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Impact of militancy on education and economic security in Niger delta region of Nigeria

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Abstract

The extensive militarization of the Niger Delta region further elicited a long drawn militancy postures from the restive youth, and the impact of the opposing postures of both State armed actors and non-state armed actors, could be seen aggravating both education security and economic security of the region. It was against this background that this engages relative deprivation theory to investigate the impact of militancy on human security in Niger Delta. The study looked at economic security and education as constructs of human security. This study adopts exploratory research design; using content analysis of publicly available archive documents. The study relies on secondary data. The research is conducted by examining literature concerning militancy and human security in Nigeria. The literature was obtained through searches in publicly available material. Literature from non-serial publications, official reports, and conferences has been included particularly if they have been cited by other references in term of economic security and education security. The study revealed that militancy has negative effects on economic security and education security in Nigeria. Based on these findings, the study concludes that provision of employment opportunities and protection of schools with accessibility to education will go a long way to ensure human security particularly in the Niger Delta region. The study recommends that Federal, State and Local Government evolve adequate protections for education, as that is a conduit of learning tolerance, balance socialisation and civility as against violent narratives from militancy while efforts should be focused on provision of jobs and economic activities to counter the negative narratives of apparent poor governance, used as recruitment bait for the youths into mainstream of militancy in the region.

Keywords: Economic Security; Education Security; Frustration-Aggression Theory; Militancy

1. Introduction

The new level of weaponry and criminality involvement of frustrated youth in the Niger Delta predicts new ambitions and capacities in the oil rich deposit region and this call for concern. The dreadful nature of activities of these frustrated youths is causing fear not only in investors, government representative, professionals but likewise the residents of the oil rich Niger Delta region, whose means of livelihood is being threatened and thrown into a state of wants; these wants are not restricted to protection of lives and property but also for education security, economic security, environmental security, health security and food security all which fractionally amount to the very foundation that human security sets out to ensure.

The Niger Delta region known for its vast deposit of crude oil was also, long before Nigeria starts independence, a custodian of an unspoiled environment which supported substantial subsistence resources for the largely sedentary populations. However, oil prospecting in the same Niger Delta has led to vast destruction of vegetation, farmlands and

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human settlements which has given room to severe environmental degradation (Eyinla & Ukpo, 2006). Unfortunately, one issue that has continued to attract national and global attention to the Niger Delta region in recent time is the spate of militancy in the Niger Delta. The frequent attacks on oil installations and facilities by militant groups in the region have cast a huge shadow of doubt on the safety of life, properties and economic activities. Although their activities are said to be directed towards fighting for a good cause, the means adopted had caused threats to the lives of residents in the areas (Ajibola *et al.*, 2014).

This background has sufficiently raised a flag of threat to human security in the Niger Delta region. The destructive activities of the Niger Delta Militants are not a good predictor of human security of both the region and Nigeria as a whole. Human security occurs when development is matched with human protection from fears and from wants, when the essence of life is protected from threats. Human security moves away from the archaic, State-centric expression of security which focuses basically on the safety of States from military aggression, to one that concentrates on the security of the individuals, their protection and empowerment. These protection and empowerment are the very basics that militancy activities in the Niger Delta threaten to its foundation. Human security could be threatened when access to education or literacy security is endangered likewise when economic security comes under strain of unemployment, chasing of investors away, it is then worrisome to note that militants activities in the Niger Delta has further put under strain both education security and economic security.

Economic security ensures maximization of human life, the degree of a region economic activities influence development. Economic insecurity could be enthroned when investors leave a region in drove due to insecurity, when people are unsure of where their next meal will come from or when properties are lost to militancy engagements. The primary economic activities of Niger Delta residents evolve around farming and fishing and apart from the environmental challenges of the region, the violent activities of the militants endanger resident economic security extensively. Basically, once economic security deficit occur ability to source for health and education dwindles (Evans & Kelikume, 2019; Osuagwu & Olaifa, 2018).

Education security when enabled evolves as the bedrock of human security as it inculcates tolerance, enthrone spirit of conflict resolution, encourage dialogue rather than violence and assist in peace building efforts. The militancy engagements in the Niger Delta has a wider disruptive contact with education security as school calendars are widely disrupted, resource manpower engaged in these schools stayed away for safety, parents restrain students movement in periods of cult clashes thus the atmosphere engendered by militancy activities constrict education security which could also be detrimental to the human development capacity of the region but a recruitment ground for the uneducated (Pepple & Ogologo, 2017; Akpan, 2015).

The reactionary measures taken so far by the federal government has not in any way been helpful, rather it has further deepened the crisis and projects a failed State. The outright militarization of the Niger Delta region has not provided the desired succor as desired by all and sundries. Felbab-Brown (2016) maintains that the state is hardly always just in suppressing militancy, even as suppressing militancy is its key imperative. Access to good governance; provision of employment for the idle youths, access to relevant education security, economic security, food security and environmental security amongst others are languages against militancy and not raw force or outright militarization. The incontrovertible fact is that both the federal government and the multinational oil companies were grossly negligent for too long about the welfare of the people and the communities of the oil bearing areas of the region (Efeturi, 2016).

The frequent attacks on oil and gas installations, killings of human potentials necessary for sustainable development, piracy activities on the high sea, and marine space, kidnappings of expatriates and high profile workers for ransom, destruction of private and public properties coupled with the incessant oil spillage from multinational corporation activities, have all retarded the economic development of the region.

The Niger Delta insurgency has extensively affected the region's education security as the unabated restiveness of the different militant groups keep frustrating normal educational activities while the accruing ill-gotten wealth remain a major distraction to literacy acquisition

Furthermore, as corporate activities are threatened by the militancy and unabated restiveness, more organisations are thrown out of business and had to lay off their manpower of which this has also aggravated the economic security crisis in the region mindless of those graduates already churned out from tertiary institutions who are adequately employable but with nowhere to go.

This study will provide answers to these research questions;

- What is the impact of militancy on economic security in the Niger Delta region?
- How does militancy affect education security in the Niger Delta region?

The paper is structured into five sections. Following this introduction, section two is concerned with literature review. Section three discussed the methodology adopted for the study; section four discussed the results, while section five provides the conclusion and recommendations.

2. Conceptual Review

2.1. Militancy

Militancy can be understood as the acts of individuals, groups or parties displaying or engaging in violence, usually for a cause, whether religious, political, ideological, economic, or social. Nowadays, the term militant is synonymously used with the term 'terrorist' (Quamruzzaman, 2010). Militancy is a state or condition of being combative or disposed to fight for a cause or belief (Chindah & Braide, 2000). Militancy has also been defined as a violent response by an individual, group or sect in a region, community, state or nation due to claims of underdevelopment, political oppression, religious beliefs and segregation. The motive is that people want their rights and if they are not going to get it by negotiation, they simply will then have it by violence against the "powers that be." A militant person or group expresses a physically aggressive posture while in support of an ideology or a cause. A militant person is confrontational regardless of physical violence or pacifistic methods. These forms of militancy are unique to the quest for resource control in the dealt oil rich region of Nigeria (Ashimolowo & Odiachi, 2012).

Not all rebellions are militant in nature. There have been many cases of non-violent rebellions, using civil resistance, as in the People Power Revolution in the Philippines in the 1980s that ousted President Marcos and the Egyptian Revolution of 2011 and the Ken Saro Wiwa's 1990 Movement for the Emancipation of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) of which MOSOP applied no violent means at redressing the political and socio-economic wrongs imposed on the Niger Delta. MOSOP demanded local autonomy for the Ogoni people, and Ogoniland via calls for the recognition of the economic contributions of Ogoni to the Nigerian State, and restitution for poverty in Ogoni as well as the ecological damage to Ogoniland by oil and mining activities. MOSOP also protested the marginalization of the Ogoni and her people at the federal and state levels demanding equal citizenship rights as other groups in Nigeria.

2.2. Human Security

The UN General Assembly's (2012) resolution 66/290 defines human security as an approach to assist Member States in recognizing and addressing widespread and cross-cutting challenges to the survival, livelihood and dignity of their people. It calls for "people-centred, comprehensive, context-specific and prevention-oriented. The human security approach was introduced in the 1994 global Human Development Report (HDR), wherein human security was relayed as ensuring "freedom from want" and "freedom from fear" for all persons is the best path to tackle the problem of global insecurity. The concept of human security is vital in building the resilience of civilian populations, not only in fragile States but world over, working towards the advancement of security before, during and after a crisis and building stability and peace.

Proponents of human security actually contest the traditional concept of national security through military security by asserting that the appropriate referent for security should be at the human rather than national level. Therefore human security reveals a people-focused and multi-disciplinary understanding of security which involves a number of research fields, including strategic studies, development studies, human rights and international relations. Prevention is the core objective of human security, thus it addresses the root causes of human vulnerabilities, by focusing attention on emerging risks and stresses early action. It actually strengthens local capacities to build resilience, and promotes solutions that enhance social cohesion and advance respect for human rights and dignity.

Interestingly, from a narrow perspective human security shields individual from internal violence and vulnerabilities whereas in abroad sense, it protects from fear, hunger, natural disasters, and diseases. Concerningly, in failed States, there are several fault lines that are human threats to daily existence of the people, some of these threats include kidnapping, political violence and instabilities, hunger, insurgency, terrorism, economic instabilities involving bitter conflicts with loss of lives, prevalence of ethnic militias and dislocations. In turn, these instabilities, lead to failing of

states, struggling to defend sovereignty and apparent incapability of guaranteeing human security. This inclusion augments security by enabling human dignity, in securing the continuation of daily lives. Quality life also includes the competent governments, which will deploy people necessities such as social and economic institutions such as schools, hospitals.

2.3. Economic Security

The ability of individuals, households or communities to cover their essential needs sustainably and with dignity. This can vary according to an individual's physical needs, the environment and prevailing cultural standards. Food, basic shelter, clothing and hygiene qualify as essential needs, as does the related expenditure; the essential assets needed to earn a living, and the costs associated with health care and education also qualify (The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 2015).

Economic security or financial security is the condition of having stable income or other resources to support a standard of living now and in the foreseeable future. Financial security more often refers to individual and family money management and savings while economic security tends to include the broader effect of a society's production levels and monetary support for non-working citizens. In the developed clime, economic security is indicated by the income level and employment security of their families or organizations while the economic security of people over 50 years old is based on Social Security benefits, pensions and savings, earnings and employment, and health insurance coverage.

Unemployment has been identified as the main cause of socio-economic tensions and violence rocking the Niger Delta area of the country (Amaraegbu, 2011). When large number of youths are unemployed, their quest to survive may make them to become willing tools in the hands of maverick and disgruntled politicians who may want to use them for anti-social and clandestine activities (Okafor, 2011). They have also been used as local militants to attack, vandalize and destroy oil pipelines, lives and property in the Niger Delta region. Over 60% of the youths in the Niger Delta are unemployed and thus many are good militants including male and female, young and old while different cultural background is never a barrier (Eboh, 2009). Anti-social activities such as political thugery, militancy, restiveness and other social vices evident among the unemployed and jobless youths are real dangers to the stability of democracy in Nigeria (Okafor, 2011). As part of the seven point agenda of former President Musa Yaradua, the provision of employment to young graduates and other skilled workers has been identified as an agenda to be given urgent attention most especially in the Niger Delta.

2.4. Education Security

Access to education is the driving force in the struggle to emancipate people from misery, insecurity, and poverty. Education ensures adequate platform to access human security whereas illiteracy is a form of insecurity as it limits an individual's potential to compete and correspond in a social setup. An illiterate individual naturally feels insecure when he or she encounters a literate and educated counterpart who has the basic knowledge and skill to compete and ensure his survival and security. Therefore, the first and foremost task of the State (authority), is to ensure literacy to mitigate the basic sense of incompetence and insecurity. Education is the most crucial factor in pursuit of human security (Khan, 2021).

Education is widely adjudged as the most potent weapon to secure livelihood and employment in today's world. The correlation between literacy and employment is critically important in rapidly globalizing world. The unprecedented competition in job market has absolutely minimized the chances on an uneducated individual to get employed and earn livelihood which is the most crucial aspect of human security. Hence, education lies at the heart of discourse on human security. Education security secures political consciousness of a society in general and that of individual in particular.

In this regard, education may prove an instrumental force as it creates political awareness among the masses. An educated person is mindful of his political rights and knows when and how to voice his concerns. On contrary, an illiterate remains at the mercy of the political system whether it is responsive or not. This is the reason that the state of human security is alarming in third world countries where the masses are politically passive and backward waiting innocently for the extractive governmental systems to come to their aid.

In order to get basic education, the youths of Niger Delta have to leave their homes in the creeks to live with relatives and friends in upland communities, most of who often treat them as servants or even beggars. When they eventually get education to tertiary levels, most of them are unable to return to their homeland except as aggrieved and embittered citizens. They had in the process witnessed how the resources of their ancestral lands are exploited and carted away to develop other communities in the country, while their people bear the brunt of this official theft in the form of environmental degradation, political disenfranchisement, social dislocation and economic despoliation

3. Empirical Review

3.1. Militancy and Economic Security in the Niger Delta Region

Evans and Kelikume (2019) adopted modified ordinary least squares to investigate the impact of poverty, unemployment, inequality, corruption and poor governance on Niger Delta insurgency in Nigeria between the years 1980-2017. The study employed fully modified ordinary least squares estimation method. Findings of the study revealed that poverty, unemployment, inequality, corruption and poor governance were significant causes of Niger Delta insurgency in Nigeria. The study validated theories of deprivation as a result of the prevailing unpleasant socio-material conditions pertaining to survival, economic deprivation, structural inequalities, environmental, degradation and governance deficits.

Osugwu and Olaifa (2018) engaged time series analysis to explore the effects of oil spills from exploration and insurgency on economic security from fish production in the oil producing Niger Delta region of Nigeria from 1981–2015. The study areas consist of highly diverse ecosystems that are supportive of numerous species of terrestrial and aquatic fauna and flora. The study deployed Cobb Douglas production function on a time series with dependent variable as fish production proxy in metric tons and independent variables are oil spills proxy in barrel during production, transportation and vandalisation process. The findings of the study showed that oil production and spills negatively affect fish production and these extensively create unemployment in the fishery sector of the Niger Delta despite the oceanic and riverine environment. The study established the negative concomitance of oil spills from explorations and militancy activities and fish production and suggests a cautious approach for a sustainable development and employment in the region.

Ebiede (2017) empirically analysed instability in Nigeria's Niger delta with the post amnesty programme and sustainable peace-building such that the relatively experienced peace and stability following the implementation of post amnesty programme has long been overdrawn. The study adopted a political economy approach on all the characters involved in conflicts and political violence in the Niger Delta. The study noted that the implementation of the post amnesty programme focused on armed militancy but failed to achieve demobilisation and reintegration of ex-militants who remain connected to their old militant networks and have been unable to find gainful employment after undergoing expensive educational and vocational training programmes. Study concluded there is urgent need to reform post amnesty programme to enable it facilitates the sustainable reintegration of ex-militants into a gainful employment against slide back into militancy.

3.2. Militancy and Education Security in the Niger Delta Region.

Pepple and Ogologo (2017) deployed purposive and random sampling technique to examine how the Niger Delta militancy affect students' access to educational resources, attitude to schooling, and academic achievement in basic science. The study employed an ex post facto with 400 students and 16 principals from 16 secondary schools drawn from four local two of which were affected by the crisis and two of which were unaffected. Purposive and random sampling techniques were used for participant selection. Findings of the study showed significant differences in students' science achievement in unaffected areas than students from affected areas of Rivers State due to the Niger Delta crisis. Study established that militancy has left more to be desired in education security level in the Niger Delta.

Gabriel (2015) thematically examined the trends in the development of secondary school education in the Niger Delta region from 2000-2015. The thematic study revealed that technical and vocational educations as well as schools for the ably challenged have not been adequately provided in the region. The study established that many who fall within this category do not have access to secondary school education which negatively impacted on literacy level of the study area. The study concluded that government and all involving stakeholders should be more involved in filling this essential gap, for a region whose demand for technical services among the oil and oil services industries calls for concern.

Akpan (2015) empirically investigated the nexus between youth's unemployment and illiteracy and its impact on national security from the Nigerian experience. Study espoused that poor literacy level; faulty institutional system and corruption are some of the factors responsible for National insecurity as seen in the rise of insurgency and youth restiveness. Study submitted that efforts should be made to encourage vocational, technical and entrepreneurial education in Nigeria-for self-employment especially in the Niger Delta and if possible education should be made free

and compulsory at least secondary school level. Government should therefore build strong economic institutions and those already in place, be strengthened to provide needed skill and literacy for the youths.

3.3. Theoretical Framework

3.3.1. Frustration-Aggression Theory

The theory of Frustration-Aggression (as used by Wilson, 2018; Amaraegbu, 2011; Afintan and Ojokorotu 2009) which is associated with works of John Dollard et al., (1939), has the core assumption that “aggression is always a consequence of frustration”. The theory affirmed that individuals are motivated to achieve life ambitions and fulfill destiny, but when these expectations are thwarted, frustration sets in. Furthermore, when there is a gap between the level of value expectation and the level of value attainment, due to lack of capability to establish a congruence between both levels, tension builds up to the pressure of an unfulfilled aspiration or an unsatisfied urge or need. This when not arrested on time leads to frustration. Frustration when it builds up, leads to the rising up of suppressed emotion of anger which is often directed against the party considered to be the source of deprivation of satisfaction. This strong emotion finally finds an outlet through aggression and violent disposition towards the environment.

The armed insurrection against military and civilian targets in the Niger Delta by militant youths, directed against government and foreign oil multinational companies could be viewed from this perspective. Be it as it may, it is important to note that the existence of frustration does not always lead to aggression, given that frustration may have other consequences other than aggression. However, the argument may have failed to differentiate between instigation to aggression and the real incidence of aggression, but this study acknowledges that frustration generates inquiries to various types of consequences, which may include instigation to certain kind of aggression. Aggression may develop as a consequence of having been exposed to an extremely frustrating condition sufficient to provoke the experience of hopelessness.

It is true that division exists among the regions' various ethnic groups, but frustration occasioned as a result of a sense of despair and deprivation, environmental and developmental issues, transnational oil companies that neglect the ethos of corporate social responsibility are among the likes. The response of Niger Delta youths to the Nigerian state's neglect and apathy of oil multinationals in the region radicalized them into violent militancy (Amaraegbu, 2011). Thus, militants activities in Nigeria's Niger Delta region is mostly motivated by frustration created by threat to life, property and peace coexistence of the indigenes by Nigeria government and multinational oil companies operating within the region.

3.3.2. The State Fragility Theory

The fragile state as articulated by Sara (2008) is the term used for countries facing severe developmental challenges such as weak institutional capacity, poor governance, political instability, unemployment, poverty and low level of economic development. It is a theory that describes how extreme poverty is concentrated in a given state, how low level of human and social development are linked to weak institutional capacity, governance and to internal conflict, all of which undermine the capacity of the state to deliver basic social and infrastructural services and offer security to citizens.

More fundamentally, a fragile state is the one that is trapped in a vicious circle of violent conflict and poverty or suffer from a natural resource curse; others face a legacy of not providing the most basic services to their citizens. Such basic services include among other things, good health facilities, good roads, quality education, electricity, good water supply etc. Slater (2012), a leading proponent of this theory has observed that a fragile state is significantly susceptible to crisis in one or more of its subsystems. According to him, a fragile state is a state that is particularly vulnerable to internal shocks as well as domestic conflicts.

Interestingly, this implies that in a fragile state, institutional arrangement embodies and perhaps preserves the conditions of crisis both in economic and social terms. In economic terms, this could be institutions, importantly property rights that reinforce stagnation or low growth rates, or embody extreme inequality in wealth, in access to land or access to the means to make a living. In social terms, institutions may embody extreme inequality or lack of access altogether to health or education. In fragile states, statutory institutional arrangements are vulnerable to challenges by rival institutional systems be they derived from traditional authorities or devised by communities under conditions of stress that see little of the state (in terms of security, development, or welfare).

4. Methodology

This study adopts exploratory research; it tries to investigate the impact of militancy on human security the Niger Delta region. Human security is assessed with economic security and education security as it relates to human security in the region using content analysis of publicly available archive documents. The study relies solely on secondary data. The research is conducted by examining literature concerning human security in Nigeria. The literature was obtained through searches in publicly available material. Literature from non-serial publications, official reports, and conferences has been included particularly if they have been cited by other references in term of militancy and human security.

5. Discussion of Findings

The review of literature shows that militancy has a negative impact on economic security. The rational for this finding could be tension it generates thus chasing investors and allied companies out of the region there throwing workers back into the labour market, as unemployment, dwindling incomes and slow economic activities are signals of economic insecurity. The position aligns with the submission in the previous works of Evans and Kelikume (2019); Osuagwu and Olaifa (2018); Ebiede (2017) who found that militancy constricts economic activities.

The result gotten from empirical literature is that militancy has a negative effect on literacy (education) security. This is because militancy apart from disrupting school calendars, closure of school, scared away needed human capital as teachers and lecturers, it also take the shine off education and attracts would be students into militancy. Many would be students have taken unto militancy and clannish cultism due to incessant disruption on their education. This finding is consistent with the findings in the previous work of Pepple and Ogologo (2017) Gabriel (2015) Akpan (2015)

6. Conclusion

The study concludes that the impact of militancy in the Niger on economic security is enormous, from loss of jobs, scaring of investors and allied services companies, disruption of agricultural activities who are also employers of labour are all signals of an endangered human security in the Niger Delta. Improved economic security will bring more employment into the region once militancy can be contained.

The study equally concludes that education insecurity is enemy of human security. There is a well-established relationship between the education security of area devoid of militancy activities and civility approach, tolerance level, orderliness and political responsiveness as against region characterised by insurgency.

Based on the conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made;

Recommendations

The study recommends that Federal and State Government in the Niger Delta should concentrate more on securing economic activities of the Niger Delta region as against the militarization of the region. It is by provision of jobs and engagement that the government can counter the narratives of militancy and take off shines off it

The study recommends that government at all tiers alongside Civil Society organisation should concentrate more on the education security of the region so as to stem the tide of youths who takes more to violence, militancy as against youth who will engage in civil approach, tolerance and conflict resolution. Governments at all tiers should be mindful that relative deprivation is a very strong narrative in the Niger Delta region and their public lifestyles triggers militancy in the region.

Compliance with ethical standards

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Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest.

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