

Nigeria's Border Porosity and Implications for National and International Security

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ABSTRACT

The evolution of modern borders can be traced to the partitioning of Africa during the Berlin Conference negotiations from November 15, 1884 to February 26, 1885. The artificial borders so created are accompanied with extreme porosity leading to myriads of transnational and cross-border criminalities which threatens the peace, security and stability of the region as a whole and Nigeria in particular. This study therefore seeks to examine the causes of Nigeria's border porosity, emerging cross-border related security threats, government and other stakeholders efforts at curbing the menace and to interrogate the implications Nigeria's Border porosity on peacebuilding, national and international security.

Talcott Parson's Theory of Functional Prerequisites served as the framework while the mixed method research design was adopted for the study. A total of eighty (80) respondents were sampled for the study while purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants who could provide valuable insights into the topic.

This research has been able to highlight various factors responsible for Nigeria's porous borders, the emerging cross-border related security threats, various efforts by government and other stakeholders in addressing the menace of border porosity and the various implications for peace, stability and security of the country. While the various efforts of government and other stakeholders are duly acknowledged, it must be stated that a lot more needs to be done to secure Nigeria's borders.

It is evident that addressing Nigeria's border porosity is crucial for ensuring peace, stability, national and international security and mitigating the various security threats associated with illegal migration, proliferation of fire arms, trafficking (drug and human), transnational crimes, smuggling, banditry and terrorism holistically requires comprehensive strategies that focus on strengthening border control measures, enhance regional cooperation and collaboration, promote information sharing, develop joint strategies to combat transnational crimes, terrorism, cross-border conflicts, addressing root causes of insecurity, promoting development and governance in the region.

Key Words: Border, Security, Peacebuilding, Border Security.

INTRODUCTION

Nigerian boundaries were delineated by the Europeans at the 1884/1885 African- Berlin Conference and consist of 4,047 km of land and 853 km of maritime borders. The sheer size and nature of these borders make it difficult for them to be policed and managed operationally and effectively by the relevant security agencies assigned the responsibility of protection. The porosity resulting from poor demarcation and poor manning presents serious challenges (Babatola, 2015). This has therefore paved the way for constant occurrences forming part of a climate of criminality across the Nigerian borders. The terrorist activities of Boko Haram since 2009 attest to the fact that the borders around North-Eastern Nigeria are hospitable towards cross-border attacks, moreso where the security apparatuses have failed to contain the flow of small arms and light weapons. The rationale for this analysis focusing on border management and Nigeria's national security is easily

discernible from the fact that most of the troubled states of Nigeria are linked to international border routes of the Cameroun, Niger and Chad which are exceedingly porous and unmanageable (Abdullahi, 2010).

The former Minister of Interior, Abba Moro, has cited that there are over 1,499 irregular (illegal) and 84 regular (legal) officially identified entry routes into Nigeria, confirms the very porous state of these borders which permits illicit transnational arms trafficking. In Adamawa State, there are about 25 illegal routes into Nigeria from neighboring countries. Terrorists and smugglers take advantage of this leakage to smuggle small arms and light weapons (SALWs) into Nigeria. As a result, over 70 percent of about 8 million illegal weapons in West Africa were reported to be in Nigeria. The proliferation of SALWs in Nigeria is indexed by the intermittent seizure of various types and caliber of arms by security and border control officers, the frequency of their deployment in conflict and crime scenes, and the level of human casualty and material damage recorded in the aftermath of their use in the country. Records available to the Nigeria Immigration Service revealed that there are over 1,400 illegal routes into Nigeria – 1,316 more than the approved number of border control posts. The 84 approved border controls cover 4,047km, the total length of Nigeria's land border. Ogun and Adamawa states, for example, have 83 and 80 illegal posts respectively (Brown, 2013).

Nigeria shares land borders with Cameroun, Chad, Niger and Benin Republic and also shares maritime boundaries with Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Cameroun and Sao Tome and Principe. Out of the thirty-six states, fifteen share international land boundaries with African countries. Ironically, the borders of Nigeria are not adequately protected by the border security forces. The traffickers of all sorts live across the border and are familiar with the routes beyond the connected security agents which is the only one holding the border, according to respondents at the Nigeria Customs office. It is not surprising that migration can be achieved as the flow of people and goods into the country is very smooth and uninterrupted. The ECOWAS migration policy allows people to move quickly and indirectly to neighboring countries with protection for ninety days. With this, Nigeria has been the major recipient of illegal immigrants even beyond the West African region. Border porosity has also strengthened illicit trade relations such as human trafficking, drug trafficking, and much more (Babatola, 2015).

Nigeria has hundreds of borders that are poorly manned and delimited. The border problem is related to colonial history where at a conference in Berlin; Germany between November 1884 and February, 1885 the territory was partitioned and carved out for the Royal Niger Company. However, its porosity has been worsened by the failure of succeeding governments to properly administer these borders. Onuoha (2013) observed that the high level of insecurity on African borders is largely due to the way they are administered and managed, and less to do with how colonialists patterned them.

Nigeria is situated within latitudes 4° and 14°N and longitudes 2° and 15°E, possessing a total area of 923,768 km² (356,669 square miles), putting it at number 32 on the list of largest countries globally, and sharing a 4,047 km border with its neighbors, (773 km with Benin, 1,497 km with Niger, 87 km with Chad and 1,690 km with Cameroon, with a modest coastline of about 853 km). Nigerian borders span many local governments in the country is characterized as porous and unmanned. According to the former Nigerian Immigration Head, David Parrandang (2014), only 84 approved entry points exist in the country while there is a staggering number of over 1,400 illegal routes. This shows that the illegal routes outnumber the recognized approved routes by 1,316. This could be as a result of the huge flow of illicit activities that happen within the area and across the borders into neighboring states.

Okunade (2017) pointed out that these illegal routes keep increasing on a daily basis as a result of the clandestine activities taking place there and as some are being foiled, new ones are opened up around the porous borders. These activities, which have long existed and been carried out in the form of transnational crimes across the Nigerian borders, have not only to a great extent challenged the country's economic security, it has adverse effects on peace building, national and international security.

Using a documentary research design and content analysis, Eselebo and Okunade (2021) revealed that one of the foremost and immediate factor of insecurity in Nigeria is the porosity of its borderlines, where individual movements are largely untracked due to shortage of manpower, inadequate facilities, higher number of illegal routes, lack of technological deployment, etc. and this has cost the country millions of Nigerian lives.

According to them, evidences pointed out that huge flow of illicit activities such as proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and other dangerous weapons, illegal migrants and herders, drug, etc. which has contributed to the heightened insecurity in Nigeria. Specifically, their study's content analysis between January and December 2020 indicates that there was an average of two violent attacks and nine deaths daily across the nation.

Bodunde (2015) has argued that some Nigeria borders are demarcated with drums and logs of woods which show the state of nature of our borders. In spite of joint patrol and task force at the borders, security personnel are not enough to manage both regular and irregular route of entrance into Nigeria state. The nature of illegal arms entrance into Nigeria through unidentified official borders has led to raising increase of various categories of crime from Boko Haram Insurgency, Kidnapping, arms banditry, militancy /Oil bunkering and farmers/herders conflicts.

The failure of the Nigerian government to manage its borders affects domestic and international economic activities. It is also a threat to national sovereignty and security of the nation. In Nigeria, bad governance and lack of political will by successive governments since the country's independence in 1960 have adversely affected all the institutions of the country (Oni and Muyiwa, 2019). This fact also ramifies border security, thus, making it easy for illegal external incursion and cross-border criminal activities to occur within the country as precipitated by the proliferation of illegal routes in the country.

Security Council Report (2011) asserts that the level of corruption that has permeated various government institutions and government officials in West Africa has made effective border security impossible and this is one of the reasons the phenomenon of illegal routes continues to thrive. Meanwhile, a professor of African History, Peace and Conflict Studies and pioneer Director of the Institute for Peace and Strategic Studies, University of Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria's Isaac Albert, blamed poor governance for Nigeria's inability to secure its borders. He noted that the neglect of border communities, corruption by officials at the borders and failure of government to deploy modern technology for effective border management were issues that had fueled the problem.

In Nigeria, the porosity of the borders has paved way for truncation of peace and security witnessed in the nation as a result of transnational organised crimes carried out along the borders of the country. The effect of this has also filtered into neighbouring states that share boundaries with Nigeria, including the Benin Republic in the West, and Chad, Niger and Cameroun in the North, almost straining the relationship between the countries on different occasions.

Statement of the Problem

Nigeria has hundreds of borders that are artificially delimited, extremely porous and poorly manned. The border porosity problem cannot be divorced from the colonial history where at a conference in Berlin, Germany between November 1884 and February 1885, the territory was partitioned and carved out for the Royal Niger Company. However, its porosity has been worsened by the failure of succeeding governments to properly administer these borders.

Onuoha (2013) observed that the high level of insecurity on African borders in general and Nigeria in particular is largely due to the way they are administered and managed, and less to do with how colonialists patterned them. For instance, the demarcation of the border between Seme (Nigerian) and Krake (Benin Republic) is through the use of ropes. The ropes are tied to drums filled with sand and after interrogation by the security agents, the rope is been lifted and vehicles can pass. It is possible to plant maize in Diffa (Niger republic) and plant guinea corn in Kukawa (Nigeria) while claiming ownership of the same piece of land. Terrorists like the Boko Haram have taken advantage of this undifferentiated border to recruit and regroup against the Nigerian state, especially at the northern borderlines (Adeolu, & Fayomi, 2012).

It has been rightly observed that what happens at the borders goes to determine the national security architecture of a state, which either makes or mars it (Okunade, 2017). This therefore makes it imperative for every state to uphold security of its borders and its management as a top priority. Therefore, border security is

a very crucial and essential part of a country as it goes a long way in determining/affecting national security. The porosity and permeability of Nigerian borders have become a cog in the wheel of the fight against insecurity in the nation. With the size of 923,768 square kilometres, (910,768 sq km on land, and 13,000 sq km in water), a recent study reported that there are 1,400 illegal, uncontrolled, and unregulated routes into Nigeria, as against the 84 controlled entry points. This makes it easier for all manner of goods, including weapons and illicit drugs to be smuggled into Nigeria unregulated and all manner of persons including criminals to sneak into Nigeria uncontrolled (Usman, 2022).

Presently, Nigeria has to contend with security failures resulting from open and insecure borders with the mostly Francophone nations of Benin, Niger, Cameroun and Chad. There are about 84 recognized Points of Entry (PoE) and over 1,499 unrecognized border entry points (Vanguard, June 19, 2013). The dilemmas facing Nigeria are numerous and complex. Both the approved and unapproved point of entry (PoE) are major sources of security concerns in the context of border management. This porousness undermines efforts to foster peace, stability, and socio-economic development within countries and across borders. Moreover, it poses a threat to national sovereignty and international security, as it enables the infiltration of terrorist organizations, compromises border integrity, and exacerbates tensions between neighboring states. Thus, understanding the causes and consequences of border porosity is crucial for designing comprehensive strategies and policies aimed at enhancing border security, promoting peacebuilding initiatives, and safeguarding national and international interests.

Asiwaju (1994) posits that the length of the Nigeria-Benin-Niger-Cameroun-Chad borderlines, which is about 3,984km, the characteristics terrain, its porous nature, as well as other natural constraints makes the thought of its effective policing of Nigeria borders unthinkable. The role of cultural ties in inter-territorial movement of peoples also explains a situation in which contacts and movements between groups of tribesmen across borders is greater than tribesmen of different stocks within same borders suffice. The porosity of the border area tends to make it difficult for security operatives to control the movement of people and goods. The land, water and air borders are not well manned and it was discovered that, illegal routes are connecting Nigeria with her francophone neighbours which the government are not aware of. Smuggling takes various form and ranges from smuggling of food items to cars, drugs, terrorists, weapons among others. The border areas have been closed on different occasions by the Nigerian government to curb the activities of terrorists and other national security saboteurs (Wukari. & Obiorah, 2019).

Despite the efforts of border security agencies which includes the Nigerian police, Nigerian Army, Nigerian Customs service, Nigerian Immigration service, and NSCDC, Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps to provide security at the borders, Nigerian borders have remained porous thereby generating various kinds of cross border or trans-border criminal activities. This includes human trafficking, smuggling, drug trafficking, armed robbery, money laundering and illicit arms trafficking. The increase in the rise of cross border criminal activities, no doubt, undermines Nigeria's peace and security and has greatly affected Nigeria's external relations. It is in this light that this research seeks to understand the reasons for the porosity and propose practicable solutions to arrest the situation and prevent further degeneration of insecurity and threats to peace in the country.

In contemporary Nigerian society, the role of Nigeria's porous borders, both land, and sea, in exacerbating insecurity in the country is yet to be appreciated and adequately addressed. These terrorist organisations continue to exploit porous border areas in order to damage innocent people's livelihoods (Monguno 2021). Unless and until our borders are adequately manned and policed, security challenges will continue unabated.

Significance of the Study

Borders serve as crucial markers of territorial sovereignty and security. However, porous borders undermine the efforts of peacebuilding by enabling the inflow of illicit goods, human trafficking, and the movement of arms. Exploring the relationship between border porosity and peacebuilding would help identify key areas for intervention and inform peacebuilding strategies. Porous borders compromise national security, opening avenues for criminal activities such as drug trafficking, money laundering, and illegal migration. Understanding the implications of border porosity on national and international security would aid the

development and implementation of effective border control mechanisms and policies to safeguard the country from internal and external threats.

This research would be highly beneficial to the social environment and the academics. It would be a handy material for security agencies on ways to handle crimes and insecurity occasioned by the porosity of our borders better. It would also enhance understanding of the various implications of the porosity of our borders on peacebuilding, national and international security.

This study would benefit the Nigerian society considering the fact that border security is very key to the development of most countries economically, socially, politically and in all other ramifications. A country that could not control what passes through her borders cannot equally control what goes on within the country.

The study would also benefit government as regards knowing the strength and weakness inherent in the security operations of the security agencies in the border areas. The better the information exchange and sharing by law enforcement agencies especially in the border areas, the more secured the borders which would lead to warding off terrorism influx from the borders or neighbouring countries, drug trafficking, illegal migration, human trafficking and most importantly, smuggling and revenue leakages through the nations' borders.

Operational Definition of Terms

Border - A border is a line that connotes a boundary. Borders symbolize boundaries between states. Border is defined as boundaries that demarcate Nigeria as a sovereign and territorially independent state from her neighbouring countries.

Border porosity - Refers to the ease with which individuals, goods, move and illicit activities takes place within and across national borders unchecked.

Security - Security is the state of being safe from any kind of danger. It is defined as the protection from both internal and external aggression.

Peace Building - Peacebuilding is the process of creating and sustaining peaceful societies by addressing the root causes of conflict and building positive relationships among individuals and communities. It aims to prevent the recurrence of violence or the outbreak of new conflicts.

Border security - This refers to established control which seeks to control or regulate the movements of people, animals, plants, goods and activities around, in and out of a country's borders.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

A number of concepts that are closely related to this research and would enhance the understanding of the research components are considered. These concepts are Border and Border Porosity, Border Management, Security, Peacebuilding, National Security and International Security.

Border and Border porosity

Borders are geographic boundaries of political entities or legal jurisdictions such as governments, sovereign states, federated states, and other sub-national entities. Borders are established through agreements between political or social entities that control those areas; the creation of these agreements is called boundary delimitation (Crause, & Nye, 2016). Borders are partially or fully controlled, and may be crossed legally only at designated border checkpoints and border zones which are highly controlled by the security agents. A border is said to be porous when it is unmarked which gives individuals chance to pass without formal check by the security agencies at the boundary line. Borders require presentation of legal paperwork like passports and visas, or other identity documents, for persons to cross borders.

According to Weber (2012), a border is a line that connotes a boundary. Borders symbolize boundaries between states, while boundaries are markers in existing states. As borders demarcate and differentiate a state's territory, they also showcase identities, belonging, and political affiliation. For this study, therefore, border is defined as boundaries that demarcate Nigeria as a sovereign and territorially independent state from her neighbouring countries. According to Magaret (2011) a border in the technical sense means an area or region nearer to a boundary.

Borders are sometimes usually referred to as boundaries or a divided line between politically sovereign territorial entities. While in this article perspective, it is viewed in terms of invisible margins and legitimate jurisdiction of political units such as sovereign states, federal state, it also seen as the main line which demarcates a country to another. Therefore border simply define geographical governments and sub national entities. They are equally regarded as a solid picture of people's cultural value systems and their identification as statehood. While in the continent of Africa, several arguments were advanced with regard to the arbitrary nature of the boundary demarcation as result of colonial exploitation which was rather truncated and distorted the cultural systems of the Africans. Borders stand as the line that links and separates one country to another at the same time, and it could be a source of benefit as well as of detriment to the contending states depending on the degree of their security (Akinyemi, 2013). As such countries find it mandatory to apply essential measures put in place in order to protect their borders on both land, air and seaports ways of entry (Mansa, 2011).

The concept of border porosity refers to the permeability or openness of national borders. It highlights the ease with which people, goods, and services can cross between countries. Border porosity can vary across different countries and is influenced by various factors such as political, economic, and security considerations. It can be categorized into three main types:

1. Open Borders: Countries with open borders have high porosity. They typically have few restrictions on the movement of people, goods, and services across their borders. Open borders often result from agreements or alliances between neighboring countries, such as the Schengen Area in Europe, where internal border controls have been abolished.

2. Controlled Borders: Controlled borders have moderate porosity. These borders have certain regulations and restrictions in place to manage the flow of people and goods. They may require specific documents or visas, conduct inspections, or impose tariffs on imported goods. Controlled borders aim to balance security concerns with facilitating trade and travel.

3. Closed Borders: This is a border that prevents movement of people between different jurisdictions with limited or no exceptions associated with this movement. These borders normally have fences or walls in which any gates or border crossings are closed and if these border gates are opened they generally only allow movement of people in exceptional circumstances. The Berlin Wall could also have been called a closed border. Perhaps the most famous example of an extant closed border is the Demilitarized zone between North Korea and South Korea.

Whereas borders are vital to separate the physical boundaries of state territories, they are in daily practice even more important to the people living along the borders. In similar vein, demarcated or not demarcated, a border can engender positive or negative effects, which have implications for national security. A greater portion of borderlands in the African continent are not distinctly demarcated and hence show no guidelines, creating security threats. According to Kristof (1959), a boundary does not exist in abstraction, it owes its existence to man. That is, all boundaries are manmade. This assertion finds explanation from the partition of African borderlands resultant from the African-Berlin Conference of 1884/1885, where borders were artificially drawn without the consent and participation of the beneficiaries. Kristof (1959) identifies two types of borders:

1. Artificial Borders - They are the limits between countries that have been constituted by human means, and, therefore, different from the natural ones. For example, the fences in the city of Melilla that separate Spain from Morocco is an artificial border. The means that delimit the artificial borders can be constructions, objects, cultural differences or imaginary lines established by means of calculations and expressed in the form of geographic coordinates on the maps.

The main feature of artificial borders is that they have been created by humans, and not by nature. For this reason, they differ from natural borders in that they support their limits on geographical accidents, such as mountains, rivers, valleys, etc.

Examples Include Berlin Wall, Border wall between Mexico and the United States, The Treriksroset: border between Sweden, Finland and Norway, Border between North Korea and South Korea, Finland-Russia border, Triple border between Venezuela, Brazil and Guyana, Border between the Netherlands and Belgium, Border between Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

2. Natural Borders - A natural border is a border between states or their subdivisions which is concomitant with natural formations such as rivers or mountain ranges, deserts and oceans. Examples of natural borders are;

Mount Roraima -Between Venezuela, Guyana, and Brazil.

Rio Grande -Between the United States and Mexico.

Detian Falls -Between China and Vietnam.

Mount Everest -Between China and Nepal.

Iguaçu Falls -Between Argentina and Brazil.

The Rhine -Between Germany and France.

The Great Wall of China -A natural boundary that was built to protect China from invaders.

The Himalayas -A natural boundary that separates China, India, and Nepal.

The Sahara Desert -A natural boundary that separates the countries of North Africa.

Oscar Martinez (1994) classified borders into four categories as follows:

(a) Alienated Borders - In this type of borderland, interaction does not exist or it is prohibited because of "severe tensions between the adjacent states and/or border populations. Border is functionally closed, and cross-border interaction is totally or almost totally absent

(b) Co-existent Border - This is a type of border that is functionally closed, and cross-border Stability is an on-and-off proposition. Border remains slightly open, interaction is totally or nearly totally absent Residents of each country allowing for the development of limited binational interaction. act as strangers to each other.

(c) Interdependent Borders - Stability prevails most of the time. Economic and social complementarity prompt increased cross-border interaction. Leading to expansion of borderlands. Border landers carry on friendly and cooperative relationships

(d) Integrated Borders - In integrated borderlands, there are no barriers, which can hinder the flow of goods or people. This kind of borderland is very stable where the economies of the two (or more) countries are functionally merged, and there is unrestricted movement of people and goods across the boundary

Richard Hartshorne (1933;1936) believes that borders can be viewed from the perspectives of the following:

1 Antecedent Boundary - An antecedent boundary is a political boundary that existed before the land was populated by the current inhabitants. For example, the boundary between the USA and Canada was drawn by the colonizers before they colonized North America.

2 Subsequent Boundary - A subsequent boundary is a political boundary that was created after two groups have already settled there. It is often used to separate different groups of people based on their ethnicity or

cultural background, and so it is often also called an ethnographic boundary. An example of a subsequent boundary is the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, which was drawn long after people were settled and reflected the religious differences between the two places

3 Super imposed Boundary - A superimposed boundary is a type of political barrier drawn without regard for existing cultural, religious, and ethnic divisions. These boundaries are a product of European imperialism in Africa, where European powers would divide up the continent into colonies disregarding established tribal and ethnic divisions. This has resulted in many African countries with artificial borders that do not accurately reflect the cultural or linguistic identities of the people living within them.

4. Natural Boundaries - A natural boundary is a natural feature that creates a physical boundary between regions. Examples of natural boundaries include:

The Pyrenees mountains, which separate France and Spain.

The Great Wall of China, which follows the natural topography of the landscape and protects China from invaders.

The Himalayas, which separate China, India, and Nepal.

The Rio Grande River, which separates the US and Mexico.

Oceans and deserts, which isolate continents and countries.

Most African borders are super imposed and that reality has not changed, despite the intervention from the African Union Border Programme.

Border porosity is the ease with which individuals, goods, and illicit activities cross national borders, presents significant implications for national, and international security. The lack of effective border control measures and the high permeability of borders contribute to numerous challenges, including the facilitation of transnational criminal networks, irregular migration, and the unauthorized movement of weapons and contraband.

This porousness undermines efforts to establish peace, stability, and socio-economic development within countries and across borders. Moreover, it poses a threat to national sovereignty and international security, as it enables the infiltration of terrorist organizations, compromises border integrity, and exacerbates tensions between neighboring states. Thus, understanding the causes and consequences of border porosity is crucial for designing comprehensive strategies and policies aimed at enhancing border security, promoting peacebuilding initiatives, and safeguarding national and international security.

Border Management

Border management can be defined as the government's oversight functions of policing, immigration, customs and excise, put in place with the aim of controlling and regulating the flow of people and goods across a country's border/boundary in the nation's security, economic, peace and developmental interest. Border management is defined as the government functions of immigration, customs, and excise, and police, with the aim of controlling and regulating the flow of people and goods across a country's border/boundary in the national interest (particularly economic development, security, and peace) (Adebayo, 2005). Border management also includes maintenance of boundary beacons that mark the physical limits of the country's territory. Border management is a collaborative process between a country and its neighbors. It cannot be done unilaterally, and it is most effective and efficient when done regionally. Key stakeholders in border management in Nigeria include:

- i. Customs, immigration, police, armed forces,
- ii. Ministry of agriculture; exist for quarantine purposes,

iii. Airline operatives

iv. Shipping companies

v. Border local authorities

vi. International business companies and

vii. Individuals; Individuals residents of the borders or travelers across boundaries e.g. traders, relatives, tourists or terrorists).

Osiemen et al. (2017) pointed out that border management is an expression of a state's sovereignty and that a state's failure to manage its borders can undermine its domestic and international legitimacy. The legal status of a state or government depends on how it manages its borders. The Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States of 1933 identifies four criteria for state sovereignty namely;

i. permanent population

ii. a defined territory

iii. a government and

iv. the capacity to enter relations with other states.

In other words, territoriality is equal to sovereignty while citizenship is defined by territory and territory is defined by borders.

Security

Security is the condition of feeling safe from harm or danger, the defence, protection and preservation of core values and the absence of threats. Security is about survival and ensuring that the conditions necessary for human existence are not compromised. People tend to actualize their potential, goals, aims and aspirations when they feel a sense of security. Efforts made can only be productive provided there is a serene, convenient, conducive and threat-free environment. When individuals and society are treated fairly, their characters and personalities are protected and their social, economic and political rights are maintained.

This means to be in a state of no fear. It is the existence of conditions within which people in a society can go about their normal daily activities without any threats to their lives or properties. Christopher however defines security as activities that ensure protection of a country, persons, and properties of the community against future threats, danger, mishaps and all other forms of perils (Christopher, 1995). In the view of Akin, security refers to "the situation that exists as a result of the establishment of measures for the protection of persons, information and property against hostile persons, influences and actions" (Ogunleye & Adewale, 2011). They further argued however that security is not the absence of threats or security issues, but the ability to rise to the challenges posed by these threats with expediency and expertise. This state of being free from any threat within or without, underscores the importance of putting in place actions and structures that can ensure the shelving of a people away from any harm. Security is the freedom of citizens to engage in their day-to-day activities safely, peacefully and without harassment. It equally connotes all-round protection of citizens: individuals or groups, properties, and trade and commerce financed both individually and by government. Walt (1991) presents security as involving knowledge of the root cause of challenges and of the use and control of well-equipped security agents to stop or at least combat the enemy in a war situation. Achumba et al. (2013) summarize security into four dimensions: peaceful pursuit of economy that yields income for good living, proactiveness of citizens, safety from criminal activities, as well as psychological terror. This definition indicates that security combats all threats – physical, economic and psychological. It does mean that there will always be threats which need to be combated as situations arise.

According to Eselebor (2013), two security schools of thought currently exist. They are traditionalist and non-

traditionalist. The traditionalists continue to support the Cold War conception of security which centers on military and state-centric approaches. This shows that traditionalists in security studies equate the concept of security with military accounting and the use of force. The focus on military threats and the use of force complement ideas of power and interest, rather than the tough-minded approach to foreign policy which seemed appropriate for the Cold War years (Garnett, 1996). The non-traditionalist school on the other hand, has gone a step further by broadening the meaning of security from just the military and use of force to include issues such as human, environmental, economic, social, feminist and other threats. While non-traditional security focuses on what could possibly endanger the survival of the individual (human security) as well as the state, traditional security's emphasis is centered on the state. The border in this discourse is about protection, stability and security of the state.

Many scholars have various perceptions and understanding about the concept of security. The literal meaning of security it deals with the defense, safeguard and protection of the core values, and the nonexistence of threats to acquired values (Bakut, 2006). Similarly, security is defined as the protection, watching and the intelligence roles of the states, and the controlling of dangers to and the breaches of peace through a multilateral and bilateral process (Eze, 2005). Although, the issue of security is more attached with the army, some researchers caution its real meaning in this way stating that security is more than just military security or the external attacks.

Nwolise, (2006) opined that the African security as an ideology should be understood in its widest sense to comprise the economic security, environmental security, social security, food security, the fairness of life security, and the technical security. As such, the issue of security is connected to development. Therefore, the security must be valued from both the military and non-military perspectives. He further argued that the foundations of insecurity can be seen from two viewpoints. The first perspective is internal sources that include: political domination, inequality, human rights abuses, socio-economic injustices, resource mismanagement, military coups, extreme deprivation, poor leadership and marginalization, revolution, civil wars, terrorism, ethnic and religious riots, secession, food riots and among others, all hanging on the bad government, operation of ethnic and religious differences, among others. The second approach is the external causes which include: cross-national raids, military invasion, subversive infiltration, smuggling, sabotage, espionage, terrorism, and cross-border misconduct among others (Nwolise, 2006).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview of Border Porosity in Africa

Border porosity, or the vulnerability of national boundaries to unauthorized crossings, has become a pressing issue with significant implications for peacebuilding, national, and international security. Traditionally, borders have been seen as physical barriers that separate nations and regulate the movement of people, goods, and services. However, in recent decades, globalization, technological advancements, and geopolitical shifts have contributed to the erosion of border controls and the rise of border porosity.

Borders in Africa aside from being largely porous generally, are often managed by limited personnel and other security agencies saddled with the responsibility of securing the land and maritime borders. Security agencies such as the Nigeria Police Force, the Nigerian Immigration Service, the Nigeria Intelligence Agency and the Defence Intelligence Agency are ill-equipped, ill-trained and unmotivated to prevent cross-border crimes and to facilitate harmonious interactions between countries as a result of the mismanagement of these borders. The porous nature of Nigeria's borders has been a major source of insecurity in the country. The lack of effective border control has allowed for the easy movement of weapons, drugs, and other contraband across the borders. This has enabled criminal networks to operate unchecked, leading to increased levels of violence and insecurity. In addition, the porous nature of the borders has enabled the smuggling of people, including refugees and migrants, into the country.

The porosity of Nigeria's borders has also had implications for peacebuilding, national and international security. The lack of effective border control has enabled the proliferation of weapons and other contraband, which has been used to fuel conflicts between different ethnic and religious groups. In addition, the influx of

people from neighboring countries has fueled existing tensions between different ethnic and religious groups, leading to increased levels of violence and insecurity.

One key factor contributing to the problem is the increasing inter-connectedness of economies and societies through trade, travel, and communication networks. While these developments have brought about numerous benefits, they have also made it easier for criminal networks engaged in activities such as drug trafficking, human smuggling, and arms smuggling to exploit weak border controls and engage in illicit activities. Additionally, the rise of global terrorist organizations has highlighted the potential for border porosity to facilitate the movement of militants, recruitment, and the planning and execution of attacks across borders.

This porosity has, therefore, nearly perpetually opened the borders to transnational crimes. Due to the fact that they are largely unchecked, illicit activities carried out across the African borders daily thrive to the extent of becoming established across various sub-regions of Africa and paramount to this study is the implications of this porosity on peacebuilding, national and international security. When national boundaries are not well policed, the unrestricted flow of both negative and positive variables will not only threaten the nation's security but also its sovereignty which the Treaty of Westphalia of 1648 gave much to the ability of a state to maintain her territorial integrity. Both evil and good permeate into a country via the national borders, the extent to which one dominates the other depends on the porosity of national borders.

Arms proliferation due to porous borders allows for the unrestricted flow of small guns into and out of Nigeria, with the majority of these weapons ending up in the hands of non-state actors who use them to stir up trouble and render society unfriendly, ungoverned, and unsafe thus causing serious security challenges. Border security is a very crucial and essential part of a country as it goes a long way in determining/affecting national security. The nature of the porous border in Nigeria encourage smuggling as Nigeria has over one thousand illegal routes through which aliens from neighboring country uses to trek-in into the country. This equally indicates to us the high rate of crime and public disorder in Nigeria as a result of access and availability of numerous illegal borders. The infiltration of non-Nigerians and illegal immigrants mixing up with the teaming unemployed youths engage into various criminal activities which cannot be managed by our security personnel's has led to possessions of the sophisticated arms uses by militants, these actions has shown to us that our entry borders are not safe. This indicate the level of security threat to the country.

The Nigeria–Bénin border has been a beehive of transnational crimes in recent times. This is largely due to the porosity of the border especially along the Idi-Iroko axis in Ogun State. Similarly, the current trend of globalization has reinforced trans-border movements of people, goods and services across the Idi-Iroko border corridor, creating opportunities for criminal elements and undermining effective border control, in a double jeopardy for Nigeria. These developments account for the escalation of illegal and undocumented migrants and transnational criminal activities in these border areas. The challenge is not just about the free flow of migrants along these two-proximate borders, that is novel, but the number of unofficial routes or ungoverned spaces and the unchecked way such cross-border movements occur. This is consistent with the submission of the African Union in 2005 that an estimated 76.3 million people are engaged in both legal and illegal intra-African migratory movements (Okafor & Obiora, 2010).

Onuoha (2013) noted that effective border management is imperative for the preservation of national security. According to Spencer (2007), border is the first point of combat against terrorism and the last line of a state's territorial integrity. Bodunde (2015) has argued that some Nigeria borders are demarcated with drums and logs of woods which show the state of nature of our borders. In spite of joint patrol and task force at the borders, security personnel are not enough to manage both regular and irregular route of entrance into Nigeria state. The nature of illegal arms entrance into Nigeria through unidentified official borders has led to raising increase of various categories of crime from Boko Haram Insurgency, Kidnapping, arms banditry, militancy /Oil bunkering and farmers/herders conflicts.

The state of insecurity in Nigeria today is no news to anyone and although it can be blamed on some factors that have been left unchecked for a long time by both the government and people of Nigeria but the level of insecurity in the country today is threatening to tear her apart and requires quick, adequate and a new approach to deal with the security challenges affecting the nation (Alemika, 2004).The porous nature of Nigeria's

borders has been a major source of insecurity in the country. The lack of effective border control has allowed for the easy movement of weapons, drugs, and other contraband across the borders. This has enabled criminal networks to operate freely without caution, leading to increased levels of violence and insecurity. It has paved way for truncation of peace and security witnessed in the nation as a result of transnational organised crimes and other criminal activities carried out along the borders of the country.

The effect of this has also filtered into neighbouring states that share boundaries with Nigeria, including the Benin Republic in the West, and Chad, Niger and Cameroun in the North, almost straining the relationship between the countries on different occasions. The porosity of the Nigerian borders has made it easy for criminal activities to be carried out along the borders with damaging effects on the nation's peace, security and economy. In this regard, effective border management is an important requisite for ensuring national security and economic prosperity. In order to address the issue of border porosity and its implications for peacebuilding, national and international security in Nigeria, it is essential that the government takes steps to strengthen border control.

Assessment of the Issues Relating to the Birth of Border Porosity in Nigeria

African in general and specifically Nigerian border problem is related to colonial history where at a conference in Berlin; Germany between November 1884 and February, 1885 the territory was partitioned and carved out for the Royal Niger Company. However, its porosity has been worsened by the failure of succeeding governments to properly administer these borders. Onuoha (2013) observed that the high level of insecurity on African borders is largely due to the way they are administered and managed, and less to do with how colonialists patterned them.

Arising from the partitioning of Africa at the Berlin conference of 1884-1885 by European powers, artificial borderlines which were drawn on paper to serve as a demarcation between African states were created without putting into consideration the identities of the affected people (Wesseling, 1996). Marenin (2010) notes that borders, especially in Africa, which cut across communities, were created by the colonialists without considering ethnic issues. Before the creation of the borders and their imposition on communities, ethnic or economic ties already existed. Evidence of formal and informal cooperation in a variety of areas already existed despite the restrictions linked to the existence of a political border.

Nigeria's porous borders are the result of colonial powers dividing Africa and post-colonial states maintaining them. The fundamental purpose of colonialists in balkanizing Africa was to establish a zone of influence based on political and economic issues rather than a physical barrier. Different ethnic and cultural communities are divided by these lines, which are defined by latitudes, longitudes, geometric circles, and straight lines (James, 1989). As a result, most African countries find it difficult to manage international borders that span across cultural and ethnic groups.

The demarcation of the border between Seme (Nigerian) and Krake (Benin Republic) is through the use of ropes. The ropes are tied to drums filled with sand and after interrogation by the security agents, the rope is been lifted and vehicles can pass. It is possible to plant maize in Diffa (Niger republic) and plant guinea corn in Kukawa (Nigeria) while claiming ownership of the same piece of land. Terrorists like the Boko Haram have taken advantage of this undifferentiated border to recruit and regroup against the Nigerian state, especially at the northern borderlines (Nasiru Shidali, Amina Musa Kaita, Maiye B. Olusegun 2023).

The length of the Nigeria-Benin-Niger-Cameroun-Chad borderlines, which is about 3,984km (Asiwaju, 1994); the characteristics terrain, its porous nature, as well as other natural constraints makes the thought of its effective policing unthinkable. Countries with penetrable borders usually experience criminal activities along their border. This is very popular among African countries such as Nigeria. Nigeria shares land borders with four countries namely; Benin Republic in the West, Chad and Niger in the North and Cameroon in the East (Nte, 2011). Notwithstanding the efforts of border security agencies, the borders in Nigeria have been identified as being porous. Thus, Nigeria has reported various kinds of organized crimes along these borders, ranging from drug trafficking, money laundering, corruption and fraud, trafficking in persons, especially

women and children, smuggling of firearms, kidnapping and armed robbery, oil theft and piracy (Alemika, 2013).

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In Nigeria, bad governance and lack of political will by successive governments since the country's independence in 1960 have adversely affected all the institutions of the country (Oni and Muyiwa, 2019). This fact also ramifies border security, thus, making it easy for illegal external incursion and cross-border criminal activities to occur within the country as precipitated by the proliferation of illegal routes in the country. Security Council Report (2011) asserts that the level of corruption that has permeated various government institutions and government officials in West Africa has made effective border security impossible and this is one of the reasons the phenomenon of illegal routes continues to thrive.

In Nigeria, the porosity of the borders has paved way for truncation of peace and security witnessed in the nation as a result of transnational organized crimes carried out along the borders of the country. The effect of this has also filtered into neighbouring states that share boundaries with Nigeria, including the Benin Republic in the West, and Chad, Niger and Cameroun in the North, almost straining the relationship between the countries on different occasions. Transnational Organised Crime (TOC) has been likened to cancer which is fast becoming a global phenomenon. As it is a current trend in underdeveloped nations, so is it in developed nations of the world.

The porosity of the Nigerian borders has, therefore, made it easy for criminal activities to be carried out along the borders with damaging effects on the nation's security and economy. In this regard, effective border management is an important requisite for ensuring national security and economic prosperity. Alluding to this, Onuoha (2013) noted that effective border management is imperative for the preservation of national security. Perhaps, this explains why Spencer (2007) asserts that the border is the first point of combat against terrorism and the last line of a state's territorial integrity. Okumu (2010) contends that while many African states recognize the need for a secure and peaceful border, only a few have existing strategies for a secure border.

The influx of non-Nigerians and illegal immigrants mixing up with the teeming unemployed youths engage into various criminal activities which cannot be manage by our security personnel's has led to possessions of the sophisticated arms uses by militants, these actions has showing to us that our entry borders are not safe, these indicate the level of security threat to the country. Bodunde (2015) has argues that some Nigeria borders are demarcated with drums and logs of woods which show the state of nature of our borders. In spite of joint patrol and task force at the borders, security personnel are not enough to manage both regular and irregular route of entrance into Nigeria state. The nature of illegal arms entrance into Nigeria through unidentified official borders has led to raising increase of various categories of crime from Boko Haram Insurgency, Kidnapping, arms banditry, militancy /Oil bunkering and farmers/herders conflicts.

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trafficking, money laundering, corruption and fraud, trafficking in persons, especially women and children, smuggling of fire arms, kidnapping and armed robbery, oil theft and piracy (Alemika, 2013). Achumba, Ighomereho, and Akpor-Robaro (2013) noted that small arms and other lethal weapons are readily available in Nigerian markets because of the porosity of Nigeria's borders as well as the weak security system. They further stated that the availability and accessibility of these weapons by non-state actors are responsible for the various forms of criminal activities witnessed across the country.

Gros (2011) opined that the situation of Nigeria's porous borders, which serve as conduits for illicit transnational traffic of small arms and light weapons and drugs, is enhanced by the limited presence of security and law enforcement officials. According to him, if they are present, they are poorly equipped, poorly paid, poorly trained and sometimes compromised or recruited to do the bid of the insurgents. Akinyemi (2013) noted that inadequate manpower has a negative implication for border security in Nigeria. It makes the policing of borders a herculean task for border guards. The resultant effect of this also would be the proliferation of illegal routes for criminal activities in and out of the country.

To Monguno B. (2021), Africa's porous borders remain a major source of concern as this has aided smuggling of prohibited items and irregular migration as well as other transnational organized crimes. Nigeria is bordered to the North by Niger, to the East by Chad and Cameroon, to the South by the Gulf of Guinea of the Atlantic Ocean, and to the West by Benin. According to him, unless and until our borders are adequately manned and policed, Nigeria will never have peace. He posited that while the phenomena of ethnicity, religion, economic deprivation, and youth unemployment have been frequently implicated in the recent violence experienced in contemporary Nigerian society, the role of Nigeria's porous borders, both land, and sea, in exacerbating insecurity in the country is yet to be appreciated and adequately addressed. These terrorist organisations continue to exploit porous border areas in order to damage innocent people's livelihoods. In his words, despite the establishment of various joint security operations to strategically contain the Boko Haram sect in Nigeria, insurgent violence still dots most parts of the Northeast as a result of various factors one of which is the porosity of borders.

Mark and Iwebi (2019) sees the lack of effective border control as facilitating arms smuggling and, as a result, the development of small arms and light weapons (SALW) in the country. Inevitably, these weapons fall into the hands of criminals, who employ them to conduct a range of offenses. Seniora and Poitevin (2013) averred that lack of clear delimitation and demarcation between independent states can lead to tension between them, which can as well spill over to neighbouring countries. Nigeria's national security is easily discernible from the fact that most of the troubled states of Nigeria are linked to international border routes of the Cameroun, Niger and Chad which scholars described as exceedingly porous and unmanageable (Eselebor and Okunade, 2021). Sagir (2013) argues that the vastness of the nation's borders in the face of challenges brings to fore the need for a rethink on the management and security of the Nigeria's borders and seaports without which an effective fight against insurgency, arms trafficking and proliferation will remain an optical illusion. He argues further that the need for innovative technology and sound intelligence platforms for border agencies remains a panacea to this problem.

Akinyemi's (2013) assertion that in West Africa, Nigeria is both the most populous and the richest country and this incontrovertibly makes her a point of destination for citizens of neighbouring countries. It is worrisome that the movements of the migrants into Nigeria are without proper documentation, as many of them explore illegal routes into the country, thus, escaping routine immigrants' checks at the border posts by officials of the NIS and other related security agencies. The influx of unchecked and undocumented migrants has continued to pose unpleasant effects on Nigeria's national security as many foreigners were fingered as mercenaries in the recent Fulani herders and farmers conflicts in Nigeria's northeast.

Durkin (2009) posits that porous features of the border region and the prevailing economic policies of the neighboring states are tantamount to influence illegal cross-border transactions in goods, currency and other threatening circumstances. To Ginifer and Ismail (2005), the porosity of Nigeria's borders provides an evidence of the of cross-border criminalities, obvious because of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALWs) and facilitated by massive cross-border trafficking and mercenary activities as evident from (Chad and Niger) and the country's long poorly constructed borders that are inadequately regulated due to

insufficient funds and the lack of capability of the security personnel. To them, part of the consequences of such horrible situation consist of threat to the security and peace of Nigeria, danger to Nigerian territorial sovereignty especially from the sides of the eastern and northern boundaries, loss of properties and lives of the Nigerian citizens present in the border zones and the constant provocation of Nigerians in those border parts.

Meanwhile, a professor of African History, Peace and Conflict Studies and the pioneer Director of the Institute for Peace and Strategic Studies, University of Ibadan, Oyo State, Isaac Olawale Albert (2021), blamed poor governance for Nigeria's inability to secure its borders. He noted that the Nigeria's border porosity can be explained under three major causes namely; neglect of border communities, corruption by officials at the borders and failure of government to deploy modern technology for effective border management were issues that had fueled the problem.

The dilemmas facing Nigeria are numerous and complex. Both the approved and unapproved point of entry are major sources of security concerns in the context of border management. Presently, Nigeria has to contend with security failures resulting from open and insecure borders with the mostly Francophone nations of Benin, Niger, Cameroun and Chad (Eselebor and Okunade, 2021).

Threat to life and property are indicators of lack of national security. Once there is danger, threat to lives and properties, banditry, terrorism, civil disturbances, riots, demonstrations, communal and religious conflicts, illegal influx into the nation, smuggling of illegal goods, and the inability of the nation to tackle these anomalies effectively, then the peaceful co-existence of the differing members of the society would suffer thus indicating security challenges (Onuabuchi, N. E. 2022).

The problem with the nature and characteristics of the management of Nigerian borders with her neighbours is that, they are poorly demarcated and poorly manned thereby making them porous. Nigeria has been battling with transnational crimes which pose serious threat to national security and this ranges from drug trafficking, money laundering, illegal arms trafficking, smuggling of all kinds, (contraband, stolen cars, firearms) theft, advance fee fraud known as 419, kidnapping among others (Adelugba & Ujomu, 2008). To them, these aforementioned factors poses a threat to national security in Nigeria and they ruin the image of the country in the international environment.

Theoretical Framework

The theory adopted for this research work is the Functional Prerequisites Theory. Functional prerequisites as a theory propounded by Talcott Parsons in the 19th century is very relevant in its analysis of society with regards to the survival of man wherever he finds himself. It is an established phenomenon that every human society has some basic needs or requirements necessary for its survival and in fact, a continuous existence. These basic needs are termed functional prerequisites of society. In concrete terms, these include food, shelter, clothing and above all, protection of life. They are basic needs an individual requires to live his life without which man cannot remain alive. Sociologists of Western orientation agreed that functional prerequisites are important because human life solely depends on them. They went further to observe that functional prerequisites are necessary for the satisfaction of a society which in turn enhances their survival.

Parsons (1951), a Western scholar, asserted that in sociological research, functional prerequisites are the essential needs; such as food, clothing, shelter, and money, that an individual needs to live above the poverty line. Christine (2002), also a Western scholar, defines functional prerequisites as the fundamental needs or necessary conditions of existence that are often hard to identify. He further avers that society needs basic elements for it to thrive and that comes in the form of food, clothing and shelter. This is highly essential for daily survival. It is conspicuous that in the border communities and the nation at large, poverty is on the rise and in a bid to survive, people embark on different means to ensure survival and that is why cross-border crimes which are threats to the borders and the national security of a state are rife. These activities being criminal cannot be carried out through government-approved routes. They can only be carried out through illegal routes and this points to the reason why the proliferation of illegal routes is on a phenomenal increase along the borders of Nigeria.

Of all the theories reviewed which are not only relevant but also gave a background knowledge and understanding of the research topic, The Functional Prerequisites Theory is the most appropriate in terms of relevance, adaptability and applicability to the Nigerian situation. Adejuyigbe (2006) argued that functional prerequisite provide an explanation for environmental adaptation, societal goals attainment, integration and the maintenance of pattern. Though it was propounded in the 19th century the theory is still relevant to the explanation of the survival social system in the modern day world. It is unarguably clear that the prerequisite function of the Nigerian government to provide the basic needs of its citizens among which protection is key. Nigerian porous borders and its attendant challenges causing untold exposure of citizens to various internal and external aggression, threats to peaceful co-existence and a whole lot of peace and security issues exposed government's deficiency in this aspect.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The mixed method research design was adopted for the study. A total of eighty (80) respondents were sampled for the study while purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants who could provide valuable insights into the topic. Data for the study were collected from primary sources through questionnaires, interviews and secondary sources through review of related books, journals, articles, publications, books, newspaper publications, reports, and other internet based applications. The study population included personnel from each of the security agencies assigned to secure the borders. In total, fifty two (52) personnel evenly spread across the three security agencies took part in the questionnaire administration while a total of twenty eight (28) interviews were conducted and it included Two (2) Unit Heads of Nigerian Customs Service and Nigerian Police Force, Nine (9) okada riders, Seven (7) drivers and ten (10) petty traders.

Study Area

The study area is Seme border. Seme Border is a settlement in Nigeria on the border with Benin. It is about thirty minutes drive from Badagry on the coastal road between Lagos and Cotonou. Seme is a part of Badagry Division of Lagos State. With the present political division in the state, it is under Badagry -West Local council development area (LCDA). A new multilateral facility for the border post was formally opened on 23 October 2018. The border between Nigeria and Benin is roughly 700 km long. The border corresponds to the inter-colonial border between British and French territories that was set up in 1889 (Flynn, 1997). According to him, the border region encompasses a large surface of lagoon and marshlands in the Queme valley, which been used as a transportation route and trade route and are very difficult to control by security authorities. There are various local markets found along the border line. These markets serve as the backbone of exchange between both countries.

Historically, the border has been the heart of economic activities between both countries. For instance, the southeast, including Lagos and Badagry, had been a focal point of economic activities. The border region between Lagos and Seme-Podji in the South has always been a busy area. Presently, the economic needs of the cities of Porto Novo, Cotonou and Lagos which are linked through the border region in the South are dependent on cross-border exuberance. This is further stimulated by a high porosity of the borders. The lagoon that links Porto Novo to Lagos facilitates the transportation of agricultural goods, such as rice and cooking oil (Constanze, 2014).

Moreover, the Beninese economy is highly dependent on informal trade with Nigeria, especially in re-exportation of goods. These activities are profitable, mainly due to the nonconformity of economic policies between Nigeria and Benin. The difference in import tolls, which is higher in Nigeria, have boosted commercial activities and yielded benefits from re-exportation activities. Studies have shown that Benin and Nigeria has organized their development policies around the trade of re-exportation. Benin imports goods from Europe and Asia and exports them to the Nigerian market (Constanze, 2014). Though, re-exportation is practiced by all of Nigeria's neighboring countries, but Benin tops the list. This is mainly due to the geographical proximity between the two cities of Cotonou and Lagos.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Data Analysis and Discussion of Findings

Demographic characteristics of respondents and the analysis of respondents responses to the questionnaire designed to address the four objectives of the research is presented below in simple explanations.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variables	Measurement	Frequency	Total	Percent %
Gender	Male	30	52	57.7
	Female	22		42.3
Age	20-30years	10	52	19.2
	31-40years	13		25
	41-50years	15		28.9
	51-60years	13		25
	Above 61years	1		1.9
Department	Immigration	17	52	32.7
	Customs	20		38.5
	Police	15		28.8
Location	Seme Border	52	52	100
Length of Stay in the Location	1-3years	22	52	42.3
	4-6years	7		13.5
	7-10years	11		21.2
	Above 10years	12		23.0

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Analysis of the Findings to the Study Objectives

The analysis of research findings contained in this part of the study is done in sections with each section addressing specific objective.

Objective One: Factors Responsible for Border Porosity in Nigeria

The factors responsible for Nigeria's border porosity can be attributed to several reasons as shown in the table 2 above. These factors are explained below supported by the percentage of respondents that are in agreement that they are the major ones responsible for Nigeria's border porosity.

Insufficient Manpower: Research confirms the existence of several unguarded borders in the country. This can be attributed to insufficient manpower to guard the myriads of porous borders existing in the country. As

seen in Table 2 above, 90% of the respondents identified insufficient manpower as one of the major factors responsible for border porosity in Nigeria.

Arbitrary delimitation of African borders: The arbitrary division of African borders during the colonial era has created complex and extensive border lines that are challenging to monitor and control. This has made it easier for illegal activities, such as smuggling and human trafficking, to take place across these porous borders. 86% of respondents strongly agreed and agreed that the arbitrary delimitation of African Borders is another major cause of Nigeria's border porosity. Arising from the partitioning of Africa at the Berlin conference of 1884-1885 by European powers, artificial borderlines which were drawn on paper to serve as a demarcation between African states were created without putting into consideration the identities of the affected people (Wesseling, 1996). African in general and specifically Nigerian border problem is related to colonial history where at a conference in Berlin; Germany between November 1884 and February, 1885 the territory was partitioned and carved out for the Royal Niger Company. However, its porosity has been worsened by the failure of succeeding governments to properly administer these borders. Onuoha (2013) observed that the high level of insecurity on African borders is largely due to the way they are administered and managed, and less to do with how colonialists patterned them. This research findings conformed with this assertion.

Several unguarded access routes: Nigeria has numerous unguarded access routes along its borders, making it easier for criminals to evade detection and transport illegal goods across the border. 96% of total respondents believed that THOSE several unguarded access routes contributes to border porosity. These routes include remote areas, forests, and waterways that are difficult to monitor effectively. This further confirmed the position of Osimen et al. (2017) that there are over hundreds of illicit routes in Nigeria that connect or lead to certain bordering African nations. Nigeria's borders are extensive, with hundreds of pathways connecting it to Cameroon, Chad, and Niger, as well as Mali, Libya, and Sudan. According to conservative estimates by locals, there are well over 250 trails linking or leading directly to Cameroon, Chad, or Niger from the Damaturu/Maiduguri axis. These routes are mostly unknown to security forces, are unmanned and unguarded.

Poverty of border communities: Many border communities in Nigeria suffer from poverty and lack of basic amenities and economic opportunities. This socioeconomic condition makes individuals more vulnerable to engaging in illegal activities as a means of survival, contributing to border porosity. Over 94% felt this factor is a major cause of the porosity of our borders. These border communities are largely impoverished with little or no developmental project or visible infrastructures.

Poor funding: Insufficient funding allocated to border security measures hampers the ability of security agencies to effectively monitor and control the borders. Lack of adequate financial resources limits the deployment of personnel, technology, and infrastructure necessary for robust border control. 94% argued that if adequate funding is devoted to border security, we would have lesser porous borders and security challenges in Nigeria.

Abuse of ECOWAS free movement protocol: The ECOWAS free movement protocol allows for the free movement of people and goods across member countries, including Nigeria. However, this protocol is sometimes exploited by individuals engaging in illegal activities, taking advantage of lax border controls and weak monitoring mechanisms. About 93% of respondents agreed that the abuse of ECOWAS free movement protocol is contributory to Nigeria's border porosity and its attendant security challenges.

Corruption: Corruption within security agencies and border officials undermines efforts to secure the borders effectively. Bribery and collusion with criminal networks erode the integrity of border control operations and contribute to porous borders. 85%

Lack of cooperation among security agencies: Insufficient collaboration and coordination among different security agencies responsible for border control create gaps and overlaps in their operations. 84% of respondents believes that lack of synergy among security agencies allow for loopholes that criminals can exploit.

Non-prioritization of border security by the government: Inadequate attention and priority given to border

security policies and initiatives by the government can hinder the effectiveness of measures put in place to secure the borders. 96% believes this is a causal factor. Government's inadequate attention to the development of border security is a major factor responsible for border porosity.

Underdevelopment of border areas: Neglected development of border areas, including poor infrastructure, limited access to basic services, and lack of economic opportunities, makes these regions susceptible to criminal activities and smuggling. 88% agree that the underdevelopment of border areas contribute immensely to border porosity. Border areas are seriously marginalized and have remained underdeveloped due to lack of government's presence.

Lack of collaboration with neighboring countries: 92% of the respondents believe that limited cooperation and information sharing with neighboring countries' security agencies and border control authorities create challenges in addressing cross-border criminal activities and securing the borders effectively.

Non-deployment of appropriate technology: Insufficient utilization of modern technology, such as surveillance systems, biometric identification, and drones, hinders the monitoring and tracking of illicit movements across the borders. 96% of respondents agree that this is one of the factors responsible for border porosity in Nigeria

Inadequate training of security agents: Insufficient training and capacity building for border security personnel limit their ability to effectively respond to emerging security threats and perform their duties efficiently. 90% of respondents agree with this.

Inadequate facilities and logistics for border control: Insufficient provision of necessary infrastructure, equipment, and logistics for border control operations impairs the ability to monitor, detect, and intercept illegal activities at the borders. 96% agree that this factor is one of the major factors responsible for border porosity.

Lack of sophisticated weapons for security agencies: 98% agree that shortage of modern and sophisticated weaponry for security agencies hampers their ability to effectively counter armed criminal groups involved in cross-border criminal activities.

Addressing these factors requires a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach, including improving border infrastructure, enhancing cooperation among security agencies and neighboring countries, increasing funding for border security, investing in training and technology, and prioritizing the development of border communities.

Objective Two: Emerging cross-border related Security Threats

Insecurity and Conflict - Insecurity and conflict are cross-border related security threats that pose risks to the stability and safety of nations. Insecurity refers to the lack of safety and protection within a region, while conflict involves disagreements and hostility between different groups or nations. These factors often go hand in hand and can escalate into violent confrontations, leading to significant security challenges. All respondents (100%) saw insecurity and conflict as a major consequence of Nigeria's border porosity.

Rise in Terrorism and Insurgency - Terrorism and insurgency are two interconnected threats that have become increasingly prevalent across borders. 92% of the respondents agree that rise in terrorism and insurgency is a consequence of border porosity. Terrorism involves the use of violence and intimidation to create fear and achieve political, religious, or ideological goals. Insurgency, on the other hand, refers to an armed rebellion against the established government or authority. A significant threat is the rise of terrorism, particularly from extremist groups such as Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP). These groups often operate across borders, making it challenging for security forces to effectively combat them. Both terrorism and insurgency can spill over borders, as extremist groups exploit weak security measures and establish networks in multiple countries, posing a threat to regional and global security.

Smuggling of firearms - The smuggling of firearms across borders contributes to the escalation of security threats. Illegal arms trafficking enables criminal organizations, terrorist groups, and insurgents to acquire weapons, which they can then use to perpetrate violence and destabilize regions. 96% agree that smuggling of firearms is a consequence of border porosity. The flow of firearms across borders makes it challenging for governments to maintain law and order, as criminals and armed groups can easily obtain weapons from neighboring countries. Gros (2011) discovered that Nigeria's porous borders, which act as conduits for illegal international trafficking of small arms and light weapons and narcotics, are aggravated by the minimal presence of security and law enforcement authorities. If present, they are poorly armed, low paid, poorly trained, and sometimes compromised or recruited to carry out the rebels' objectives. Hazen and Horner (2007), also noticed that, due to our porous borders and inadequate security system, illicit goods, firearms, and small guns readily enter Nigeria from neighbouring countries. According to Onuoha (2013), about 70% and 8 million illicit firearms in West Africa were alleged to migrate into Nigeria through neighbouring nations.

Infiltration of armed groups - The infiltration of armed groups across borders refers to the movement of individuals or groups involved in violence or armed conflicts from one country to another. 92% agree that this infiltration can occur due to various factors, such as porous borders, weak border control, or collusion among corrupt officials. When armed groups infiltrate across borders, they can carry out attacks, support local insurgencies, or exploit existing conflicts, exacerbating security challenges for both the affected country and its neighbors.

Cybersecurity - Cybersecurity is a cross-border security threat that arises from the increasing reliance on digital technologies and interconnected networks. It encompasses the protection of computer systems, networks, and data from unauthorized access, theft, or damage. Cyber-attacks can originate from anywhere in the world and target individuals, governments, or organizations, posing a significant risk to national security, economic stability, and personal privacy. 85% of respondents agree that Cybersecurity is also an emerging cross-border threat, as criminals exploit the digital space to carry out fraud, hacking, and other cybercrimes. These activities transcend national boundaries, making it necessary for collaborative efforts to combat them.

Farmer-Herder Crisis - The farmer-herder crisis refers to conflicts between agricultural farmers and nomadic herders over access to land, water, and resources. This crisis often occurs in regions where there is competition for limited resources, such as grazing areas. 94% of respondents agree that porous borders aided the farmer-herder crisis across Nigeria. The clashes between farmers and herders can escalate into violence, leading to loss of lives, displacement of communities, and further exacerbating existing security challenges. In some cases, these conflicts can transcend national borders, as herders and farmers cross boundaries in search of resources.

Drug Trafficking - Drug trafficking involves the illegal production, transportation, and sale of illicit drugs across borders. 96% of respondents agree that porous borders encourage drug trafficking. This illicit trade poses significant security threats, as it fuels organized crime, corruption, violence, and addiction. Drug trafficking networks often span multiple countries, taking advantage of porous borders, corruption, and weak law enforcement. The profits generated from drug trafficking can fund criminal and terrorist activities, destabilizing regions and undermining the rule of law. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime has identified Nigeria as one of the eight nations with the worst incidence of human trafficking (Austral, 2014).

Human Trafficking - Human trafficking is a grave cross-border security concern involving the illegal trade and exploitation of individuals. It encompasses various forms, such as forced labor, sexual exploitation, and organ trafficking. Human trafficking networks operate across borders, luring vulnerable individuals into deceptive situations and exploiting their rights and dignity. This illicit trade not only violates human rights but also contributes to social instability and poses challenges for law enforcement agencies in multiple countries. 98% of respondents agree that human trafficking is a product of porous borders.

Addressing these emerging cross-border related security threats requires a multi-dimensional approach and effective strategies to mitigate their impact on global security. This would involve international cooperation, intelligence sharing, strengthened border control measures, and capacity building for security forces.

Objective Three: Implication of Border Porosity on National and International Security National Security

The porosity of Nigeria's borders pose significant implications for national security across various domains. Several challenges arise as a result, including the infiltration of criminal elements, terrorism and insurgency, economic impact, infiltration of armed groups, human trafficking and irregular migration, spread of infectious diseases, infiltration of strange doctrines and religion, weak governance and corruption, border disputes and insecurity, smuggling and illicit trade, food insecurity, influx of terrorists/rebels, rise in criminal gang activities, banditry and kidnappings, and illegal immigration.

Infiltration of Criminal Elements: 98% agreed that Nigeria's porous borders make it easier for criminal elements such as armed groups, smugglers, and organized crime networks to infiltrate the country. This can lead to increased crime rates, including drug trafficking, arms smuggling, human trafficking and organized crime syndicates, leading to increased criminal activities within the country. Such activities undermine national security by destabilizing communities and eroding public trust in government institutions.

Terrorism and Insurgency: Nigeria has been grappling with terrorist groups like Boko Haram and other insurgent movements. 92% Agree that porous borders enable the movement of terrorist groups, such as Boko Haram and affiliated organizations, across Nigeria's borders. This facilitates the planning and execution of attacks, further exacerbating the challenge of terrorism and insurgency within the country. Porous borders provide avenues for these groups to carry out cross-border attacks, seek refuge, and recruit new members. This poses a significant threat to national security as it undermines the stability and unity of the country.

Economic Impact: The porosity of Nigeria's borders enables the proliferation of illicit trade, including the smuggling of goods, which has a negative economic impact on legitimate businesses. It also results in revenue loss for the government and jeopardizes economic growth. 96% of respondents believe that border porosity can have adverse economic implications for Nigeria. Smuggling of goods across porous borders undermines legitimate trade and leads to revenue losses for the government. It also hampers the growth of local industries and affects job creation. Additionally, the influx of undocumented migrants due to porous borders can strain public resources and services, impacting the economy and social fabric of the country. Porous borders can enable smuggling, illicit trade, and other illegal activities, which can negatively impact the economy. This can lead to loss of revenue for the government, exacerbate poverty, and create economic inequalities, potentially fueling social unrest and undermining peacebuilding efforts.

Infiltration of Armed Groups: 96% of respondents agree that the porous nature of Nigeria's borders allow armed groups, both domestic and foreign, to infiltrate Nigeria. This contributes to the overall insecurity and fuels conflict within the country. This finds support in the findings of Adeola and Oluyemi (2012) who posited that due to the porosity of the borders, unwarranted influx of migrants from neighbouring African countries such as Republic of Chad, Niger and Benin has become possible. And that these migrants who are mostly young men who are some of the perpetrators of crimes in Nigeria. Lamenting on this anomaly, Okumu (2011) viewed that the insecure border shave greatly contributed to severe security threats such as insurrection, incursion and terrorist activity.

Human Trafficking and Irregular Migration: 96% of respondents as shown in table 5 agree that porous borders make it easier for human traffickers to engage in their illegal activities. This includes the trafficking of men, women, and children for forced labor, sexual exploitation, and other forms of modern slavery. Additionally, irregular migration poses various social, economic, and security challenges.

Spread of Infectious Diseases: 96% of respondents agree that unrestricted movement across porous borders increases the risk of infectious diseases spreading across different regions. This includes the transmission of diseases such as Ebola, COVID-19, and other communicable diseases. Inadequate control over the movement of people and goods increases the risk of importing diseases into the country. This poses a threat to public health and can overwhelm healthcare systems, particularly during pandemics or outbreaks.

Infiltration of Strange Doctrines and Religion: Porous borders allow the infiltration of extremist ideologies,

religious doctrines, and radicalized individuals into Nigeria. 96% of respondents agree that border porosity contributes to the rise of religious tensions, social unrest, and potential conflicts.

Weak Governance and Corruption: The challenges associated with porous borders highlight the weaknesses in governance and corruption, as officials may be involved in facilitating illegal activities, such as smuggling and illicit trade. 94% of respondents agree that border porosity undermines the rule of law and weakens overall governance.

Border Disputes and Insecurity: Nigeria shares borders with several neighboring countries, and porous borders can exacerbate border disputes and territorial conflicts. Unregulated movement across borders can lead to tensions, clashes between communities, and potential conflicts. 94% of respondents agree that porous borders can lead to disputes with neighboring countries over territorial boundaries. These disputes can result in heightened tensions, conflicts, and insecurity along the borders. Resolving these disputes and ensuring border security is essential for maintaining national security and stability. The porous nature of the Nigeria-Benin border has led to a large number of cross-border raids and assaults between herdsmen and farmers over a pastoral conflict (Mailabari & Hamidu, 2015). All of these illicit activities undermine Nigeria's national security.

Smuggling and Illicit Trade: The porous borders provide opportunities for smuggling activities, such as the trafficking of weapons, drugs, and contraband goods. This not only undermines the economy but also contributes to insecurity and organized crime within Nigeria. 96% believes that this will not only leads to revenue loss for the government but also fuels criminal activities and undermines the rule of law.

Food Insecurity: Porous borders allow for the illegal importation of agricultural products, undermining local farmers and contributing to food insecurity within the country. 96% of respondents agree that Nigeria's border porosity has implications for the overall well-being and stability of Nigeria.

Influx of Terrorists/Rebels: The porous borders allowed an influx of terrorists and rebels from neighboring countries. 98% of respondents agree that this can further escalates security threats, promotes inter-communal conflicts, and hampers efforts to maintain peace and stability.

Rise in Criminal Gangs Activities, Banditry, and Kidnappings: Porous borders contribute to the rise in criminal gang activities, including banditry and kidnappings. Criminals take advantage of the open borders to carry out their illegal activities, posing a significant threat to the safety and security of Nigerian citizens. 98% of respondents agree that the growth of criminal elements who engage in armed robbery and other criminal activities which pose serious threats to national security as a result of Nigeria's border porosity cannot be overemphasized. The research conducted by Alemika, Ahmed and Chilaka (2013) corroborates this. They confirmed incidences of automobile hijacking by criminals who normally snatch expensive cars from their owners in Nigeria and take them to neighbouring countries like Benin, Togo and Chad to resell.

Banditry and Kidnappings: This has become a major disturbing security issue in Nigeria and consequently a major implication of poor border management to Nigerian national security. 98% of respondents agree that banditry and kidnappings are results of porous borders. This research finding finds relevance in the works of Menner (2014); Temisan (2015); Adetula (2015); Mailabari and Hamidu (2015) which explained that the problem of securing Nigeria border helps the Boko Haram to adequately launch several successful attacks in Nigeria eliminating thousands of people and displacing millions of people.

Illegal Immigration: The porous borders increase the likelihood of illegal immigration, with individuals entering Nigeria without proper documentation or undergoing background checks. 98% of respondents agreed that Unregulated movement across porous borders increases the risk of illegal migration, human trafficking, and smuggling of migrants. This poses security challenges, as it can lead to social tensions, exploitation, and the infiltration of criminal networks. Again, the porous nature of the Nigeria-Benin border has led to a large number of cross-border raids and assaults between herdsmen and farmers over a pastoral conflict (Mailabari & Hamidu, 2015). All of these illicit activities undermine Nigeria's national security. This study found that illegal immigration and arms smuggling have been aided by the Nigerian porous borders.

Addressing Nigeria's border porosity is crucial for safeguarding national security. It requires a comprehensive approach that includes strengthening border control measures, improving surveillance and intelligence capabilities, enhancing cooperation with neighboring countries, and investing in border infrastructure and technology. Additionally, addressing the root causes of insecurity, such as poverty, unemployment, and governance challenges, is vital for ensuring long-term national security.

Objective Three: Implication of Border Porosity on National and International Security International Security

The porous borders of Nigeria have several implications on international security, affecting not only Nigeria but also the broader region. Let's examine each impact and its implications:

Regional Instability: Nigeria's porous borders contribute to regional instability. 92% of respondents agree that the movement of armed groups, terrorists, criminals, and weapons across borders can spill over into neighboring countries, exacerbating existing conflicts or fueling new ones. Regional instability threatens peace, hampers economic development, and creates a fertile ground for transnational crimes and terrorism. This can have spillover effects on neighboring countries, leading to increased security risks and potential conflicts in the region. Nigeria's porous borders contribute to regional instability. The infiltration of terrorist groups like Boko Haram and ISWAP not only threatens Nigeria's security but also has spillover effects on neighboring countries, such as Chad, Niger, and Cameroon. These groups use Nigeria as a base for their activities and launch cross-border attacks, destabilizing the entire region. Nigeria's porous borders can contribute to regional instability, as conflicts and security threats can spill over into neighboring countries. This can have a destabilizing effect on the entire region, affecting trade, economic development, and political stability.

Transnational Crimes and Terrorism: 94% of respondents agree that porous borders facilitate the activities of transnational criminal networks, including drug trafficking, arms smuggling, human trafficking, and illicit trade and terrorism. These criminal activities not only undermine local security but also have far-reaching implications for international security. Transnational terrorist groups can exploit weak border control to establish safe havens, recruit fighters, and plan attacks, posing a significant threat to regional and global security. These activities can destabilize regions, create security threats, and hamper peacebuilding efforts by diverting resources away from development and towards security measures. Nigeria's porous borders facilitate transnational crime networks, including human trafficking, drug trafficking, arms smuggling, and the smuggling of goods. These criminal activities have implications beyond Nigeria's borders, affecting neighboring countries and even other regions. This contributes to the proliferation of illegal activities and undermines international security efforts. Porous borders enable the smuggling of illicit goods, including drugs, weapons, and contraband, which can have implications for international security. Transnational criminal networks exploit Nigeria's porous borders to conduct their illegal activities, further fueling organized crime and undermining global security efforts.

Cross-Border Conflicts: 92% of respondents agree that inadequate border control can lead to cross-border conflicts, as disputes over resources, territorial claims, or ethnic tensions spill over into neighboring countries. These conflicts can escalate rapidly, destabilizing the entire region and straining diplomatic relations between nations. The porous borders of Nigeria can become conduits for the spread of violence, hindering efforts to maintain peace and security.

Infiltration of Armed Groups: 94% of respondents believe that porous borders enable armed groups to infiltrate neighboring countries, leading to internal conflicts and regional instability. Infiltrators can provide support to local insurgencies, exacerbate existing conflicts, and perpetuate violence. This infiltration challenges the security of the affected countries and strains diplomatic relations between nations, as governments grapple with the cross-border movement of armed groups.

Diplomatic Relations: 96% believes that the porous borders of Nigeria can strain diplomatic relations between Nigeria and neighboring countries. This can impact collaboration and cooperation on peacebuilding initiatives, making it challenging to address shared security concerns effectively. Cross-border conflicts, infiltration of armed groups, and transnational crimes can create tensions among nations. Disputes over border

security and the perception of inadequate control may lead to strained relations, affecting regional cooperation and collaborative efforts to address common security challenges.

Spread of Infectious Diseases: Porous borders can facilitate the spread of infectious diseases, posing risks to international health security. Research findings reveal that 92% of respondents agree that inadequate border control measures can allow the unrestricted movement of individuals, including those carrying contagious diseases. This can lead to the rapid spread of infectious diseases across borders, affecting not only Nigeria but also neighboring countries and potentially becoming a global health concern. Porous borders can facilitate the spread of infectious diseases across borders. In the context of public health emergencies, such as outbreaks or pandemics, the inability to effectively control the movement of people and goods can have implications for international health security, as diseases can easily cross borders and affect global populations.

Transnational Organized Crimes and Terrorism: The porous borders of Nigeria enable transnational organized crime networks and terrorist groups to operate across multiple countries. These criminal activities, such as drug trafficking, human trafficking, and arms smuggling, undermine security, stability, and governance beyond Nigeria's borders. The interconnected nature of these crimes contributes to international security threats, necessitating regional and international cooperation to effectively combat them. Nigeria has been grappling with the Boko Haram insurgency, which has spilled over into neighboring countries. 98% of respondents agree that porous borders provide opportunities for terrorists to cross borders, seek refuge, and expand their operations. This poses a significant challenge to international security, as it allows for the diffusion of extremist ideologies and the potential for cross-border terrorist attacks.

Human Trafficking and Irregular Migration: Porous borders facilitate human trafficking and irregular migration, with implications for international security. Human trafficking networks exploit weak border control to transport individuals across borders, leading to human rights abuses, social instability, and potential security risks. Irregular migration can also strain resources and put pressure on neighboring countries, affecting regional stability and cooperation. 94% of respondents believe that transnational criminal networks exploit these vulnerabilities to engage in human trafficking, smuggling of migrants, and exploitation. This has implications for international security as it affects human rights, contributes to instability, and undermines governance in destination countries. As conflict and insecurity persist within the country, many people are forced to flee their homes in search of safe and Peaceful location.

Poor Regional Cooperation and Collaboration: 96% of respondents agree that lack of regional cooperation and collaboration is a direct consequence of border porosity. Inadequate information sharing, limited joint operations, and weak border management systems hinder effective responses to transnational crimes, terrorism, and cross-border conflicts. Improved regional cooperation is essential to address these security challenges and enhance international security.

Addressing Nigeria's border porosity is crucial not only for the security and stability of the country but also for international security. To mitigate these implications on international security, it is requires comprehensive strategies that focus on strengthening border control measures, enhance regional cooperation and collaboration, promote information sharing, develop joint strategies to combat transnational crimes, terrorism, cross-border conflicts, addressing root causes of insecurity, promoting development and governance in the region. By addressing these challenges collectively, Nigeria and its neighboring countries can contribute to regional stability and enhance international security.

Objective Four: Government and other Stakeholders Efforts Towards Addressing the Menace of Border Porosity in Nigeria

Research revealed that government has taken the following steps to address the menace of border porosity. Some of these measures are highlighted below;

Provision of Standard border Edifice - Government has changed the face of Seme Border with the provision of modern border structure which accommodates the security agencies. The new seme border structure accommodates the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) and the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) while the joint

border patrol task force police post is strategically positioned at the entrance of the border. (See figures 4 & 5)

Establishment of Joint Border Patrol Task Force - The joint border patrol task force in the border area is a welcome development. It reinforces security in the border environment. Prompt response to distress calls and timely intervention during chaotic moments at the border posts is highly commendable.

Adoption of ECOWAS Passport - The adoption of ECOWAS passport assisted in checkmating passport racketeering because of the security features it carries. Once under the detector machine, the features come up readily unlike the fake ones. This further helps in addressing illegal immigration.

Increased Border Surveillance - Improved border surveillance at the border environment is very advantageous as additional security measure which among other things helps to reduce unwanted guests or visitors loitering around the premises.

Provision of Scanning Machines - These machines detect contrabands and illegal drugs trafficking thus checkmating cross border criminalities and illicit trade. It also saves time as man hours spent manually to check individuals is drastically reduced.

Improved Staffing and Staff Training - Research confirmed that government has done better in the area of equipping security agencies with requisite knowledge, skills and attitude required for the optimal performance of duties allotted to them. Efforts are in top gear to continuously fill manning gaps across all security agencies.

Collaboration with Neighbouring Countries - the Nigerian Customs Service (NCS) confirmed that there is an improved relationship and collaboration with their Counterparts in Benin Republic to jointly fight criminality around the border area.

Provision of Fake Document Detector - The provision of a functional multi tasking fake document detector is a necessary working tool for the Nigerian customs and the Nigerian immigration services. Travelling documents, importation documents and all other necessary processing documents are subjected to scrutiny and confirmation before adoption. The provision of this machine is very timely.

Investing in Border Intelligence - Intelligence gathering in the border posts its environment is necessary for intelligence policing. Information obtained is processed and communicated to appropriate quarters for necessary actions. This has helped in tracking notorious criminals from their hideouts.

Improved Networking - Government has facilitated inter agency cooperation and collaboration with the provision of seamless communication gadgets across border posts and environment. It is therefore very easy to track down a fleeing suspect or criminal because signal was sent across networks in the locality.

Increased Funding - Government is paying more attention to security matters. Thus allocation into security has increased drastically in the last few years. This is to further ensure no stone is left unturned in the provision of adequate security not only at Nigerian borders but to also ensure that everywhere in the country is safe for all citizens.

The steps enumerated above taken by the government and other stake holders towards addressing the menace of border porosity in Nigeria is quite commendable. However, a lot more needs to be done to secure the porous borders. All the factors identified in objective one of this study as responsible for Nigeria's border porosity has to be tackled headlong leaving no stone unturned for peace, stability and security to be guaranteed in the country.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This research has been able to highlight various implications of Nigeria's porous borders on national security, international security and peacebuilding. In the course of the research, a number of factors were discovered to

be responsible for Nigeria's border porosity thereby resulting in border related emerging security threats and serious implications for peacebuilding, national and international security.

The porosity of Nigeria's borders poses significant implications for security and peace across various domains. Several challenges arise as a result which including the infiltration of criminal elements, terrorism and insurgency, economic impact, infiltration of armed groups, human trafficking, irregular migration, spread of infectious diseases, infiltration of strange doctrines and religion, weak governance and corruption, border disputes and insecurity, smuggling and illicit trade, food insecurity, influx of terrorists/rebels, rise in criminal gang activities, banditry and kidnappings, and illegal immigration.

Addressing Nigeria's border porosity is crucial for peacebuilding, national security and international security. It requires a comprehensive approach that includes strengthening border control measures, improving surveillance and intelligence capabilities, enhancing cooperation with neighboring countries, and investing in border infrastructure and technology. Additionally, addressing the root causes of insecurity, such as poverty, unemployment, and governance challenges, is vital for ensuring long-term national security.

Conclusion

The role of borders in peacebuilding, national and international security cannot be overemphasized. Effective border management is a necessary condition for ensuring national security. Efforts have therefore been made in this study to empirically analyse the implications of border porosity on peace and security in Nigeria. This study reviewed existing related literatures to have an informed perspective and establish a link with related previous studies. The relationship between border porosity, peace and security in Nigeria is that of cause and effect. The research study confirm among other things that porous borders contribute to security challenges both locally and across the border, thus affecting peacebuilding efforts.

The porosity of Nigeria's borders poses significant implications for national security across various domains. Several challenges arise as a result, including the infiltration of criminal elements, terrorism and insurgency, economic impact, infiltration of armed groups, human trafficking and irregular migration, spread of infectious diseases, infiltration of strange doctrines and religion, weak governance and corruption, border disputes and insecurity, smuggling and illicit trade, food insecurity, influx of terrorists/rebels, rise in criminal gang activities, banditry and kidnappings, and illegal immigration.

Furthermore, these cross-border related security threats, including insecurity and conflict, terrorism and insurgency, firearms smuggling, armed group infiltration, cyber security, farmer-herder crisis, drug trafficking, and human trafficking, are interconnected and require international cooperation, strengthened border control measures, and effective strategies to mitigate their impact on national and international security. Tackling these emerging cross-border related security threats requires a multi-dimensional approach involving international cooperation, intelligence sharing, border control measures, and capacity building for security forces.

In addition, addressing these border porosity and security challenges in Nigeria is critical for peacebuilding efforts and requires comprehensive strategies that encompass the strengthening of security forces, improving governance and law enforcement, promoting cross-border cooperation, and implementing effective policies and legal frameworks, tackling corruption, and addressing the root causes of conflicts are essential steps towards mitigating the negative impacts and fostering sustainable peace in the country. By addressing these challenges, Nigeria can create a more secure and stable environment that supports peace-building initiatives and fosters sustainable peace and development. It is crucial for safeguarding national security. It requires a comprehensive approach that includes strengthening border control measures, improving surveillance and intelligence capabilities, enhancing cooperation with neighboring countries, and investing in border infrastructure and technology.

In conclusion, Nigeria's border porosity is crucial not only for the security and stability of the country but also for international security. To mitigate these implications on international security, it requires comprehensive strategies that focus on strengthening border control measures, enhance regional cooperation and collaboration, promote information sharing, develop joint strategies to combat transnational crimes, terrorism, cross-border

conflicts, addressing root causes of insecurity, promoting development and governance in the region. By addressing these challenges collectively, Nigeria and its neighboring countries can contribute to regional stability and enhance international security. It is evident that addressing Nigeria's border porosity is crucial for ensuring peace, stability, national and international security and mitigating the various security threats associated with illegal migration, proliferation of firearms, trafficking (drug and human), transnational crimes, smuggling, banditry and terrorism.

In the light of the forgoing, it will be noted that porous borders is one issue that can lead to turbulence in both national and international community if not adequately tackled. The increased activities of smugglers across the border area coupled with arms trafficking as well as the unchecked influx of strangers from neighbouring countries are a challenge to security in Nigeria. The current insurgence in North East Nigeria and other regional crisis will be curtailed if the flow of arms is reduced and illegal immigration is curtailed. Government efforts at tackling the menace of border porosity is recognized but grossly inadequate. A lot more needs to be done to put the negative impacts of Nigeria's border porosity in check.

Limitations of the Study

This research on border porosity and its implications for peacebuilding, national, and international security in Nigeria has a number of limitations which are enumerated below;

A major limitation is time and financial constraints. Given the time available and the cost involvement of traversing the whole country gathering data for this study, the sample size had to be reduced to achievable size. This accounts for why only one of the numerous borders is the only border chosen for this research work which is the Seme border.

Additionally, the accuracy and reliability of secondary data used is dependent on the validity of existing data in the literature. Conducting research in border areas of Nigeria may be hindered by issues related to access and security. Restrictions on moving freely, information released by security agencies, access to evidences (seized items), among others are limiting factors to the research.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are proposed following the outcome of this study;

- i. As pointed out by the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) of Seme Border Division, there are thousands of unknown borders which cannot be manned by all security agencies put together. According to him, until Nigeria acquires enough drones for surveillance, Nigeria borders will remain porous because it is so wide that cannot be manned by all the security agencies unless with the aid of technology.
- ii. The identification, arrest and prompt prosecution of criminals such as smugglers, traffickers, drug pushers, cross-border criminals as well as shaming them publicly, will go a long way in reducing cross border crimes. The justice system in the country requires serious overhauling to accommodate prompt and speedy execution of justice on all border related crimes.
- iii. Government should intensify efforts in identifying all unmanned borders and provide adequate security personnel to guard them. A state of emergency should be declared on Nigeria's border porosity. The implication of border porosity on Nigeria's security and peace requires government to prioritize border security project. Government should enact a bill prioritizing border security and sufficient allocations should be made towards its accomplishment in national budget yearly until all borders are fully secured.
- iv. Provision of up to date border monitoring gadget, training of personnel with relevant skills, intelligence gathering, improved welfare package for security agents to reduce corruption is highly recommended. Increased surveillance of the border areas, acquisition of more sophisticated weapons and state of the art technology for border monitoring and patrol would be a step in the right direction.

- v. The high level of criminal activities in Nigeria's borders are creating negative image for the country. The country's reputation in the international community is at stake with the nefarious activities of border criminals which also constitute serious threat to peace and security. Government should therefore move strongly to checkmate all activities in border areas that portray the country in bad light such as bribery and corruption, indiscipline among security agencies, unwarranted delay of passengers, aiding and abetting crimes and other criminal activities.
- vi. There is a very serious poverty level in the border environment due to lack of government presence. Infrastructural facilities are almost non-existent. For instance the Seme Border Divisional Police Station and the Joint Border Patrol Task Force Police posts are very sub-standard (see figures 1 & 2). The environment is largely underdeveloped. Access roads are very bad, there is a very high unemployment rate among the youths which makes them susceptible to crime. As expressed by the petty traders and Okada riders interviewed; “we need infrastructural amenities in the border area. We suffering neglect and underdevelopment. We want to see more government presence.”
- vii. Engaging with international partners, such as regional organizations, neighboring countries, and international law enforcement agencies, can help in addressing transnational security threats and promoting stability in the region. Asiwaju (2015) advocated serious engagement with the neighbouring countries, in terms of the effectiveness of collaboration and that it would have the best chance of success if governments on both sides engaged in serious matter of policy harmonization.

By addressing these implications of border porosity holistically, Nigeria can enhance peacebuilding efforts, strengthen national security, and contribute to international security and stability.

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APPENDIX

Transcripts of Interviews Conducted

Interview with the Divisional Police Officer of Seme Divisional Police Headquarters

S/No	Questions	Responses
1	Kindly share your views about Nigeria's Border Porosity	First and foremost we can't talk about Nigeria border porosity without talking about the landmass. Nigeria is one of the largest countries in Africa and 32 biggest in the world out of 193 or 195 countries in the world. Without technology, even though we merged all security agencies to secure border alone would, we would still not cover it.
2	What are the factors responsible for Nigeria's border porosity?	Lack of technology, Inadequate manpower of all security agencies, uncooperative attitudes of border communities, sharing of border with some landlocked African countries
3	What are the various efforts made by government to tackle the menace of border porosity in Nigeria?	The only efforts made by government that I knew was when the transporter robbery of Hammani Tijani was at its peak, was when border was closed in 2003. It only have little effects, cos there are thousands of unknown border which cannot be manned by all security agencies together. Until Nigeria acquired enough drones, Nigeria border is so wide that cannot be manned by all the security agencies unless with the aid of technology
4	What are the security agencies doing to curtail the negative impacts of border porosity on peace and security in Nigeria?	Security agencies can only do little with investment in security generally. Like Police, cos of lack of manpower, the concept of Community policing was introduced to aid the police and other law enforcement agencies in tackling crime by prompt report of any security breaches, but when their children are also involved. Take for example, most of the border community resident are benefiting from. porosity of border to smuggle anything. With all these, the security agencies are helpless.
5	Are there efforts by other stakeholders and border communities in checkmating the menace of border porosity?	There is little or nothing border communities are contributing to checkmate the menace of border porosity. This is because the border communities in themselves are impoverished and secondly, they benefit from the porosity of the borders
6	What are the emerging security threats of border porosity in Nigeria?	Influx of small and light weapon, the war in neighbouring African countries has encouraged the smuggling of illegal arms by bandits and other criminals. Increase in smuggling of hard drugs into the country.
7	Kindly suggest ways by which the Nigerian government can make its borders more secure	Border porosity is like when you are living in a house without entrance door, you have given unfettered access to you building. It affect both internal and international security. Security challenges we have in Nigeria today was caused by the porosity of our border with the neighboring countries like Niger, Chad and Cameroon.
8	Does border porosity have any effect on Peacebuilding, national security and international security?	Border porosity has tremendous impact on peacebuilding and Security. The activities of Smugglers, Cross-border criminals, are capable of truncating Peace process and cause Serious security challenged Across the country

Interview with the Customs designated officer, Nigeria Customs Service Seme Area Command

S/No	Questions	Responses
1	Kindly share your views about Nigeria's Border Porosity	A border is porous when people, goods and services pass through it without the necessary checks.
2	What are the factors responsible for Nigeria's border porosity?	Several factors can account for the porosity of Nigeria's borders. Many do not have clear demarcations, the size of the country which makes it easy for anyone to create bush path unnoticed, insufficient Personnel, inadequate funding, inappropriate technology, and so on
3	What are the various efforts made by government to tackle the menace of border porosity in Nigeria?	The adoption of ECOWAS passport, strengthening of border security agencies, introduction of joint border patrol, increased funding, improved technology
4	What are the security agencies doing to curtail the negative impacts of border porosity on peace and security in Nigeria?	Identification, arrest and prosecution of criminals - smugglers, traffickers, drug pushers, cross-border criminals as well as shaming them publicly, increased surveillance of the border area, introduction of more sophisticated weapons
5	Are there efforts by other stakeholders and border communities in checkmating the menace of border porosity?	We sometimes engages community members for relevant information about Suspected smugglers and trafficker. Other Stakeholder that we have been enjoying their cooperation are the prosecutors who ensure arrested criminals are brought to book.
6	What are the emerging security threats of border porosity in Nigeria?	Threats to life and property by non-state actors in Possession small arms and light weapons (SALW), Robberies, conflicts, cross-border criminalities, fuel scooping, gun running and insecurity.
7	Kindly suggest ways by which the Nigerian government can make its borders more secure	Identifying all unmanned borders and provide adequate security personnel to guard them, provision of up to date border monitoring gadget, training of personnel with relevant skills, intelligence gathering, improved welfare package for security agents to reduce corruption.
8	Does border porosity have any effect on Peacebuilding, national security and international security?	The high level of criminal activities in Nigeria's borders are creating negative image for the country. the country's reputation is at stake with the nefarious activities of border criminals which also constitute serious threat to peace and security.

Summary of Interactions with the Okada riders and petty traders in Seme border town

S/No	Questions	Responses
1	How long have you been living in this environment?	90% of respondents grew up in the Environment. They are therefore accustomed to the situation in their domain
2	How long have you been in	Respondents have been in their businesses for between three

	this business?	and eight (3-8) years
3	How profitable has this business been since you started.	In a way, it has been profitable. Community members and visitors or travelers makes the business interesting.
4	How secure has the environment been	The environment is highly secured with the heavy presence of security and law enforcement agents around
5	Are there other routes into Benin Republic aside this joint border access?	Yes there are other access routes into Benin Republic apart from the main border access route. These routes are rough and dangerous. Though some law enforcement officers found out about some of the routes, majority of them are only interested in settlement thereby going home daily with plenty money.
6	What are the advantages you enjoy by living in a borderland like this?	There is security of lives and property. No cases of kidnapping or banditry in border communities only that of smugglers and traffickers
7	Can you access the cost of living here in terms of feeding and accommodation?	Cost of living is quite high and standard of living is very low due to poverty. Despite been a border community, things are not as cheap as people thought. only few smuggled it items are relatively cheap
8	What do you want the government do for the community?	<p>There is a very serious poverty level in the environment due to lack of government presence. Infrastructural amenities are non-existent. The environment is largely underdeveloped.</p> <p>Access roads are very bad, there is a very high unemployment rate among the youths which makes them susceptible to crime.</p> <p>The check-points are too many making cost of transportation arbitrarily exorbitant. For instance between Badagry and Seme, there are over twenty (20) check-points where all the different security agencies are strategically positioned with the aim of exploiting commuters in the name of curtailing criminal activities.</p>

Summary of Interactions with the drivers plying Badagry-Seme routes in Seme Border Area

S/No	Questions	Responses
1	How long have you been living in this environment?	97% of respondents have been residing in the environment for at least ten (10) years. Others are between three (3) years and five (5) years.
2	How long have you been in this business?	Respondents have been in their businesses for as long as they have lived there.
3	How profitable has this business been since you started.	In a way, it has been profitable. Travelers, tourists, researchers and visitors make the business interesting. Unfortunately, the numerous security agents at the check-points erode our profit.

4	How secure has the environment been	The environment is highly secured due to the presence of security personnel scattered all over the place.
5	Are there other routes into Benin Republic aside this road?	<p>Yes, there are other access routes into Benin Republic apart from this main road access route. Most of these routes are rough, narrow, dangerous and not motorable.</p> <p>Okada riders make use of these bush paths majorly with those who wants to escape the search by security agents.</p>
6	What are the challenges you face as a driver in this environment?	The most significant challenge is the menace of security agents on the road. The road blocks/check points between Badagry and Seme is more than twenty (20). These security agents collects bribe at each stop. They feel its their entitlement and when you fail to drop something, you experience delays which can be very annoying and makes the business uninteresting.
7	Can you access the cost of living here in terms of feeding and accommodation?	Cost of living is high. People thought that as border area things will be cheap, so they rush down. Then competition begins. This force prices to go up. Additionally, the level of corruption of the security personnel at checkpoints have significant effect on costs generally. accommodation is costly. Feeding is also Expensive now compared to before. Increase in pump price of petrol is additional factor responsible for general hike in commodity prices
8	What do you want the government do for the community?	<p>There is an urgent need to reduce the number of checkpoints to two or three at most. This will seriously reduce cost of freight, ease movement and reduce travel time.</p> <p>We need infrastructural amenities in the border area. We suffering neglect and underdevelopment. We want to see more government presence.</p>





Figure 1 Police Post Pictures



Signage Welcoming Visitors to Seme Border



Figure 2 Assess Signage to Seme Border





Figure 3 Entrance Gate to Seme Border



Side View of the Administrative Block



Figure 4 Administrative Block, Seme Border



Researcher in Front of Seme Border Administrative Block



Figure 5 Administrative Block, Seme Border (front view)