

**PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND SECURITY SUMMERSAULT IN URBAN CENTRES IN
NORTH CENTRAL NIGERIA IN TIMES OF REFORMS**

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Abstract

Public Administration is the machinery through which government can manage its activities effectively and efficiently and deliver services to citizens. But in Nigeria, there are huge challenges with public administration and its institutional apparatus in the discharge of its duties in the urban centres in Nigeria.

Introduction

Urban governance entails the proper management of state institutions and structures to enhance socio-economic and political transformation of the society. It is the expectation of the citizens that the state will practice and promote the core values of constitutionalism, respect for the rule of law and human rights, popular participation, accountability, transparency and probity in the management of people and resources. The governance process embodies the social bond existing between the government and the governed, and the capacity to enhance popular trust and galvanize popular participation in the political system is strong (Adejumobi, 2005; Egwu, 2006).

Good urban governance has been identified as indispensable or necessary to achieve adequate security, sustainable growth and development in contemporary times particularly in the developing world context. Good governance assures that political, social and economic priorities are based on broad consensus in society and that the voices of the poorest and the most vulnerable are heard in decision making over the allocation of development resources. In other words, good governance is a *sine qua non* for effective and efficient security in any nation. Without adequate security, the principal goal of good governance will be defeated. This accounted for the reason why the UN-HABITAT in collaboration with the Government of Nigeria launched the good urban governance Campaign in Nigeria in April 2001 as part of the advocacy role to promote the Habitat Agenda, and in particular, the goal of achieving sustainable human settlement development and management in a rapidly urbanizing world. Besides, with more and more people preferring cities as their choice of settlement, the challenges lies not in stemming this tide of migration, but in managing and governing our cities better, to improve quality of life, security of lives and standard of living.

The rapid urbanization in developing countries particularly in sub Saharan African societies requires more proactive and efficient actions to ensure its sustainability. Therefore, developing capacity for good governance in a society has been identified as a *sine qua non* to achieving sustainable and adequate security through the elimination of poverty, and creation of enabling environment in which every member of the society can enjoy good health and creative lives. The goal of sustainability of security in urban centres through effective urban governance has affected all areas of human endeavours including governance at different levels of government. One way to achieve this is by understanding and documenting the existing situation, the institutions created over the years to manage or carry out effective administration of the urban centres as well as the practices and tools of governance.

Furthermore, it entails forestalling any form of socio-economic, political, and environmental assault on the state. Therefore, the combination of high level military intervention and improvement in the standard of living of the citizens are required to enhance national security (Bello, 2011). Governance that enhances

the delivery of public goods and improved standard of living for the people has the capacity to guarantee improved security of lives and properties and minimize potential risks to national security (Akpan, 2010). The catastrophic episodes of poor governance is evident in the perversion of the constitution and constitutionalism, the subversion of the rule of law and institutions of probity and accountability, and the abuse of political power for personal aggrandizement by the political leadership in Africa; and the attendant devastating challenges of development, poverty, insecurity and conflict underscore the import of urban governance on development and security (Egwu, 2006).

The Nigerian political landscape in recent times has witnessed an unprecedented level of insecurity. Inter and intra-communal and ethnic clashes in Jos, ethno-religious violence in Suleja, cattle rustling and killings in Rafi local government area of Niger State and Southern Kaduna, armed robbery and kidnapping in Okene and in almost all the States of the federation, assassination, kidnapping, murder, rape, gender-based violence, and bomb explosion in the North Eastern Nigeria have been on the increase leading to enormous loss of lives and property and a general atmosphere of siege and social tension for the populace. While communities and ethno-regional and religious groups fight each other, state agents and political party officials have been involved in the perpetration of violence and destruction as reflected in the Benue, Plateau, Rivers States crises and the wanton destruction of lives in the North Eastern Nigeria by the Boko Haram terrorist

Problematising Security in the Nigerian Environment

There is a strong correlation between urban governance and national security. The concept of national security goes beyond safeguarding the state from external and internal threats. It also involves improving the socio-economic activities, health, environmental, physical wellbeing, food, and security, political security of the people and protection of dominant values, ideology, and the way of life of the state from threats. One of the social ills in urbanization and industrialization is crime and social disorder. In response to this, many successive governments and security agencies have made concerted efforts towards crime reduction in the urban centres within this region which has not yielded the desired results. Yet, urban centres especially in the north central geo-political zone of Nigeria have been gripped with persistent crimes such as burglary, armed robbery, stealing, rape, cattle rustling, terrorist activity, murder, assassination, assault and kidnapping among others, which dominates these urban centres to render the cities insecure. Despite the efforts of various governments to ensure that these urban areas are adequately governed in terms of making life comfortable for the people, crime rate has continued unabated even unlike rural areas by ensuring that governance issues are addressed. The thrust of this study therefore is to investigate how security challenges have hindered urban governance in North Central Nigeria. This is with a view to assessing its impact in filling the urban governance security gap in the region. The main objective of the study is to investigate the relationships between urban governance and security challenges in the North Central geopolitical zone of Nigeria with a view to examining the profile of security challenges in the area.

Conceptual Clarification

Governance

The concept of governance is as old as human history and it has experienced a huge attack from various writers without an end to its appraisal and the debates that it has constantly generated among users. Due to the sensitivity of the subject matter in the determination of how man administers his fellow man, it has attracted much attention, especially from the mid-20th century to date, than any other issue in the world. Some scholars have opined that the concept of governance probably originated from the Greek word *kybernan*, meaning to pilot, steer or direct, which was translated into Latin as *gubernare*. Some other scholars have submitted that the superfluous emphasis has given room for more divergence than convergence of opinions making the concept rather increasingly 'difficult' to grapple with (Hyden, 2007) (cited in Omoleke, 2013). However, the issue of governance as a critical necessity for socio-political and economic growth and development for countries all over the world is a subject around which there seems to be a considerable consensus (Omoleke, 2013).

Governance is defined by the World Bank as "the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development" (Okotoni, 2017). Good governance includes "a broad reform strategy and a particular set of initiatives to strengthen the institutions of civil society with the objective of making government more accountable, more open and transparent and more democratic. It involves the traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised. Good governance becomes very fundamental and imperative when viewed against the backdrop of the massive deterioration of government institutions, pervasive poverty and widespread unemployment, corruption, as well as the near total collapse of moral and ethical standards empowered by nearly three decades of military rule in the country, which saw governance capacity weakened at all levels (World Bank, 2011).

The concept of "governance" is not new. It is as old as human civilization. Simply put, "governance" means the process by which authority is conferred on rulers by which they make the rules and by which those rules are enforced and modified (World Bank, 2011). It is the act of governing. It relates to decision that defines expectations; grant powers, or verifies performance. Governance can be used in several contexts such as corporate governance, international governance, national governance and local governance. Since governance is the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented, an analysis of governance focuses on the formal and informal actors involved in decision-making and implementing the decisions made and the formal and informal structures that have been set in place to arrive at, and implement, the decision.

Contributing to the contentious issues on the definition of governance Oladoyin (2001) posited that a true index of democratic governance is the extent to which the people are enabled to set their own objectives themselves, using their own resources without external interference from higher levels of authority. Governance can be defined as the act of governing. It depicts the process of overseeing the responsible, legal, ethical, transparent and effective achievement of national or organizational goals. To distinguish the term governance from government; "governance" can be said to be what a "government" does (Rotberg, 2003), and these include the provision of basic public goods and protection of lives and properties of the individuals residing in their territory. This implies that security is a major public good that government must deliver. As such the provision of security has become a key benchmark for measuring government performance.

Generally, governance, according to the World Bank Report (2004), is the exercise of political power in the management of a nation's affairs. This definition thus implies that governance encompasses the state's institutional and structural arrangements, decision-making processes and implementation capacity, and the relationship between the governing apparatus and the governed- that is the people in terms of their standard of living. There is a need then to explain the term good governance.

In his analysis, Odock (2006) sees good governance as "a system of government based on good leadership, respect for the rule of law and due process, the accountability of the political leadership to the electorate as well as transparency in the operations of government." On transparency, Odock opined that it has to do with the leadership carrying out government business in an open, easy to understand and explicit manner, such that the rules made by government, the policies implemented by the government and the results of government activities are easy to verify by the ordinary citizens. Accountability as a component of good governance refers to the fact that those who occupy positions of leadership in the government must give account or subject themselves to the will and desire of the society and people. Unfortunately, this appears to be lacking in the public domain in Nigeria.

Urban Governance

In an increasingly urbanizing world, sustainable urban governance will depend largely on the management capacity of cities and the active participation of citizens. Urban governance refers to the complex set of values, norms, processes and institutions by which cities are managed. Urban governance refers to both the formal and informal political processes which determine and, at least, influence what happens in a city. Good urban governance works towards making cities more efficient, equitable, safer and

sustainable. Systems of urban governance that are based on sound, transparent and accountable processes can go a long way in making cities more inclusive (Oladimeji, 2012). At the city level, there has been a tendency in the past to see urban governance entirely in terms of urban management -the operation and maintenance of infrastructure and services. But, cities are not autonomous entities, as there are various tiers of government intervening in urban areas. They are also located in wider national and international economies, environmental systems and socio-spatial relationships. A solely managerial perspective blurs both the wider contexts within which urban governance is conducted and the politicized nature of governance.

According to the UN-HABITAT (2000), “Urban governance is the sum of the many ways individuals and institutions, public and private, plan and manage the common affairs of the city. Urban governance, therefore, embraces a variety of notions, which encompass intergovernmental relations such as negotiations, agreements and co-operative ventures among public and private parties. In particular, it implies bottom-up decision-making, decentralization and broad-based participation. Urban governance institutions basically exist to create a functional climate for citizens’ survival in the quest to acquire the basic necessities that guarantee human existence. Thus, good urban governance is meant to bring about successful social and economic transition for future development.

The pervasiveness and spontaneity of the global urbanization process has been an issue of concern in recent time; as this essentially constitutes serious challenge to the attainment of sustainable development and effective urban governance (Osasona, 2005). The implications of this developmental challenge in many developing nations, including Nigeria, are diverse socio-economic, cultural and environmental problems. These problems include inequality in income, political apathy and the general weak governmental institutions. Addressing these urban developmental challenges in Nigeria requires effective and efficient good governance. One of the critical issues of concern to most national governments world over is the need to stem the rate of urbanization induced by the incidence of globalization, industrialization and an unprecedented population growth rate in the cities (Jiboye, 2005; Osasona et al., 2007). This concern has led to several global summits organized at various level of government, international Agencies including the United Nations. Specifically among such are, the Millennium Development Goals Summits, the 2002 world summit in Johannesburg and the 2005 La-Havana UN sustainable cities documentation of experience programmes among several others. In each of these summits, member nations reiterate the need for good and effective governance as a means of achieving sustainable development in the cities (Oladunjoye, 2005; UNHabitat, 2007; UNDPI, 2008; Jiboye, 2011).

In Nigeria, the urbanization process is similar to what obtains in several other developing countries; as the growth and complexity of human settlements and, in particular, the rate of urbanization has been phenomenal (Ujoh et al., 2010). Considering its 2006 population figure of over 140 million people (the highest in Sub-Saharan Africa), Ajanlekoko, 2001; FRN, 2007; Jiboye, 2011 states that, available data has shown that the country has been growing at the rate of 5.5 percent annually from 1980 to 1993. This process has resulted in a very dense network of urban centres (Oladunjoye, 2005); thereby constituting a major problem to the urban residents whose quality of life and living conditions have deteriorated considerably (Ajala, 2005; Jiboye, 2009; 2011). Therefore, a major developmental challenge facing the nations - particularly those within the developing world, is how to cope with the increasing urbanization and minimize its adverse consequences on the cities’ insecurity as well as the overall wellbeing of the people (Jiboye, 2011). A major reason attributable to these urban security problems in North Central Nigeria is the lack of effective mechanism of governance needed to ensure a rational level of equilibrium between the growing population, the cities environment, security and existing infrastructure; hence, the increasing poor quality of the living conditions and low livability index of urban areas in North Central Nigeria (Jiboye, 2011, Daramola & Ibem, 2011). According to the scholars, there is a need for effective mechanism to stimulate progressive urbanization in our cities. This need thus constitutes a critical challenge to urban governance, security and development with the aim of reducing absolute poverty of the world’s poor population by providing lasting and secured livelihoods that minimize resource depletion, environmental degradation, cultural disruptions and social instability and social insecurity.

Methodology

The population of this study is three hundred and eighty six (386). It consists of 215 senior officers of the Nigeria Police Force from nine local governments from the three selected states, 90 public office holders, and 81 senior civil servants who formulate and implement policies of the government. The selection of the aforementioned categories of people was based on their unique roles both as service providers and beneficiaries. A total of 193 copies of questionnaire were administered to respondents who were randomly selected from various categories of public office holders, senior police officers and senior civil servants in each of the three sampled states based on their experience on security and governance related matters.

Results

The result and the analysis of the data obtained through questionnaire administered and the outcome as well as highlights from interview are discussed in this section.

The focus of this study was to investigate the relationships between urban governance and security challenges in the North Central geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The individual characteristics of workers were an important factor in determining the background of the members of the security agencies and the beneficiary of the services provided. For optimal utilization of security funds in the proper channel, there was the need to identify some of these features including age, educational level and gender of citizens that may serve as facilitating variables or obstacles towards accessing security services. Results of the analysis revealed that those who strongly agree that there were frequent security challenges and threats have the highest number with 100 respondents which represent 56.5% of the total responses. Large number of respondents believed that there are frequent security threats and challenges. This is in line with the findings of Nwadiakor (2011) that so high is the rate of insecurity in North Central Nigeria now that every facet of citizen's life has been badly affected. The results also revealed that security challenges and threats affected the lives of the respondents negatively with 104 representing 59.1% strongly agreed, and 138 representing 61% agreed that government response to challenges of security threats are inadequate. This high frequency of security and challenges is an indication that the government should be proactive and respond quickly to security challenges that might have arisen.

The study found that, challenges confronting security threats in North Central Nigeria were of different categories. These were lack of security equipments, inadequate funding, inadequate personnel, and attitudes of security agencies, inadequate institutional structures, and corruption on the part of government officials. These corroborated the findings of Akhpe (2012), Ogbonnaya and Eighamouse (2013) and Omede (2013) and Ogunleye, Adewale and Ogunde (2011) that inadequate personnel, obsolete and inadequate security equipment were some of the challenges confronting security in North Central Nigeria.

Table 1 Distribution of Respondents’ according to the Profile of Security Challenges in North Central Nigeria.

Types of security Challenges	Yes	No	Total
Armed robbery	109 (56.5%)	84(43.5%)	193
Kidnapping	159 (82.4%)	34 (17.6%)	193
Herdsmen invasion	119 (61.7%)	74 (38.3%)	193
Boko Haram	103 (53.4%)	90 (46.6%)	193
Urban governance and security challenges			
Is there adequate funding of security personnel in our area?	60(31.1%)	133(68.9%)	193
Does government provide good education to the citizen in your area?	54(28.0%)	139(72.0%)	193
Are there enlightenment programmes in your area ?	44(22.8%)	149(77.2%)	193
Are there adequate employments for the people in your area.	34(17.6%)	159(82.4%)	193
Are there adequate infrastructural facilities such as water, electricity, good road network etc in your area?	44(22.8%)	149(77.2%)	193
Is there opportunity for you to participate in governance in your area?	53(27.5%)	140(72.5%)	193
Is there political stability in your area?	134(69.4%)	59(30.6%)	193
Others	3	1.5	100.0
Total	193	100.0	

Source: Fieldwork, 2017

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation

Summary of Findings

The study was aimed essentially at appraising the governance and security challenges in the urban centres in the North Central geo-political zone of Nigeria. To this end, several research questions were raised as guides to probe and provide answers to the important issues connected to governance and security challenges in the urban centres in North Central Nigeria.

The study revealed that there is a strong connection between governance and security challenges in North Central Nigeria. The study also revealed that governance defines the direction of security so that the apparent high level of insecurity in North Central Nigeria is traceable to bad governance and the inability of government to provide adequate social services and vital infrastructural facilities to the teeming population of citizens in the North Central Nigeria.

Conclusion

The study explored urban governance and security challenges in North Central Nigeria. It unraveled causes of security problems in the urban centres. The study examined the connection between governance and security challenges in urban centres in North Central Nigeria. Based on the data collected from the field,

the study examined the profile of security challenges in the study area. The connection between urban governance and security challenges was also examined and the strategies adopted in tackling security challenges were also appraised. Also, the factors militating against security challenges were investigated. Primary and secondary data were used through which empirical findings were made. The study concluded that the inadequacies at the governance level in the selected States of North Central geo-political zone have negatively contributed to the high level of security challenges in the area. It was similarly discovered that Benue State had the highest rate of challenges of security threat among the three selected state under consideration, and that from the response of respondents, the government is pulling all her resources from all fronts to ensure that adequate security is provided for the citizens of the area under study.

Recommendations

In line with the findings of the study, the following recommendations are offered:-

There is urgent need for the government to play a major role in addressing the challenges of insecurity by promptly attending to the frequent cases of security challenges and threats, especially, the issues of youth empowerment through employment. The government should be involved in the provision of adequate social and infrastructural amenities for the benefit of the entire citizens. The nexus between the security agencies should be sustained by having constant joint training programmes for the security agencies. Enlightenment programmes should be organized to improve the attitudes and approach of security personnel towards the performance of their duties.

There should also be adequate provision of institutional structures such as sustainable training institutions where proficiency training will be available and affordable for members of the security agencies as an improvement on the strategies put in place to tackle security challenges. In addition, the government should ensure adequate funding of the Nigerian Police Force and other security agencies and there should be proper monitoring and evaluation to ensure that money earmarked for security equipments are channeled towards the procurement of relevant weapons for the security agents. Corruption which has eaten deeply into the fabrics of the society should also be checked by the government. Money earmarked for security equipments should be channeled towards the procurement of the relevant weapons for the use of the security agencies.

The study further recommend that the Nigerian state and its government should be involved in national and international security policy making so as to understand the operational methodologies and instruments of these terrorist organizations and the threats from them. The study also recommends the complete overhauling of the security institutions of the Nigerian state in order to meet the current security challenges confronting the state. The study recommended that the Nigerian state and its government should reach global agreement for cooperation in various areas in order to curtail international crime and terrorism and reduce global insecurity.

In addition the government and civil society organization should re-evaluate the effects of the different forms of crimes on the lives of the citizens and should give a deep consideration to the issues of youth and women empowerment in the process of governance and crime prevention. It is equally suggested that government should initiate a comprehensive security sector reform that would incorporate the community policing strategy.

The government should also initiate a capacity building programme that would ensure that the Neighborhood Watch Associations consolidate and transform into sustainable security institutions. The Government should improve the socio-economic reality of the states in the North Central Nigeria; the scenario in the study area shows a paradox of poverty amidst plenty and is correlated with the prevalent insecurity in the geo-political zone and the North in general. Government should pay more attention to security in all its ramifications, thereby embarking on relevant reforms to strengthen and empower the security agencies for good governance and efficiency in the provision of security.

Finally, government should create an enabling environment for robust state security objectives that will affirm, promote and sustain the overall well – being and happiness of the people.

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