

Intelligence Gathering and Sustainable Crime Management in Nigeria

Abdallah Dauda

Center for Sustainable Development, University of Abuja

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ABSTRACT

Nigeria has witnessed different categories of crime and unimagined attacks such as terrorism attacks, insurgency, proliferation of arms and ammunition, transnational organized crimes, drug trafficking, bandit's attacks, kidnapping, abduction, violence attacks on individuals and robberies, cybercrimes, trading on illicit drugs and dealing on contraband goods. Crime in the society today has become a recurring daily discussion that is bordering all manner of individuals and group living in the society. There is therefore every need to take proactive measures at ending this menace that has become an enemy not only to the growth and development of the society but the entire existence of humanity. The study focuses on the application of intelligence gathering in crime in management Nigeria. This study delves into the relevance of the intelligence gathering approach in crime management within the Nigerian context, while exploring the nature of intelligence gathering and its application in Nigeria. This research investigates the practical implementation of intelligence gathering and its impact on crime management and control in Nigeria. The study uses qualitative data that allows for the identification of emergent themes and patterns of criminality in Nigeria. Findings indicate that the intelligence gathering approach holds relevance in adapting to dynamic criminal trends in Nigeria. This study contributes to the discourse on modernizing law enforcement strategies in Nigeria by examining the practical relevance of the intelligence gathering in crime control. The study's outcomes aim to inform policies and practices that enhance the effectiveness of intelligence-driven approach in addressing crime challenges, offering insights for strategic decision-making in the realm of law enforcement.

Key words: Intelligence, Security, Crime management, Sustainability.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria has seen a sharp increase in crime rates in recent years. These crimes include cybercrime, kidnapping, armed robberies, and insurgencies, all of which pose serious risks to public safety and security (Adepoju, 2018). Innovative and creative ways are needed in law enforcement to address the ongoing difficulty of effectively suppressing these illicit activities (Oluwaseun & Adeyemi, 2020). A technique that seeks to improve crime management by acquiring, analyzing, and using intelligence data is the intelligence gathering tactics (Ugwuoke, 2019). While intelligence gathering holds promise for addressing the intricate and evolving nature of crime, its implementation and effectiveness within the Nigerian context remain understudied and warrant rigorous examination. Intelligence gathering is a strategic method that prioritizes the collection, analysis, and usage of timely and reliable intelligence to support law enforcement choices and actions. Policing is very important for crime prevention and control (Ratcliffe, 2016). The challenges faced by today's police in upholding social order are numerous. One such major concern is the increasing incidence of transnational crime, which jeopardizes social and political stability as well as national economic prosperity. In order to effectively pursue crime management in these crucial circumstances,

policing should encompass a proactive strategy that employs both traditional and high-tech tools and gathers comprehensive intelligence so that better crime detection will result in better crime management.

To balance the gap in crime prevention measures, intelligence gathering and crime management are vital. This calls for a modern, generally accepted strategy to law enforcement that uses a wide range of tactics to combat crime, replacing the previous, more philosophical manner of police. At the core of every security model is intelligence. It entails meticulously gathering and analyzing data so that law enforcement organizations can foresee criminal activity and identify potential offenders before a crime is committed. Without intelligence, security groups could not operate. One of the main objectives of any security group is to prevent crime. Identification and prevention of illegal behavior are essential components of successful police (Ajibade, 2011). This can only be accomplished by concerted efforts on the part of security and intelligence agencies, as well as other crucial non-law enforcement stakeholders in every region of Nigeria. Because of globalization, easy access to current technologies, and the free flow of intelligence among criminals, the rate at which criminality is expanding, the complexity and sophistication of conventional crimes, and the invention of new criminalities, are all on the rise. Because it tends to promote proactive security networking, this strategy is essential to crime control in Nigeria.

Statement of the problem

Combating crime is a global challenge. Crimes are perpetrated on a regular basis, and those who commit them are always coming up with and implementing new, sophisticated methods, which culminate in high-profile crimes that sometimes even cross international lines. In order for the security authorities to stay ahead of criminals and lessen their threat, the Nigerian government must thus embrace technology, which is now a crucial component of the fight against crime worldwide (Carl, 2013). The average individual probably does not think of crime reduction when they think of digital technology, whether it is social media, GPS systems, security cameras, or even cell phones. However, as technology develops, an increasing number of both new and old technologies are being used to combat crime. This has raised the threshold for technology used by law enforcement agencies. Whatever one's point of view, intelligence, or Intel, is the pinnacle of combating crime. It serves as the centre of gravity for all aspects of crime prevention, control, and investigation.

Achieving optimal results in crime prevention and control requires accurate intelligence collecting. All parties involved, including security and intelligence professionals, have been taken aback by this situation. It suggests that Nigeria is either at war or a conquered state, and security agencies are ill-equipped to handle the crisis. Intelligence ought to have been able to fathom the challenges on time or within a few periods of days or weeks. The value of technology in crime-fighting cannot be over-emphasised. For instance, in advanced countries, law enforcement agencies are now using statistical analysis and predictive modelling in the fight against crime (Odekunle, 2005). Police and government authorities are combing through data to identify trends and to highlight possible connections between events. As a result, police authorities have a better handle on crime in the areas they are protecting, as well as a better idea of what to expect in the future by establishing causality between specific trigger events and criminal activities. This is where intelligence gathering helps in mapping crime in the country.

Be that as it may, digital tracking has been faced with stiff opposition by the masses that see it as an infringement of their fundamental human rights, causing waves of agitation globally. Consequently, the pivot of crime-fighting is now citizen participation in intelligence gathering. This has helped to build a strong relationship between the government and the masses. Building strong relationships with the public is a major component in community policing and has played a significant role in reducing crime rates. By turning traditional, hierarchical policing techniques on its head, community-oriented policing emphasizes proactive, cooperative efforts by both local police agencies and community stakeholders. In general, it has been demonstrated that community-oriented police works very well to lower crime rates and provide

residents a sense of security and trust (Okeshola, 2012). The public and community policing component in Nigeria have a strained relationship as a result of the reported mistreatment of individuals who have volunteered security intelligence to security operatives in the past and the alleged sabotage by dishonest security personnel who choose to either hoard or ignore such information.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The concept of Intelligence gathering

Intelligence is the product of an analytic process that evaluates information collected from diverse sources, integrates the relevant information into a cohesive package and produces a conclusion or estimate about a criminal phenomenon by using the scientific approach to problem solving (Peter, 2012). Logic, comprehension, self-awareness, learning, emotional intelligence, planning, creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills are just a few of the various ways that intelligence has been characterized. In a broader sense, it may be defined as the capacity to take in or deduce information and then store it as knowledge that can be used to guide adaptive actions in a given setting. Three phases make up the most intelligence process or cycle: synthesis, analysis, and collecting. Analysis uses a variety of methods to draw conclusions or findings. According to Joe (2008), criminal intelligence is the body of information obtained about known or suspected criminals or data gathered from the study of criminal information on people or suspected criminals.

Most intelligence output involves a significant element of processing. Hence, all intelligence is information; but not all information is Intelligence. Information has to be both evaluated and actionable in the sense that it must be actual, factual and actionable/caution-able to be acted upon. Hence a bogus information like rumors, hearsay, looking or spying out ones feelings, and intention are not proactive i.e. actionable as something which will strengthen the security apparatus. One manner of differentiating among these terms is the extent to which values have been added to the raw data collected either through overt or clandestine means. Scholars have defined intelligence in a variety of ways, and there is no universally accepted definition. Their significance is not diminished by the lack of agreement on this concept. Certain definitions highlight issues that arise when one or more intelligence elements are not well covered. Even though they are somewhat constrained, these criteria serve as a suitable foundation for learning more about the topic of intelligence studies.

According to Stephen (2010), intelligence is a service that supplies the fundamentals of intelligence information, wisdom, and awareness at all times. It is also actively capable of alerting people to approaching crimes and identifying potential surprises, hazards, threats, or attacks beforehand. According to Ronald (1997), intelligence is information as well as a structured framework for gathering and using it. It is both an activity and a product of that activity. For Lindsay (2011), intelligence is the knowledge which our highly placed civilians, military and security men must have to safeguard the nation's welfare. An intelligence collecting network is a system that uses several, connected sources to get information about a certain organization for the advantage of another. He further states unequivocally that intelligence is not something that exists for its own sake. The goal of obtaining intelligence that is, information about other people's secrets is to provide decision-makers and leaders the tools they need to make decisions and implement policies that are more effective and efficient.

Nicolas (2008) illustrates that there is no need for tasking, collecting, analysing, and distributing intelligence products if there is no policy issue or anticipated issue on the table. Furthermore, he argues that for intelligence to be relevant, it must ensure that it provides the policy makers' time out, critical and unique information to warn them of potential risks and dangers, allows policy-makers to face the unknown and best reduce the uncertainty, and assist the policy makers when to make critical decisions. By evaluating the

goals, capabilities, and intentions of current or prospective rivals, intelligence should be able to recognize possibilities in the global marketplace. In a far more restricted sense, intelligence is a subset of the larger category of information, which is a stage in the chain generation process in the hierarchy underpinning current knowledge or information management theory. Therefore, intelligence is defined as knowledge that satisfies the stated policy needs for the entire process, but which data and information are identified, obtained, and analyzed so as to respond or not take these needs by surprise. Information, on the other hand, is anything that can be known, regardless of how it is discovered.

The extent and Nature of Intelligence gathering in Nigeria.

An essential component of any professional inquiry is obtaining intelligence. It entails gathering data from several sources and analyzing it to provide a comprehensive picture of the issue or circumstance at hand. This technique has been employed by a number of industrialized nations to preserve lives and property, including the United States of America, the United Kingdom, and Germany, to name a few. With more than 200 million citizens, Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa. Given the diversity of its population's cultures and belief systems, security issues are certain to arise (Okeshola, 2012). Surveillance and intelligence gathering are some of the sophisticated methods that law enforcement authorities use to tackle security challenges, and these methods help them gather sufficient information to prevent crimes that are yet to be committed, intervene in one that is being committed, or, better yet, investigate a crime that has already been committed. The idea of exploring the role of Intelligence for National Security dates back to ancient history. It is perhaps not surprising that across the world, intelligence organizations are often the primary providers of protection, information, knowledge for investigation and probable action by the state (Ajibade, 2011). It is associated with first hand awareness for precaution, readiness, action for and against threat and adversaries.

Its failure or inefficiency frequently contributes to crime and poses a threat to national security. Thus, intelligence serves as a country's essential mechanism for defending its cooperative existence. The national security cart is driven by this horse. The situation is the opposite in Nigeria, where there is widespread insecurity resulting from crimes such as theft, abduction, armed robbery, proliferation of light and heavy weaponry, banditry, insurgency, and terrorism. Because of the high death rate and the massive amount of ungoverned territory that has been left uncontrolled, observers and academics have dubbed Nigeria "the Banana Republic." The security structure and operations are also either comatose or complacent. This led to a dangerous scenario when a number of intelligence directors, commanders, and top security officials said that the intelligence product was useless for operations and lacked analytical ability and real-time intelligence (Oluwaeun, 2020) Officers who have received specialized training on handling espionage and counter-espionage in democratic settings have not yet observed any indication of this in the handling of the current hopeless situation. The importance of intelligence is so great that national security cannot exist without it. Therefore, when intelligence is applied correctly, it serves as a forerunner and aids in the government's capacity to protect the safety and well-being of the country and its citizens, to guarantee good governance, and to enable the state to function effectively and efficiently.

It may be argued that intelligence plays a vital role in a responsible leader's status and absolute commitment to his people by ensuring that security threats are identified in a timely manner and neutralized. The primary tool for guaranteeing the long-term viability of national security is intelligence. It is nearly hard to predict future national security trends without intelligence. Ad hoc and reactive measures might have disastrous implications that compromise systematic and long-term planning. National security intelligence is one of two complementing governmental goals. It provides the fundamental input into national security policies while the latter is the driving force that keeps the former active (Adepoju, 2018). Inadvertently, information which is the hub of intelligence can also be put to all sorts of illegitimate use. An Intelligence agency of course, can legitimately use personal information to prevent crime and combat terrorism. But if not properly

taken can also be used to suppress the speech and other right of the people. Control over intelligence services is arguably the most troublesome topic in the field of democratic intelligence relations. This is caused by more than just the remnants of the previous, non-democratic regimes, where violations of human rights were commonplace and intelligence or security apparatuses served as essential tools of control. According to Agbeyi (2012), Nigeria needs to be aware of the limitations and applications of effective intelligence as a tool for managing crime and national security. He says that intelligence must be proactive, preventive, and intelligence-led rather than reactive, which may not be sufficient to deter crime and instability.

The concept of crime and Crime management in Nigeria.

Crime management refers to methods taken to reduce crime in a society. Crime control standardizes police work. Crime prevention is also widely implemented in some countries, through government police and, in many cases, private policing methods such as private security and home defence. The goal of crime management is to lessen and discourage criminal activity. It is particularly used in reference to government initiatives to uphold criminal justice, enforce the law, and lessen crime (Linda, 2011). Nevertheless, deploying the police or security forces might not always be the best course of action to stop a crime from happening. Nigeria has far higher crime rates than the global average. Crime has both direct and indirect costs for people, families, neighborhoods, companies, the government, and the nation as a whole. These costs include lost money, heightened victimization fears, restricted behavior and movement, strained relationships based on trust, trauma, and long-term psychological and physical effects.

Elevated crime rates significantly strain the criminal justice and health care systems, leading to a notable increase in state spending. It is therefore necessary to identify cost-effective strategies for decreasing violent inclinations and criminal tendencies as well as limiting their harmful impacts. A tried-and-true strategy that might be quite helpful in this area is crime management. Essentially, the goal of crime prevention is to avoid crime rather than to deal with it after it has already happened. Any measure intended to lower the real amount of crime and/or the perceived degree of crime fear is considered crime management (Onoge, 1993). Crime management comprises of policies and methods targeted at the reduction of crimes, and their potentially deleterious effects on individuals and society, including fear of crime, by intervening to influence their multiple causes.

Importance of intelligence gathering on crime management in Nigeria.

Comparing intelligence collection techniques with more conventional approaches has several benefits. Notwithstanding these advantages, the Nigerian securities market has a famously poor track record because of a variety of issues that have complicated the strategy's use. The advantages of acquiring intelligence are immeasurable. Carl (2013), states that one of the most advanced approaches used by law enforcement personnel to handle security issues is intelligence gathering, which in the strictest sense can assist them in preventing crime before it happens, if not completely halting attacks on people and property, as well as the government, financial institutions, public transportation, and communication. Intelligence gathering helps proper, proactive and timely planning to ward off potential and real threats that have the capacity to minimally and substantially fracture the peace, order and tranquillity and socio-economic advancement of a nation. Furthermore, it saves time to engage in a needless physical confrontation like wars that would end in bloodletting and annihilator effect on the polity's growth and development.

Furthermore, this piece can be used by the government as a useful policy and a legislative tool to help legally in the administration of criminal justice and finally serves as a knowledge pool for researchers in this area. While all information is required, certain information has a greater effect and resonance depending on the current objective it aims to accomplish. In addition to the pressing need to highlight the benefits of intelligence gathering and comprehend, to a large extent, the procedures, manpower, resources, and

equipment needed for security agents to conduct surveillance and access information that is not commonly available in Nigeria, this work will be extremely beneficial to both the Nigerian community and the developed world at large, particularly to their respective militaries in resolving some of the logistical and operational issues that, if left unchecked, could pose a risk to people and property (Ifeolu, 2012).

Intelligence gathering can relatively save cost, i.e. the cost of putting troops on the ground is far assuaged in gathering and collecting real and useful information. Because the appropriate intelligence was obtained, accessed, and produced to form an alternative position of an event that, prior to the intelligence, had been seen and thought of differently and warrant an attack, this strategy has avoided consequential negative happenings and operations. Logistics equally involved in planning an outright confrontation, which in some situations appears to be incorrect if there were no intelligence, will be redirected to human capital development. With intelligence gathering, fewer enemies are made and rebuilding trust and friendship amongst nations can be easily facilitated than where open and full-fledged wars ensue. This is because traces or imprints of physical destructions and attacks are not left and seen as evidence to serve as a pointer for future generation. On the whole, intelligence gathering notwithstanding its challenges remains the best approach to tackling insecurity and other related criminal activities (Frank, 2024).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND JUSTIFICATION OF THE THEORY.

Systems theory

Systems theory is the study of coherent collections of interconnected, interdependent components, whether natural or artificial. Every system has causal boundaries, is influenced by its surroundings, characterized by its structure, function, and role, and manifested by its interactions with other systems. A system is “more than the sum of its parts” when it exhibits synergy or emergent behaviour. Changes to one component of a system may have an impact on other components or the entire system. These shifts in behavioural patterns may be predictable. For systems that learn and adapt, the degree of development and adaptation is determined by how well the system interacts with its environment and other circumstances that influence its organization (Odekunle, 2005).

In order to keep the other system from failing, some systems maintain it. In order to achieve optimized, systems theory aims to model the dynamics, constraints, conditions, and relations of a system and to clarify principles (such as goal, measure, methods, and tools) that can be identified and applied to other systems at every level of nesting and in a variety of fields. Instead of creating concepts and principles that are unique to a single field of study, general systems theory aims to generate concepts and principles that are generally applicable. The functionalist viewpoint served as the system theory’s first inspiration. August Comte and Emile Durkheim, two of the founding fathers, are its primary sources. The theory focused on the assumption that society has its different components which must perform its functions towards the functioning of the whole system (Joe, 2008).

Every facet of criminality and intelligence is interconnected and essential to the overall system’s operation. According to systems theory, both internal and external relationships are used to analyze organizations like intelligence, national security, and democratic ethos. Institutions have a purpose, and in order to fulfill this purpose, specific qualities must develop. In addition to having wants that must be satisfied and being adaptable to changes in their environment, such as social solidarity, consensus, social order, and equilibrium. The theory goes on to describe actions in terms of how they preserve equilibrium and help a system remain in good operating order.

According to Linda (2011), A system is comprehensive in the sense that it includes all the interactions-input, the mutual relationship that makes organizations to function in close knit which make it blend, separate and make distinct organizations into one, hence change in the organization operation to match with

the democratic principles in these security firebox becomes imperative. Against these background, one can deduce that the intelligence organization in Nigeria is not responding to these democratic influence or vice versa as most intelligence techniques such as gathering, analyses and making projection that is in tandem with democratic norms are either not available or archaic, or act of complacency which one may perceive to be the cause of intelligence democratic crises hence failure to, manage Crime and threat to NationalSecurity.

Methods of data collection

The information acquired for this investigation was explained using descriptive qualitative analysis. It is theoretical and provides a thorough explanation and illustrative description. The study uses mainly secondary data since it provides insights on intelligence gathering as a tool for crime management. Data is analysed using content analysis with thematic analysis. This method was applied because of the nature and composition of present Nigerian security architecture.

Major findings and implications of insecurity of socio-economic development of Nigeria.

Virtually all security agencies in Nigeria, whether the Nigerian Army, Navy, Air Force, the police, NSCDC and the Department of State Services (DSS), have intelligent units or departments. In fact, the DSS was specifically established to nip such terrorism and treasonable crime in the bud through intelligence gathering. If Nigeria had a robust intelligence network and there was more cooperation rather than competition among the security professionals tasked with supplying intelligence and security, many of the crimes and acts of violence that are documented could have been prevented. It appears that the intelligence network is down. It is clear that the security architecture is insufficient to keep the nation safe. A nation this size cannot be secured by a centralized security architecture. It even opposes a federal system. When it comes to obtaining intelligence, governments work to safeguard three things: their intelligence operatives, staff, and facilities and resources.

At its core, secret service operations revolve around gathering intelligence to develop a thorough understanding of national security risks. Security intelligence (SI) refers to the data necessary to defend a country or organization against both internal and external threats, as well as the procedures, guidelines, and equipment used to collect and evaluate that data. People frequently link intelligence to the prevention of crime, which suggests that timely access to intelligence may be able to stop crimes from happening. Nigeria is still a young country. The Nigerian Police lack the necessary expertise to secure crime scenes, carry out effective evidence-gathering techniques including removing fingerprints from the scene, maintain a reliable criminal database, employ forensic science to solve crimes, and so forth. Until recently, we could not trace a criminal using his mobile phone records. Policemen are barely literate. Their educational requirement is not high, and it has become the last resort to school drop-outs who probably had no other options in life. The kind of training they receive is abysmal. There is also a huge level of corruption within the ranks of the Force. People do not trust them, neither do they respect them. And for the other intelligence agencies such as the SSS, people deal with them with suspicions.

Nigeria, like other countries across the globe, does not lack relevant outfits tasked with providing intelligence. The Nigerian police have the Force Criminal Investigations Department (FCID) and the Federal Investigations and Intelligence Bureau (FIIB) The FCID conducts investigations and prosecutes complex crimes within and outside the nation. The FIIB carries out intelligence gathering and surveillance to aid other police units. The SSS (also known as DSS), formed in 1986, operates under the presidency and answers directly to the National Security Adviser (NSA). It manages domestic intelligence and ensures the national security of the country is not compromised. The SSS is also empowered to eliminate national threats and provide security for top government officials and visiting dignitaries. The National Intelligence Agency (NIA), also under the NSA, is charged with gathering international intelligence.

CONCLUSION

Undoubtedly, Nigeria's increasingly intricate and sophisticated criminal operations necessitate the development of a strong, proactive, and strategic intelligence framework that can address seemingly insurmountable security difficulties in any given scenario. Nigerians are generally and palpably frustrated with the flawed and non-existent mechanism for exchanging intelligence between and among security agencies. It is inaccurate to blame security lapses on a lack of competence on the part of security officers, but rather on ingrained corruption and a lack of political will on the part of Nigeria's government. There is a general and palpable frustration among Nigerians about the defective and seemingly nonexistence of intelligence gathering structure between and among security agencies. It is incorrect to attribute security failure to lack of capacity from security personnel but the inherent corruption and lack of political will of the leadership in Nigeria. The loss of intellectual prowess is occasioned by inter-security agencies' flagrant refusal to cooperate and share intelligence, each claiming superiority, relevance and mastery over intelligence expertise to the detriment of the country.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are therefore made based on the findings:

1. To accommodate contemporary intelligence operations, the current intelligence organizations ought to be overhauled and restructured. The majority of these agencies' employees lack even rudimentary computer and internet skills, let alone knowledge of intelligence software, etc.
2. The government must provide all intelligence agencies with the equipment and tools they require to do their jobs; in particular, the police and SSS must be given the freedom to concentrate in order to reduce the amount of "constabulary" work that the military currently performs while supporting sister agencies.
3. Since the situation has gotten worse due to inter-agency rivalry, efforts must be taken to bring the agencies together so they can exchange intelligence. They (agencies) can depend on an organization like the National Orientation Agency or communication ministry to promote any efforts they make to address the clamour to be the one to claim the glory for any achievement, which will lessen the struggle for relevance that typically accompanies achievements.
4. Despite the fact that insecurity affects the entire world, other developed nations have discovered that it is better to put their trust in their institutions rather than in individual citizens. We have to get started on this. The security agencies will start to act in unison when Nigerian politicians start to temper their ambitions and work toward nationhood.

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