



LEADERSHIP FAILURE AND INSECURITY IN NIGERIA: A STUDY OF THE IPOB PHENOMENON IN SOUTH EAST GEOPOLITICAL ZONE, 2020-2022

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ABSTRACT

Success or failure of any society relies upon in large part the mannerism of its management. The result of poor leadership in Nigeria is embodied as poor governance manifested in consistent political crisis and insecurity, poverty of the extreme order among the citizens, unscrupulous corruption, and a high rate of unemployment indices, for this reason, the thrust of this paper is on leadership failure and insecurity in the southeastern part of Nigeria: a study of the IPOB phenomenon. Data have been accrued through the use of a documentary approach and analyzed through the content material evaluation approach. The study become anchored on interventionist theory. The paper discovered that the state of violence in Nigeria's southeast and the government's incapability to efficiently defend existence and assets are taking a toll on nearly all elements of existence, which includes socio-monetary improvement. The violence additionally negatively influences the livelihoods of citizens, who ply their alternate in the informal casual economy. The activities of the IPOB secessionist group also affected Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo states by killing policemen, burning and looting police stations, and killing various innocent citizens in these states. The study in this manner prescribes amongst others that state governments have to work on a zonal framework to articulate and pursue a sturdy improvement blueprint for the region. This has to consist of centered empowerment programmes designed for unemployed youths to limit their vulnerability to recruitment through separatist and crook groups.

Keywords: *Displacement, Insecurity, IPOB, Leadership failure, South East*

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INTRODUCTION

It is an axiom that Nigeria is providentially endowed with vital human and material resources for national development and advancement (Cole, 1997). But since gaining political independence, Nigeria has continued to walk the path of failed, weak, and "youthful" states (Ministry of Finance, 2022). A state that had great prospects at the time of independence and was touted as lifting Africa out of the forests of underdevelopment and economic dependency, Nigeria still finds itself in the league of the very poor, corrupt, underdeveloped, infrastructure-decaying, in crisis, morally bankrupt and Southern countries with leadership deficits (Imhonopi, 2019). Rather than becoming an example of transformative leadership, modern bureaucracy, national development, national integration, and innovation, Nigeria seems infamous for everything mediocre, corrupt, incredibly violent, and morally hostile (Yahaya, 2019).

Therefore, one can only agree with the position that Nigeria is the victim of poor governance and a convoluted systemic corruption that has become pervasive and carcinogenic in the country's national life (Anise, 1984). This view has been strongly advocated in the literature by scholars and writers, who have identified the unstoppable link between the leadership crisis and insecurity in the country as the enduring cause of the country's shameful economic agony, political dislocations, and national underdevelopment. Agbor, 2019; Esirim, 2010; Ebegbulem, 2019; Ogbunwezeh, 2022). Agbor argues that the success or failure of a society depends largely on the mannerisms of its leadership.

He adds that the result of poor leadership in Nigeria is poor governance, manifested in ongoing political crisis and insecurity, extreme poverty among citizens, a crippling miasma of corruption, and rising unemployment rates. Nigeria's National Life (Ezirim, 2010), Nigeria's nationality has been sucked into the maelstrom of insecurity that remains a breeding ground for all that is vicious, seedy, and backward. While insecurity is not unique to Nigeria, one report ranks it as one of the most chronic macroeconomic problems facing most African countries today (ACBF, 2019). It looks like the root cause of the various economic and political crises that have hit the African region and continue to aggravate not only the problem of underdevelopment in every country but also extreme poverty among its citizens. This specter of insecurity seems to haunt the nation and has permeated the very fabric of the state aided by the crisis of leadership afflicting the nation (Obayelu, 2021).

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

This paper seeks to research the inglorious roles that leadership crises have played in stymieing national insecurity within the case of the IPOB development in the southeast politics zone of Nigeria. The paper also will try a historical analysis of corruption in the country, examine existing literature on the dual issues of poor leadership and insecurity in Nigeria and also the impact these have on the security of the southeastern states, and determine the causes of the leadership crisis in the country and counsel ways that will be used to tame this ugly scenario. Ala Mbama (2019).

PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

The purpose of this research is to examine the disastrous effect of insecurity in the South Eastern zone of Nigeria perpetrated by IPOB and to proffer a lasting solution to this ugly scenario by projecting recommendations that can be adopted by leaders to mitigate the insecurity crisis in the region.

HYPOTHESIS

The IPOB phenomenon is a consequential effect of leadership failure in the southeast geo-political zone of Nigeria.

REVIEW OF EXISTING LITERATURE ON LEADERSHIP CRISIS AND INSECURITY (A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE).

According to Ebegbulem (2019), Nigeria has now no longer had the best fortunes of being ruled properly because it won its political independence in 1960 because “proper and sturdy leaders” have by no means been in power. He argues that from the primary democratic regime in 1960 to military regimes and lower back to democracy as practiced within the country today, Nigeria has unfortunately been controlled and governed by leaders who are narcissistic and corrupt. They gather wealth to the detriment of the well-being of the country without accommodating and providing for the primary wishes of the masses (Chukwuebuka and Chidubem, 2020). He believes the leadership from 1960 has criminally controlled the country’s affairs and thereby threw the humans over the precipice in which they now wallow in absolute poverty, illiteracy, hunger, growing unemployment, avoidable health conditions, disaster, and insecurity.

In reading the plethora of leaders which have bestrode the country’s political landscape, Ebegbulem discovered that selfish, mediocre, tribal leaders and opportunistic small cash-minded humans masquerading as leaders have endured regeneration over time. From Tafawa Balewa (1960- 1966) to Olusegun Obasanjo (1999-2007), management disaster within the country remains the same. Nwankwo stated in Ebegbulem (2019) ran a scholarly and apt remark at the management convulsion in Nigeria. According to him, Alhaji Tafawa Balewa who ruled Nigeria from 1960-1966 could not chart a revolutionary path for country-wide improvement due to a lack of consciousness of development. General J. T. U. Aguiyi-Ironsi (January-July 1966) who was brought into power under the most passive and apolitical circumstances never understood the real meaning of national development. He was careless and misled and never understood the politics of Nigeria which were placed in his hands rather he became genuinely ignorant and naive. General Yakubu Gowon who governed Nigeria from July 1966 to July 1975 became reputedly the only Head of State anywhere in the world who had so much money at his disposal but did not know how to utilize it.

The temporary country-wide affluence occasioned through the harmless however rising upsurge of mineral resources cast a spell of quick-sightedness over Gowon and his reactionary advisers. They mistook the temporary waft of petroleum for an everlasting destiny of the Nigerian economic system without carrying out an essential evaluation of the global marketplace forces which decide the value of petroleum and its applicable area to country-wide improvement. General Murtala Muhammed’s emergence (July 1975-February 1976) became innovative in addition to challenging. He introduced a brand new experience of tasks and became radical in his technique of governance. His regime was cut short by the inordinate ambition of younger military officers, who couldn’t comprehend his firebrand technique of governance (Ogundiya, 2020). The regime was very short to permit a better assessment. Although General Olusegun Obasanjo who took over after the assassination of his boss, General Murtala Muhammed, charted a brand new path for democratic governance and constitutional improvement, he has a pathological hatred for the intellectuals and did no longer see what is germane to the countrywide improvement. His coverage moves have been irritating the Ivory Tower as he starved the colleges of finances and started the distortion of the instructional establishments through untoward coverage action. Shehu Shagari’s management (1979-1983) additionally witnessed

a management disaster. His administration sought to destroy the political and social structures that have crippled the nation and economy but rather his administration was more focused on the accumulation of wealth and use of power. In seeking to achieve his favored aim of keeping strict monetary discipline and accountability, Buhari who ruled the Nigerian nation from 1983 to 1985 selectively imprisoned corrupt politicians even as draconian decrees have been promulgated to check-mate management excesses (Imhonopi & Urim, 2021). The problem with his leadership style became the faulty conceptualization of the number one motive of the presidency as an avenue for the imprisonment of civil society activists and critics of his authorities.

The military president after General Buhari was General Ibrahim Babangida who took the country into a political laboratory and came up with a grandiose political transition that became defined as the most exorbitant in the whole of Africa and the end led to no democracy. With his intelligence and private charm, as his visionary and modern programmes, Babangida might have been positioned within the pantheon of respected political leaders in Nigeria and Africa, but, he became not able to satisfy it with the sincerity and field required of proper and selfless management. He deepened the subculture of rent-seeking for prebendal politics and made little attempt at infrastructure improvement. General Sani Abacha who ruled between 1993 and 1998 ruled with an iron fist. While the whole state became an extension of his private property for 5 years, he gathered a lot of wealth than the maximum international locations in Black Africa positioned together (Inifade, 2021). His transmutation schedule became reduced quickly through divine intervention in 1998 when he died mysteriously. Leadership was trusted at the shoulder of General Abdusalam Abubakar. He became a cool-headed and compassionate man, although he emptied the overseas reserves of the country in the name of democratic transition (Ranis, 2000). The transition system witnessed General Olusegun Obasanjo coming to power once more in 1999, this time as a democratically elected President. His attempt at fighting corruption became fruitless as he and the officers below him have been corrupt (Fjeldstad, 2018). He offered authorities assets to himself and his cronies' beneath the value price. His successor, Alhaji Yar'Adua became an incompetent chief who lacked the features of an amazing and sturdy chief (Eme, 2018).

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

LEADERSHIP FAILURE

Failure of leadership occurs when an organization's control has issues in teaching and directing team members and coordinating their efforts (Urim, 2021). This can lead to mission failure and failure in the achievement of organizational goals. Leadership failure may be due to many elements such as the leader's loss of experience, bad verbal exchange skills, and conflicts with different leaders (Ike, 2010). Leaders always need to act and perform in their best ways so that they do not drop their honor or undermine their authority as a leader (Okafor, 2015).

INSECURITY

According to the English learner's dictionary, insecurity means a lack of confidence and the state of one no longer feeling safe or secure (Cited in Apampa, 2019). A feeling of missing self-assurance and now no longer being positive about your skills or whether or not human beings like you. It is the first class of one no longer feeling secure or robust and missing self-assurance oneself (Agbor, 2018).

SOUTH EAST

The South East (regularly hyphenated to the South-East) is one of the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria representing each a geographic and political area of the country's inland southeast. It contains five states which are: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo. The region is bounded by the River Niger at the west, the riverine Niger Delta at the south, the flat North Central to the north, and the Cross River at the east. It is split among the Cross-Niger transition forests Eco areas withinside the south and the Guinean wooded area savanna mosaic withinside the drier north (Amuwo, 2015). Culturally, the enormous majority of the quarter falls inside Igbo land the indigenous cultural native land of the Igbo people, a set which makes up the most important ethnic percent of the southeastern populace at over 90%.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored on the interventionist theory. This theory was elaborately propounded by Grotius in 1789. As Festinger and Katz (1995) aptly placed it “no approach is higher than the theory which has been tested”. A theory in the phrases of Kerlinger is “a fixed interrelated construct (concepts) and propositions that portrays a scientific line view of phenomena”.

Grotius asserts that the law guiding nature authorizes states to briefly function as guardians for overseas nationals who have suffered insupportable cruelties in their state. Interventionist theory resonates with recent practices of humanitarian intervention in certain areas; states that invoke humanitarianism as a foundation for intervention tend to justify their movements as a necessary action that is undertaken for and on behalf of oppressed human beings to save them from dying and suffering (Javier, 1999). On the alternative hand, the events of the war have the responsibility and number one duty to offer humanitarian help to civilians and civilian populations in their control. There are, however, additional provisions that permit the possibility (with positive conditions) of humanitarian corporations to adopt remedy movements. The policies on humanitarianism that give people the right to have access to such humanitarian assistance are highly dependent on the type of conflict. If it's a non-worldwide armed war, provisions for humanitarian help are the least accessed in this context.

APPLICATION OF THE THEORY

The international interventionist theory is most appropriate for this study as it reveals the various ways whereby southeastern states in need of humanitarian assistance caused by their state actors and conflicts can achieve this. The Southeast geopolitical zone of Nigeria being a victim of a massive number of IDPs and incessant attacks as a result of IPOB nefarious activities in the region requires international intervention to curb and ameliorate the rate of humanitarian needs in the region.

METHODOLOGY

Data for the study have been accumulated through the use of documentary sources such as textbooks, journal articles, newspapers, and magazines and analyzed through the use of content material analysis. The ex-post-facto research design was used for the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Failure of governance has brought about a boom in assaults in the southeastern states of Nigeria. The military, safety, and intelligence agencies must bring the IPOB individuals perpetrating violence and insecurity to face the law. The southeastern states ought to additionally be imparting residents with safety and welfare. The gunmen frequently target and gun down policemen within this geo-political region at their stations or checkpoints. Personnel is killed, and their automobiles and obligation posts are burnt. More than 20 police stations have been attacked in elements of the southeast within the first 5 months of 2021, with many law enforcement officials killed (Urim, 2022). The maximum latest assault was on the Umuguma police station in Imo State. In a few cases, police stations are burnt and guns were stolen. With extra weapons in their hands, attackers have ended up being bolder and have also featured and engaged in other different criminal crook activities which include kidnapping for ransom within the zone of the 5 states in the region. Attackers have additionally focused on government agencies which include the Independent National Electoral Commission offices (INEC), prisons, and courts. Insecurity has been compounded and brought to an alarming rate by jailbreaks perpetrated by the attackers who are the IPOB, which has led to extra criminals re-coming into society. IPOB has perpetrated a lot of criminal and nefarious activities in the southeast.

In Abia state, on February 1st 2021, one policeman was killed at Omoba police station in Isiala Ngwa South L.G.A. On February 23rd 2021, two policemen were killed and weapons stolen in Abayi divisional police headquarters Osisioma Ngwa L.G.A. On March 23rd 2021, three policemen were killed and weapons stolen in the Abiriba police division in Ohafia L.G.A. on April 19th 2021, a police station was burnt in Uzuakoli police station, Bende L.G.A. On May 9th 2021, a police station was burnt in Mike Okiro's police station divisional headquarters in Umuahia North L.G.A, also a police station was burnt in Ozubulu Ekwusigo L.G.A.

In Anambra state, on March 18th 2021, weapons were stolen at a police checkpoint at Neni, Anaocha L.G.A. on March 19th 2021, one policeman was killed in Ekwulobia police station, Nanka Orumba North. On March 21st 2021, weapons were stolen in the Mbakwu police outpost, Awka L.G.A. On April 19th 2021, a part of a police station was burnt in zonal police headquarters, Ukpok town, Dunukofia L.G.A.

In Ebonyi state, on January 8th 2021, three policemen were killed at Onueke police station in Ezza South L.G.A. On February 4th 2021, three policemen were killed, a police station was burnt and weapons were stolen in police divisional headquarters in Isu, Onicha L.G.A. On March 1st 2021, a police station was burnt in Iboko divisional police station in Izzi L.G.A.

In Enugu state, on April 1st 2021, a police station was burnt in the police headquarters in Adani, Uzouwani, L.G.A.

In Imo state, on February 5th 2021, two policemen were killed in the Umulowo police division in Obowo L.G.A. On February 25th 2021, the police station was burnt and weapons stolen in Aboh Mbaise divisional police headquarters, Aboh Mbaise L.G.A. On March 9th 2021, the police station was burnt and weapons were stolen in a police station in Ihitte Uboma L.G.A. On March 20th 2021, a part of a police station was burnt in a divisional police station in Umuelemai in Isiala Mbano L.G.A. On April 7th 2021, a police station was burnt in Mbieri police station Mbaitolu L.G.A (Fabian, 2022).

The state of violence in Nigeria's south-east and the authorities' incapacity to correctly guard human existence and assets are taking a toll on nearly all components of life, this has also affected the socio-economic development of the region as workers no longer feel safe to go to work, offices are closed during working hours, workers do not go to work on Mondays as it has been declared a compulsory "sit at home", traders and businessmen and women feel safe and secured to go to markets, this has inadvertently affected the economic and social development in the region. The violence additionally negatively impacts the livelihoods of the poor, who ply their exchange within the casual economic system (Lawal, 2021). Imo State which is the heartland of the southeast has its hospitality pushed as its economic system is declining at a very alarming rate. Violence is inflicting organizations within the 5 states to shut down or relocate outside the zone. This has led to an outrageous growth of unemployment and the lack of internally-generated revenues accrued for state governments. An openly militarized reaction to violence has now no longer resolved Nigeria's safety challenges. The use of pressure might also additionally cause the arrest and killing of criminals and prevent their logistics and enablers, but this however won't get rid of the underlying drivers of violence. These encompass generalized emotions of alienation, unemployment, perceived political marginalization, and repressive responses by the state forces (Ogboru, 2021). A holistic technique that prioritizes strategic dialogue for eradicating anxiety is needed.

Table 1: Attacks on Police Stations in South East Nigeria, February – April 2021

| STATE | DATE | POLICE STATION | NUMBER OF POLICEMEN KILLED | POLICE STATION BURNT | WEAPONS STOLEN |
|---------|-------------------|--|----------------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| ABIA | February 1, 2021 | Omoba Police Station in Isiala Ngwa South LGA | 1 | ✗ | ✓ |
| | February 23, 2021 | Abayi Divisional Police Headquarters, Osisioma Ngwa LGA | 2 | ✗ | ✓ |
| | March 22, 2021 | Abiriba Police Division in Ohafia LGA | 3 | ✗ | ✓ |
| | April 19, 2021 | Uzuakoli Police Station, Bende LGA | - | ✓ | ✗ |
| | May 9, 2021 | Mike Okiro Police Divisional Headquarters, Umuahia North LGA | - | ✓ | ✗ |
| | May 12, 2021 | Police Divisional Headquarters, Bende LGA | - | ✓ | ✗ |
| | | Police Station at Ozubulu, Ekwusigo LGA | - | ✗ | ✗ |
| ANAMBRA | March 18, 2021 | Police checkpoint at Neni, Anaocha LGA | 1 | ✗ | ✓ |
| | March 19, 2021 | Ekwulobia Police Station, Nanka, Orumba North LGA | 1 | ✗ | ✗ |
| | March 21, 2021 | Mgbakwu Police Outpost, Awka North LGA | - | ✗ | ✓ |
| | April 19, 2021 | Zonal Police Headquarters, Ukpor town, Dunukofia LGA | - | PART | ✗ |
| EBONYI | January 8, 2021 | Onueke Police Station in Ezza South LGA | 3 | ✗ | ✗ |
| | February 4, 2021 | Police Divisional Headquarters in Isu, Onicha LGA | 3 | ✓ | ✓ |
| | March 1, 2021 | Iboko Divisional Police Station in Izzi LGA | - | ✓ | ✗ |
| ENUGU | April 21, 2021 | Police Headquarters in Adani, Uzo-Uwani LGA | 2 | ✓ | ✗ |
| IMO | February 5, 2021 | Umulowo Police Division in Obowo LGA | 2 | ✗ | ✗ |
| | February 25, 2021 | Aboh Mbaise Divisional Police Headquarters, Aboh Mbaise LGA | - | ✓ | ✓ |
| | March 9, 2021 | Police Station in Ihitte-Uboma LGA | - | ✓ | ✗ |
| | March 20, 2021 | Divisional Police Station in Umuelemai in Isiala Mbano LGA | - | PART | ✗ |
| | April 5, 2021 | Imo Police Headquarters | - | ✗ | ✗ |
| | April 6, 2021 | Area Divisional Police Headquarters, Ehime Mbano LGA | - | ✗ | ✗ |
| | April 7, 2021 | Mbieri Police Station in Mbaitoli LGA | - | ✓ | ✗ |

YES
 NO
 PART
PART Part of the Police station was burnt

Source: Fabian (2022).

The dramatic surge in the nefarious activities of the criminals defined as ‘unknown gunmen’ has now no longer come about in a vacuum. It’s a result of separatist agitation and related repressive national responses, and the designation through the way of means of the federal authorities of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) as a terrorist organization. The deterioration of safety comes amid a campaign for Biafran independence staunchly championed by IPOB, led by Nnamdi Kanu, with large followers of younger people who were born after the Nigerian civil war. Their choice for an unbiased Biafra nation is fuelled by a sense of marginalization and ancient grievances in opposition to the authorities (Aiyede, 2016). The authorities have reacted to this separatist agitation through aggressive militarization, safety crackdowns, and mass arrests of supporters and youths. According to Amnesty International documented, at least hundred and fifteen humans (115) have been killed by military forces between March and June 2021, with over 500 arrested after police and navy raids in reaction to spiraling violence within the southeast. Since

2021, the particularly calm place has taken a violent twist with common clashes between the security forces and pro-Biafra supporters (IPOB).

The IPOB has perpetrated a lot of criminal and violent activities in the southeast as a reaction to the poor leadership of the country and a separatist state. They have killed policemen, murdered innocent citizens, burnt and raided police stations, and stolen weapons in the police divisional headquarters among others. These activities have led to a state of insecurity in the region as workers find it unsafe to go to work, businesses are closed, and markets are locked down giving rise to hunger and inflation in the region.

CONCLUSIONS

The leadership failure of Nigeria has brought about inflation of the prices of goods and services within the region due to insecurity as well as youth unemployment and lack of confidence within the nation, people have fled areas characterized by high rates of insecurity such as Orlu, Uratta, and Egbu in Imo state. A lot of people have fled these areas for more peaceful areas in the state such as World Bank, Owerri West, and Ikeduru thereby raising the cost of houses in these areas (Ani, 2022). Food and standard of living have also experienced a hike in price because traders no longer feel safe selling thereby increasing the prices of food in the region. IPOB stated it set up Eastern Security Network (ESN) due to the failure of governments in Imo state and Abia state to install local safety networks like their other counterparts in other parts of the country such as the Amotekun. ESN was established to make certain protection in each wooded area and farmland within the southeastern region in opposition to rampaging crook activities by the cattle herders destroying farmlands in some parts of the region, however, regrettably it has perpetrated worry and distinct types of ugly and nefarious activities within the southeast of Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the foregoing, the study recommended the following:

1. There ought to be the non-violent talk among the federal authorities and the actors of IPOB. Such talk ought to contain the federal and national governments, IPOB representatives, traditional rulers, women's organizations, young groups, protection forces, and civil society organizations. These vital stakeholders want to speak about viable answers to a nation-particular lack of confidence and their hyperlinks to the wider dynamics of violence within the region.
2. State governments ought to work on a zonal framework to articulate and pursue a sturdy improvement blueprint for the region. This ought to encompass focused empowerment programmes designed for unemployed youths to decrease their vulnerability to recruitment via way of means of separatist and crook groups.
3. Measures for addressing the socio-economic drivers of lack of confidence ought to be prioritized via way of means of key actors, specifically the national governments and the personal region. The prepared personal region can assist youngsters' capability, construction, and competencies acquisition, at the same time as national governments increase and fund local improvement plans.

4. Lastly, the federal authorities ought to assist in infrastructure improvement and set up policies to restore ill industries. A holistic reaction to the lack of confidence in Nigeria's southeast is critical to relieving separatist tensions and addressing nearby grievances, which ought to in the end assist, rebuild, and accept as true within the federal authorities.

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