall and Taylor (1996) find in their account three different versions. This variety is due to the long history and the distinct roots institutionalism has in the various subfields of the social sciences such as economics, law, political science and sociology (Scott 2001). Furthermore, Scott contends that these theories have basic principles, but have different perspectives. As well as concerning the institutional basis (the regulative, the cognitive, and the normative), also concerning the level of analysis (from global to sub-organizational level), and the different theories have a different focus. The submission from (Peters 2000) stated above, contains most elements that are found in the bulk of institutional theories (Scott 2001): social structures, stability, norms, rules, values and ideas. Applying such an eclectic definition has a broad scope and allows us to look to the various theories for further insights. A crucial topic that has to be addressed too is the use of the term 'institutionalism' versus the term 'new institutionalism'. This creates the impression that there is an important difference between the two schools. However, the arrival of the new institutionalism was not the beginning of a new paradigm. Instead, it was more a shift in focus.

Organizational theory of Douglas McGregor theory X” and “theory Y

This theory takes a cursory look at the level of motivational force that drives agencies and institutions for better performance in Nigeria, developed by Douglas McGregor in the 1960s; in the Nigerian context the public administration system is overly inefficient, an average public sector worker is nonchalant in performing the roles and responsibility assigned, hence theory X is based on certain assumptions of the average worker. Accordingly, Theory X believes that all actions should be traced and the responsible individual is given a direct reward or a reprimand according to the action's outcomes. Theory Y assumes that people in the workforce are internally motivated, enjoy their labour in the company, and work to better them without a direct reward in return.

8. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

What is inter-agency cooperation?

According to Weiss (1987), inter-agency cooperation exists when two or more organizations that share a problem area agree to deal with the issue by establishing a link via a formal contract that provides for resources and for the adjusting of internal and/or external procedures to support the new arrangements adequately.

Collaboration and synergy is a vital mechanism for managing conflicts and containing insecurity. Several successes have been recorded in the sphere of cooperation; this is because each of the security agencies has a unique capability and operational skills that can complement one another. Hence the essence of inter-agency cooperation are outlined as thus;

- i. The need for security synergy and exchange of ideas and information among security agencies;
- ii. To create a platform for collective networking and planning of activities, thereby building a database for preventive action;
- iii. To provide a forum for the analysis of conflict indicators and processing of security-related information for early warning and timely response;
- iv. To serve as a channel for the dissemination of security reports to all stakeholder's efforts, among others.
- v. To set out strategic analysis on fostering inter-agency results oriented strategies adaptable for Nigeria's security challenges.
- vi. To partner and examine the constraints of an effective inter-agency drive and its effects on Nigeria's security challenges

Factors Militating Against Inter-Agency Cooperation in Nigeria

▪ **Corruption**

Widespread corruption among security agencies still exists in Nigeria. However, the issue of corruption cannot be treated in isolation of the larger society. Most of these security agencies routinely extort money from victims of crimes to initiate investigations and demand bribes from suspects to drop investigations. Corruption is so endemic that it has eroded public trust and confidence they have in the security agencies. To achieve any success in combating corruption, agencies responsible have to take a holistic approach and most importantly understanding the growth and existence of corruption.

▪ **Institutional Constraints:**

Many of the allegations leveled against institutions and its personnel, some of which have proven to be true, include arbitrariness in exercising its power, corruption, perversion of justice, and delays in the administration of justice. Certain issues have been viewed as a trigger to the ineffective administration and efficient maintenance of law and order in Nigeria.

▪ **Inadequate Manpower and Poor Conditions**

Insufficient education and training, inadequate equipment, and poor conditions of service of the average security officer, the long-term failure of the Nigerian authorities to address police bribery, extortion, and large-scale embezzlement threatens the basic rights of all Nigerians, a strategic and workable policy is the crucial for achieving the rule of law and public security. In poll conducted by Human Rights Watch among 145 respondents who witnessed to the prevalence of security corruption in Nigeria, among them are market traders, commercial drivers, sex workers, criminal suspects, and victims of common crime, rank-and-file and senior-level police officers; federal government officials; judges, prosecutors, and lawyers, religious and civil society leaders, journalist, diplomats and members of an armed vigilante group, outcomes from the investigation depicts the magnitude of corruption in Nigeria and also shows how institutionalized extortion and a profound lack of political will to reform the force, and impunity combine to make police corruption a deeply embedded problems". Cases of extortion, bribery, embezzlement, and failure of oversight functions were obviously identified. Mammus (2010) asserted that the major challenge of inadequate security is the dearth of the workforce, shortage of funding, lack of logistic support and infrastructure, absence of technological equipment to cover all the areas of the state are responsible for the current state of the general national insecurity in Nigeria.

. The behaviour of the police as a vital institution does not only reflect the political and economic character of society, but also shows what those in authority condones or perhaps permit, and seeks no accountability demand of the police (ICPC,2008).

▪ **Negative Public Perception**

Another important factor that has been neglected for many years is the perception of the security agencies by Nigerians. Questions that readily come to mind are: What is the perception of the citizens they claimed to be serving? To be candid, the image of security agencies in the eyes of Nigerians is badly arising from all the factors enumerated above.

▪ **Weak Orientation**

The weak orientation as it is now is unimpressive and lacks professionalism. Unarguably this issue is probably the major challenge faced the service, turning it from a noble profession to a joke, officers often lack the skills needed to function effectively, but refuses to admit the most serious allegations made about them that they brutally torture and sometimes kill suspects without trial (Iwar, 2009)

▪ **God-father syndrome**

The God-father syndrome exists when officials and personnel in the security service are not duly regulated and properly reprimanded for their official transgression; this syndrome over the years has become an issue in the Nigerian polity. Other inherent factor includes;

- **The posture of superiority** by an agency over another can create a sense of envy which can cause violent rage any time;

- **Absence of general discipline**, policy violation, poor orientation, education and training, which downgrades the *esprit de corps* principle among the security agencies;
- **Overriding pecuniary interest** as a result of poor remuneration; when this security personnel are underpaid or irregularly, will seize any opportunity to make additional income may
- **Absence of inter-service communication** which is required to ensure prompt command and control hampers the quick relay of information among the services, especially when clashes are in the formative stages;
- **Overlapping of functions** there is no clear cut constitutionally assigned operational areas of competency and, furthermore, undue interference in the general responsibilities of other agencies resulting in acrimony.
- **Unnecessary application of force** by security officers at the slightest caused provocation is another cause of several inter-agency conflicts;
- **The inability of the structural set up and systems in security agencies** to create channels for appropriate sanctions for erring officers; instead non reprimanding this personnel prepares the grounds for further rivalry and clashes;
- **Inadequate accommodation and support system** which compels the security personnel to live among the general civilian populace and commute alongside regular masses in public transportation.

9. SUMMARY

Attempts were made to see how inter-agency cooperation can positively impact on the state of national security in Nigeria, however by addressing their relative strengths in terms of workforce demands and the level of resources commitment; collaborating agencies should agree on their roles and responsibilities, meaning they should work together to define and agree on their respective roles and responsibilities; and collaborating agencies should establish compatible policies, procedures, and other means to operate across agencies. In the course of this research paper specific institutional inadequacies among other problem were discussed, which were anchored on;

- i. Rivalry among security agencies has resulted in violent clashes
- ii. Rising levels of political nepotism
- iii. Possibility of political interference
- iv. Constitutional limitations
- v. Inadequate essential equipment, coupled with poor conditions of service.

The essence of the securities everywhere is to adequately protect the sanctity of life and properties publicly owned or individually. A high sense of optimism has emerged concerning the benefits of increased synergy among all participating security agencies in Nigeria. This eventually spills over into a safe and secure nation place, as many analysts and policymakers now believe that the provision of adequate security in place can offer great gains to developing countries of which Nigeria is a dominant part.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

More than ever before, the need for inter-agency cooperation in Nigeria has never been this over-emphasized, towards this end, this recommendation suffices.

- i. Good and excellent reward packages for the workforce in these agencies would serve as a motivating force to propel them for better performance. The quality of remuneration will mitigate frequent frictions among them, as each will focus on their duties instead of sourcing for alternative income.
- ii. The mass and social media too could be of immense help by maintaining an unbiased posture, so that brewing crises and tension could be prevented as it could escalate to major in agency rivalry.

- iii. Concerted efforts to create a general meeting point for relevant security agencies for recreational activities should be embraced. In essence, there must be combined training at all level for officers to interact intellectually for better understanding of one-other for improved cooperation at all times;
- iv. A clear, cut and well defined communication channel among the different ranks of the security service, while moves to establish liaison officers in all units at all levels and structure of command to entertain complaints from disgruntled personnel of other services.
- v. Mutual trust and respect for one another with the belief that all services are performing different functions towards achieving a common goal.

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