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NIGERIA'S SECURITY DYNAMICS AND THE FIGHT AGAINST CRIME

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ABSTRACT

This review paper delves into the 'security dynamics in Nigeria, and the fight against crime', elucidating the current state of criminal activities in Nigeria, which have reached unprecedented levels, particularly with the emergence of social media and other sophisticated technological tools. Nevertheless, the paper aims to leverage these advanced technological resources for intelligence gathering to combat crime effectively. It correlates the nature of criminal activities and their evolution with the intergenerational differences present in our society today, highlighting how these differences have also impacted the capabilities of law enforcement agencies in addressing crime in Nigeria. The recommendations put forth in this paper emphasize the significance of inter-agency cooperation, advocating for the integration of advanced intelligence-gathering mechanisms into the operational frameworks of security agencies to expedite crime prevention. Additionally, the discussion on recommendations entails investing in community policing, enhancing security protocols, and enacting reforms, among other proposals.

Keywords: *Crime, Criminal Intelligence, Nigerian Security Organizations,, Technological Advancement, Security Advancements.*

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria has witnessed different categories of crime and unimagined security challenges such as terrorism, insurgency, the proliferation of arms and ammunition, transnational organized crimes, drug trafficking, banditry, kidnapping, armed robberies, cybercrimes, trading in illicit drugs and dealing on contraband goods (Arase *et al.*, 2007). It is imperative to note that by strategically leveraging criminal intelligence, law enforcement organizations can effectively dismantle criminal networks that threaten public safety. This empowers a proactive approach, allowing them to disrupt and prevent criminal activity before it occurs, while also enhancing investigations and monitoring of ongoing crimes (Pinizzotto & Finkel, 1990).

Before independence, crime intelligence served a multifaceted role, its functions such as supporting tactical operations, investigations, and broader strategic planning were carried out by the collaborative efforts of organizations such as law enforcement agencies, intelligence services, and security departments (Oguntunde *et al.,* 2018). These entities worked in coordination to gather information, analyze data, and develop strategies to combat criminal activities effectively. For instance, police forces would conduct surveillance operations to monitor suspicious individuals or groups, while intelligence services would intercept communications to gather valuable insights. Additionally, security departments would collaborate with local communities to gather information on potential threats and vulnerabilities. This collaborative approach ensured that front-line officers, investigators, and security leaders all worked towards the same goals, achieving enforcement objectives, analyzing crime trends for control, and ultimately reducing crime. Through these combined efforts, they not only addressed immediate threats but also informed national law enforcement policies and resource allocation (Tamuno, 1970).

The future of Nigerian security is intelligence-driven, as is also operational in certain Western Countries such as the United Kingdom and Singapore. To achieve this, all security agencies and stakeholders must collaborate and adopt criminal intelligence management as a cornerstone in the fight against crime. The future of Nigerian security is intelligence-driven. To achieve this, all security agencies and stakeholders must collaborate and adopt criminal intelligence management as a cornerstone in the fight against crime. This means that law enforcement agencies, such as the police, must work hand in hand with intelligence agencies to gather and analyze information to prevent and solve crimes effectively. For instance, in cases of organized crime, intelligence sharing between Nigerian security agencies can lead to the dismantling of criminal networks. Moreover, Nigeria's collaboration with international security agencies, either from the United States of America, United Kingdom, Singapore, will aid the country in the application of the best strategy and tools in gathering and managing intelligence that helps eliminate crime in Nigeria.

Furthermore, the collaboration between Nigeria and international security agencies such as those from the United States of America, the United Kingdom, and Singapore is crucial for enhancing the country's capabilities in combating crime effectively. By working together, Nigeria can benefit from the expertise, resources, and advanced technologies that these agencies possess. For example, sharing intelligence with the FBI from the United States could provide valuable insights into transnational criminal networks operating in Nigeria. Partnering with the MI6

from the United Kingdom can offer specialized training to Nigerian security forces on counterterrorism tactics (Nayak & Dutta, 2017).

Moreover, the collaboration with security agencies from Singapore, known for its advanced surveillance systems, can assist Nigeria in upgrading its monitoring and investigative capabilities. This exchange of knowledge and resources is essential in developing a comprehensive strategy to address various forms of criminal activities prevalent in Nigeria. Through leveraging the best practices and tools from these international partners, Nigeria can enhance its intelligence-gathering processes and strengthen its law enforcement efforts.

REVIEW OF THE IMPACT OF GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES ON CRIME-FIGHTING IN NIGERIA AND ACROSS THE GLOBE

Crime is a generic word of wide significance, and there has been no universal adoption of a precise, definite, and exclusive meaning to be attached to it (Iwerimie-Jaja, 2003). Crime and criminality are social perpetual problems and their impacts and consequences are devastating. Crime rates, either violent or property crime; are often used as a yardstick in reflecting the safety level of a nation (Petherick, 2006). The fluctuating stream of crime rate worldwide is seen as a public perplexing problem as it fosters public fear, distrust, anger, and perceptual errors, and causes grief among family members and friends of the crime victim. Along this line of thought, large numbers of criminogenic elements such as environmental, social, biological, genetic, generational differences, and psychological traits are identified as the causal and underlying factors of criminal behavior in a growing body of criminology and sociology literature.

In terms of generational differences, cohorts such as Baby Boomers, Generation X (Gen X), Millennials, and Generation Z (Gen Z), have unique characteristics, values, and experiences that can influence their involvement in criminal activities (Laub *et al.*, 2003). Baby Boomers, persons born between 1946 and 1964, witnessed a string of defining events during the tumultuous era - from the JFK assassination to the Vietnam War and Watergate in the West. Looming large was the Cold War, a constant ideological battle between capitalism and communism, with the chilling threat of nuclear war ever-present. Despite these shared experiences, distinct forces shaped this generation. The Baby Boomers, in their Youth era, may have seen higher rates of property crime and violent crime compared to later generations after them. (Farrington, 2003). Typically, Baby Boomers are more likely to engage in traditional crimes like fraud, embezzlement, and property crimes, and may be more likely to use violence to achieve criminal goals; these forms of crime they engage in are often motivated by their need for financial or personal gain.

Generation X (Born between 1965 and 1981), on the other hand, entered a world that was rebuilding from war's ashes. Unlike their idealistic predecessors, Gen X faced a tough job market after a period of economic upheaval. Pragmatism became their watchword, with a focus on hard work and accomplishment. They witnessed the tail end of the crime surge; this made them more cautious due to their concerns for safety according to (Joseph and Davies, 1999). Unlike the Baby Boomers, the Gen X operated as adults in a world where there were more dual-income families, single-parent households, and latchkey kids left to fend for themselves after school. Gen X were pioneers of the tech revolution, growing up alongside personal computers, the explosion of cable TV which became a

defining cultural touchstone for their generation and the "Just Say No" anti-drug campaign, developed a strong sense of resilience and self-reliance. Gen X are more likely to engage in white-collar crimes like fraud, identity theft, and cybercrime, and may be more likely to use technology to facilitate criminal activities as they are often motivated by financial gain, thrill-seeking, or rebellion (Wright *et al.*, 2001).

Millennials, typically born between 1981 and 1996, bridge the gap between Gen X and Gen Z (Kaifi *et al.*, 2012). Often called the "digital natives," they seamlessly embraced new technologies like smartphones, social media, and streaming services (Prensky, 2001). They are the most educated generation yet and hold more progressive political views than their predecessors. These rapid technological changes, however, created a digital divide within the generation itself. (Piquero *et al.*, 2010). They are more likely to engage in cybercrime, online fraud, and digital piracy. The emergence of social media has become an invaluable tool in this era, enabling individuals to partake in various forms of cybercrimes and even collaborate with online acquaintances to establish cybercrime syndicates. Their participation in such illicit activities is exacerbated by the ostentatious display of affluence exhibited by others on the internet, leading to a sense of peer pressure and a desire to ascend the social hierarchy (Prensky, 2001). Gen Z (born between the late 1997 and early 2000s) are undeniably shaped by their experience of the Great Recession and the COVID-19 pandemic. This is the first generation to come of age entirely in the smartphone era. (Turner, 2015). Generation Z Compared to their predecessors, is experiencing a more diverse way of living. This generation is growing up in more single-parent and mixed-race families and a culture of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ+) society. This translates into a generation that is comfortable breaking gender norms, with a majority of them advocating for options beyond "man" and "woman" on forms and profiles. They have never known a world without smartphones, constant connectivity, and streaming everything from entertainment to information. (Moffitt, 1993). They embraced open platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Snapchat, sharing deeply personal content that allows them to control who sees their content and keep it temporary, reflecting a privacy preference and curated online identities. They are more likely to engage in online harassment, cyberbullying or cyber-violence, and digital vandalism. Furthermore, they may be more likely to use encrypted platforms and dark web marketplaces for illegal activities (Mirammirkhani *et al.*, 2017; Piquero *et al.*, 2010).

Law enforcement and criminal justice professionals must understand these dynamics to effectively address and prevent criminal behavior across generations as media depictions and cultural anxieties can sometimes overemphasize generational differences in crime.

Regarding generational differences and their role in criminal intelligence in Nigeria, it is evident that Baby Boomers often do not fully understand the Internet and cybercrime, as these were not part of their upbringing. They grew up in a time when the focus was on rudimentary methods, and many of them were deeply involved in Nigeria's fight for independence, driven by a nationalist mindset that emphasized self-rule and governance (Oyebanji and Olanrewaju, 2019). The crimes they encountered were typically mundane, basic, and petty compared to the complex criminal activities of today. In contrast, millennials, while not born into the digital age, have adapted to it as the internet becomes increasingly prevalent. This generation bridges the gap between the old and new schools of thought,

balancing traditional approaches with the new realities of the digital era. This transition contributes to their more cautious and reflective approach to criminal activities, as they weigh the consequences more carefully. When examining the variations in crime, cybercrime, terrorism, banditry, and sabotage across different generations, it is clear that the situation has deteriorated significantly compared to the past (Wall, 2007).

During President Obasanjo's administration from June 1999 to 2007, Boko Haram was already a concern (Murray, 2011). Also, the South-South agitation movements in Nigeria primarily focused on the Niger Delta region, where local groups and militias protested against environmental degradation, resource control, and the perceived marginalization of the region by the federal government and multinational oil companies. The arrowheads of these movements were often militant leaders who commanded significant influence and power in the region. These figures were instrumental in the agitation for greater control over the Niger Delta's resources, often employing militant tactics to push their agenda. The movements they led played a significant role in bringing attention to the grievances of the South-South region, eventually leading to initiatives like the Amnesty Program, aimed at disarming and rehabilitating militants in exchange for development in the region. The leaders of these movements were often Generation X and the millennials, who became heavily involved in bombings and attacks due to their susceptibility to indoctrination.

Fast-forward to 2024, and crime has worsened, with people acting on their imagination in ways that are detrimental to the nation, driven by the variations in generational outlooks. Generational differences significantly influence how law enforcement agencies approach crime and the methods they use to curb it (World Bank Report, 2016). While not to downplay the contributions of the older generation, it is critical to acknowledge that many older individuals do not fully understand the role of social media in shaping choices and behaviors. Their adaptability to digital and social media changes is slow, and many have not fully embraced these changes. On the other hand, the current generations were born into the age of smartphones and social media, which are significant factors in the reluctance of many of Nigeria's leaders to keep pace with the changing times. As a result, addressing prevailing security challenges with outdated mentalities or methods is ineffective, necessitating a paradigm shift to an advanced effective method of addressing the current security landscape of Nigeria.

POLICY MAKING & CRIME FIGHTING AS A DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD

The security architecture of Nigeria across generations and before independence was heavily influenced by British colonial interests through a series of strategic events and policies (Michael, 2006). The establishment of protectorates, the use of indirect rule, the formation of regional police forces, and the creation of the West African Frontier Force were some of these events instrumental in consolidating British control and, in a twisted way, maintaining order (Oyebanji and Olanrewaju, 2019). Fast forward, the impact of this British control is seen on the ethnic divide across Nigeria. With this divide comes different economic, social, and environmental issues peculiar to the ethnic groups. These issues have facilitated the nature and type of crime that is also peculiar to the different ethnic groups in the country. The Southern part leans towards white-collar crimes and violent armed robberies; because of its high economic inclinations, while the Northern part due to its highly conservative Islamic

background; leans towards Islamic terrorism, and religious extremism leading to religious strife. More so, there is a heavy practice of drug abuse in the Northern regions given their high intake of intoxicants. This could be viewed as an outright criminalization of alcoholic beverages according to (Ajayi, 2020). Either by legislation, government policies, or traditional means of law enforcement, it is a trite fact that for the principle of legality to be upheld in the administration of the criminal justice system, government, especially the government of Nigeria, must continue to do more in the areas of revamping its criminal legal system, so that it will not be left behind by other climes, thereby giving criminals and criminally minded individuals the leeway to hide under this doctrine which seeks to promote the doctrines of equity in the prosecution of criminal cases.

To effectively combat criminal issues, the following are essential forward-thinking approaches that can be leveraged:

a. **Enhancing Intelligence Capabilities Across Different Body of Security Organization in Nigeria**

Nigeria should enhance intelligence gathering and analysis by investing in state-of-the-art technology including artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, and big data analytics. These tools can improve collaborations with foreign intelligence agencies and organizations to exchange knowledge, best practices, and technical advancements. They are also effective in forecasting crime trends and their possible threats to society (Wall, 2007).

b. **Strengthening Community Policing**

The government should create community policing forums where residents can express their concerns, work together on crime prevention strategies, and use local knowledge to gather intelligence that can be put to use to strengthen the bonds between law enforcement and local communities (Ojo, 2016). Community Police can offer insightful information about criminal activity and potential threats, thus, fostering communal collaboration and the development of trust.

c. **Improving Inter-Agency Collaboration**

It is the responsibility of the law enforcement authorities to establish cohesive command structures that enable smooth collaboration among diverse security agencies in Nigeria. This will enable quick detention and response in real-time to security threats such as Cybercrimes, terrorism attacks, and others. These collaborative efforts will also eliminate duplication of security roles across security agencies in Nigeria (Lum *et al.*, 2017). This will create cooperative task teams for certain security issues, including cybercrime or terrorism, and improve situational awareness and decision-making.

d. **Legal and Policy Reforms**

This includes updating existing laws and enacting new legislation to address emerging security threats especially related to cybercrime, terrorism, and human trafficking. Also to ensure that the judiciary is equipped to handle complex security cases, specialized training for judges and prosecutors can enhance

their ability to effectively adjudicate these cases. Furthermore, regularly reviewing and updating security policies to reflect changing realities will ensure that strategies remain relevant and effective (Akpan, 2021).

   e. **Leveraging Technology and Innovation:**

Install cutting-edge surveillance technologies, such as drones and CCTV networks, to keep an eye on high-risk regions. Cyber security Precautions can be considered to bolster cyber security infrastructure to fend off online attacks (Giddens *et al.*, 2017). Also, by placing strong firewalls, intrusion detection systems, frequent security audits, data-driven policing, and the application of data analytics to guide policing tactics, law enforcement can more efficiently deploy resources and pinpoint crime areas by analyzing crime data.

   f. **Enhancing Capacity and Resources**

Security stakeholders can ensure agencies have enough resources to supply vehicles, cutting-edge equipment, and communication tools as well as enhance the well-being of security personnel by offering competitive pay, comprehensive benefits, and ongoing opportunities for professional growth **(**Ajayi, 2019).

CONCLUSION

In addressing the current issues of crime and criminal activities, it is essential to examine Nigeria's leadership as they must be open to continuous, relevant training, and where resistance is encountered, restructuring should be considered to bring in fresh ideas, strategies, new hands, and smart minds to enhance security policy development and implementation. While the experience of the older generation should not be discarded, there must be a fusion of old and new approaches, adopting modalities and procedures that address insecurity criminal behavior, and crime in general in the nation.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE

The author declares no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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