



Insecurity Question and Crime Statistics in Nigeria: A Case of Anambra State, 1999-2015

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Abstract: *It is axiomatic to posit that criminals have virtually taken over Nigeria. This is because crime rate is souring in the polity and there exists many determinants to this anti-societal behavior amongst the people. In this paper, those variables that are crime prone in Southeastern state of Anambra over a 16 year study period were determined using Principal Component Analysis (PCA); a Multivariate Statistical Technique that is use to reduce the dimensionality of a large number of interrelated crime variables while retaining as much of the information as possible. Data were collected on eight crime variables, from the data bank of National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), the Police and Niger Watch. From the study, we found out that the highest and most committed crime in the study region are Armed Robbery, kidnapping, Murder and Grievous Harm and Wounding. The paper suggests that the public should be ready at all times to give necessary information to the police. This is because, crime is a challenge that all and sundry must confront headlong for a stable and safe society.*

Key words: *Crime & Crime Statistics, Anambra State, Structural- Functionalism, Anomie & Security Personnel*

INTRODUCTION

Crime is fast becoming a serious problem world over. The high rate of crime in Nigeria in general and Anambra State in particular has raised a general feeling of insecurity of lives and property, and has made residents to cry out to both the federal and state governments for urgent assistance to curb the ugly situation in order to safeguard lives and property of the populace. In an anxious bid to tackle this rising wave of crime, the federal and state governments have increased support to Nigeria police service in areas of personnel, logistics and firearms. However it seems that the more weapons and police personnel deployed to fight crime, the more criminal activities are committed. As Chukwuma (2002) noted that the much that has been achieved seems to be crime spreading from one local government, state or region to another. The argument therefore is that to deal with the increasing rate of armed robbery operations, superior weapons, more personnel and new methods or strategy like police/public partnership (Community Policing) should be introduced. Thus community police was introduced in Nigeria in 2004.

But as each day unfolds with it strange tales of one form of crime or the other there is hardly any day that passes now without one crime or the other being committed. From cult-related killings, to kidnap or suicide, killing of innocent people has become more or less the order of the day. In short, crime inventory in Nigeria in the past 17 months, as reeled out the other day by the Nigeria Police is alarming, to say the least. The dark days of fear and trepidation are fast returning to Anambra state. They were days when families abandoned the comfort of their homes to sleep in churches. In those days nightlife became a thing of the past while business transactions were done with the midst of tension and fear of the unknown.

But the government of former governor Chinwoke Mbadinuju indeed steamed the incidence of violent crimes in the state. The Anambra Vigilante Service (AVS) popularly known as Bakassi Boys took on hoodlums and the state became a safe haven for all and sundry. Though politicians latter infiltrated their

rank and politicized their working. The superlative performances put up by the security outfit have not been equaled in the history of the state.

However, events have followed the erosion of the years and today another reign of terror is currently sweeping across the land. It is either cases of kidnapping, assassination or armed robbery. Today in the state, people sleep with only one eye closed. Even the sound of busted car type can scare the day light of the public, let alone a firecracker. These are seasons of fears and psychological trauma in Anambra.

In the last few months, the cold hands of brigandage have gripped the state, and life is being treated with contempt. Three major incidents that have jolted the unity of the state have indeed shown the hapless state of a people passing through the crucibles of insecurity. Recently, daredevil armed robber took on Awka capital weeks later but lost touch of a bank billion vans that they were chasing. The gang however took on banks in Nnewi commercial nerve centre and today commercial activities in the town are under threat, while banks are now apprehensive.

It is therefore, axiomatic to posit past that there is no longer enough room to continue to broad over the state of insecurity in the state. Several theses have been adduced and to what may have led to the recent wave of violent crimes in the embattled Anambra State. Until now, the police and other security agencies are unable to find most of the perpetrators. No body feels safe either in their home, on his way to office or home. The question most Nigerians ask everyday is: who will be the next victim? The police whose constitutional responsibility is to control crime appears helpless. So what are the factors responsible for their inactivity? What are its implications on the stability and consolidation of democracy in Nigeria? This paper seeks answers to those questions and related issues. To attain this, the paper conceptualizes insecurity question from three thematic perspectives, it goes on to identify factors responsible for the police inactivity and the state's responses to combat crimes. The outfits too are, helpless because the state governments cannot properly fund them.

But for how long the state shall remain under the siege of trigger happy men, with only responsive approach to the malady instead of proactive solution to the puzzle, analysts ask. This paper seeks to examine the question of insecurity and Crime Statistics in Anambra state of Nigeria. It also offers policy recommendations on how the key issues threatening peace, stability and security of the state can be tackled.

The paper is divided into four parts. Part one conceptualizes what insecurity question and crime statistics are. Part two focuses on the question of insecurity in Anambra tracing its background; contemporary manifestations and deep-rooted causes. Part three highlights on the consequences on individuals, communities and nation in general. The last part of the paper is on recommendations.

Clarification of Concepts: Crime & Crime Statistics

Crime is often thought of as a moral threat and injurious to the society. However, it has been observed that the entire world is experiencing high criminal rate. Crime denotes an unlawful act punishable by a state. In modern criminal law, the term crime does not have any simple and universally accepted definition though statutory definitions have been provided for certain purposes. The most popular view is that crime is a category created by law; in other words, something is a crime if declared as such by the relevant and applicable law. The notion that acts such as Murder, Rape, and Theft are to be prohibited exists worldwide. What precisely is a criminal offence is defined by criminal law of each country. While many have a catalogue of crimes called criminal code, in some common laws, countries with no such comprehensive statute exists. The causes of crime are multiple and could be traced to bio-genetic factors such as genetic mutation and heredity (Horton, 1939), psychological factors such as personality disorders (Abramson, 1994) and sociological factors such as learning environment (Sutherlands, 1939).

Nigeria has one of the highest crime rates in Africa (List25 LLC, 2014). Murder often accompanies minor burglaries. Rich Nigerians lives in highly secured compounds and even the police in some states are empowered to 'Shoot on Sight' violent crimes (Financial times, 2009). These crimes are being carried out with more perfection and sophistication. This has led to the formation of various vigilante groups, to combat crimes in some parts of the country (Fejemirokun et al., 2006). One of the fundamental techniques to combat criminal activities is the better understanding of the dynamics of crime.

Crime according to Territo et al (2004) is defined as acts that violate laws (formal, official, written statements of norms) and its control becomes all the attempts made by established agencies of the state to reduce to the barest its occurrence. Crime prevention and control in traditional societies as stated elsewhere were mostly informal. Good human relation skills, good character and behaviour as well as

cordiality, folktales, stories and fear of reactive punishments are some of the preventive strategies used by traditional societies to control crime (Rubington & Weinberg, 1991; Mbiti, 1969; Spector, 1999). Crime is also an act or omission/ commission prohibited by both private and public law for the protection of the public, and made punishable by the state in a judicial proceeding in its own name.

The wave of crime in the state adds currency to the debate. In a popular parlance, crime in a polity is only offence or unlawful activity punishable by law. In the words of United Nations and Odekunle, it generally reflects the quality of life and development in society. Criminal activities abound in all societies, developed and developing, but they tend to be more widespread in peens of national conflicts aid military supervised political transitions when the community experiences a higher degree of socio-economic and political uncertainties. There are more cases of state sponsored terrorism against the populace, political corruption, murder, extra-judicial killings, kidnapping, hard drug and human trafficking, theft, armed robbery advance free fraud, and rape among others. This increase in the wave and rate of crime breeds general insecurity in the polity and undermines democratization. It destroys the basis of trust between the rulers and the ruled. Criminal activities are either violent or non-violent .

In a popular parlance, crime statistics refers to the uniform data on offences and offenders in numerical terms derived by official government agencies like the Police, Courts, Nigeria Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA); Immigration, Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC); Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic on Persons (NAPIT) Civil Defense Corps and Prison among other law enforcement agencies in Nigeria. These figures are derived from the records of these official agencies. These figures are often tabulated, classified and analyzed, in order to establish between and among the classes of offences recorded.

Crimes are expected to be reported at a given period annually, which is, quarterly, bi-yearly or at the end of the year. It is worthy to be noted that Crime Statistics definitions are equally derived from victim – survey; Report Studies, and Direct Observation among others. These sources are regarded as unofficial sources of crime statistics. Crime Statistic enables an individual, the government or international and local non-governmental organizations to know whether crime is in creasing or decreasing in a polity. It also makes these institutions or people to understand the persons involved in crime in different areas in a polity. That is, it must constitute all offences in the wide area. Having knowledge of this will make it easy for planning to curb the incidence of crime in the country.

In a popular parlance, crimes are classified based on the extent of punishment that can be given for committing it. The punishment is usually based on the seriousness of the crime. Countries differ as to the classification of any particular crime. A crime committed in one country may be classified differently than if it was committed in another country. But across the globe, crimes are classified as Felony Crimes such as Murder, Rape, Burglary, Kidnapping, Arson, Robbery among others. Misdemeanor Crimes such as Public Intoxication, Trespassing, Speeding, Prostitution, Vandalism, Use of fake ID among others.

However, In Nigeria, the police classification of crimes depends greatly on what law prescribed . In the Nigerian Police Abstract of Statistics (NPACS), offenses are categorized into four major categories:

- i. Offences against persons include: man slaughter, murder and attempted murder, assault, rape, child stealing, grievous harm and wounding, e.t.c.
- ii. Offences against property include: armed robbery, house and store breakings, forgery e.t.c
- iii. Offences against lawful authority include: forgery of currency notes, gambling, breach of peace, bribery and corruption e.t.c.
- iv. Offence against local act include: traffic offences, liquor offences, e.t.c.

And in supporting their classification and just recently, the 36 states of the Federation and the Federal Capital Territory, recorded 2,241 robbery cases in 2015, according to an official record obtained from Nigeria Watch Project (2015). Conversely, the nation recorded 2,841 robbery cases in 2014 and 2,988 in 2013. It also recorded 1,827 rape cases, including 886 kidnappings last year. The crime record indicates that Taraba State had the highest rate of 301 robbery incidents followed by Ebonyi with 144. Benue came third with 107 reported incidents of armed robbery followed by Katsina with 102 cases. Other states with high robbery record include, Bauchi 98, Bayelsa 95, Oyo 95, Ogun 89, Lagos 87, Kwara 76 and Kano 61.

Other states with relatively moderate crime rate were, Plateau 45; Rivers 45; ,Kogi 46; Borno 57; Ekiti 58; Gombe 52; Kaduna 55; Niger 57 and Zamfara 52. States with low crime record include Cross River 9; Jigawa 18; Enugu 20; Imo 22; Osun 26; Sokoto 33; Yobe 33; Kebbi 33; Nasarawa 34; Adamawa 27; Abia 30; FCT 31;

Delta 37; Edo 38; Anambra 39 and Akwa Ibom, 41. Lagos was on top of the rape record in 2015 with 513 cases, followed by Delta, 205; Kano 189; Katsina 120; Ogun 76; Ondo 68 and Edo, 55. Others are FCT 44; Ebonyi 41; Cross River 40; Bauchi 38; Oyo 35; Kaduna 33; Anambra 33; Bayelsa 31; Niger 29; Enugu 28; Plateau 25; Yobe and Zamfara, 21; Borno 20; Jigawa 18; Imo 17, Kogi 15 and Gombe 12.

States that recorded low rape incidents include Taraba 9, Benue 6; Adamawa and Kebbi 7, Ekiti 8, and Abia 10. The statistics however showed that the nation recorded 1,959 rape cases in 2014 and 1,788 in 2013. Rivers State recorded the highest incidents of kidnapping in 2015 with 294 reported cases, followed by Lagos, 142; Ebonyi 79; Ekiti 56; Ogun 52; Benue 41; Taraba 24 and Adamawa 38. Others are Taraba 24; Delta 15; Borno and Niger 12; Oyo 13 and Ondo, Kwara and Bayelsa 10. Five states namely, Gombe, Jigawa, Katsina, Osun and Yobe recorded zero incident of kidnapping.

While commenting on the report, the Force Public Relations Officer, Donald Awunah, said the crime rate had not increased, adding that what had increased were the frequency of specific crimes like 'confidence tricks' and kidnapping, which he said, were becoming endemic. He explained that the police had conducted a geo-mapping of crime in the country to know the crimes that were specific to certain geo-political zones. He added that the force "ramping up its intelligence gathering capabilities and also collaborating with other security services to check crimes before they occurred. We are also encouraging the public to be part of policing decisions by providing useful information and tips to the police (Adepegba, 2016). He argued that the police were dealing with criminals, noting that crimes like highway robbery had reduced because Nigerians were no longer moving around with cash.

Methodology

The methods used in this work are the descriptive and analytical methods. The use of library materials was employed. Related text books, journals, special publications and newspapers were analyzed. Crimes in Nigeria are not a fairly recent issue, and not much has been written on the subject, hence the reliance on daily news as recorded by credible sources. Sources also include interviews with victims of crimes, law enforcement agencies as well as people who were witnesses and later released victims of crimes.

Theoretical Framework

The structural functionalism theory which is associated with the works of Emile Durkheim (1917), Robert K. Merton (1968) and Talcott Parson (1979) will be used to examine the linkage between crime and security challenges in Anambra state. It is a framework for building theory that sees society as a framework for building theory that sees society as a complex system whose parts work together to promote solidarity and stability. This approach looks at society through a macro-level orientation, which is a broad focus on the social structures and social functions that shape society as a whole, and believes that society has evolved like organisms.

Durkheim was concerned with the question of how certain societies maintain internal stability and survive over time. He proposed that such societies tend to be segmented, with equivalent parts held together by shared values, common symbols or a systems of exchanges. Durkheim used the term 'mechanical solidarity' to refer to these types of "social bonds based on common sentiments & shared moral values that are strong among members of pre-industrial societies". In modern, complex societies, members perform very different tasks, resulting in a strong interdependence.

Functionalism addresses society as a whole in terms of the function of its constituent elements; namely norms, customs, traditions and institutions. Herbert Spencer, using a common analogy popularized and presented these parts of society as "organs" that work toward the proper functioning of the "body" as a whole. In the most basic terms, it simply emphasizes "the effort to impute, as rigorously as possible, to each feature, custom, or practice, its effect on the functioning of a supposedly stable, cohesive system".

For Talcott Parson, "structural-functionalism" came to describe a particular stage in the methodological development of the social sciences, rather than a specific school of thought. The structural functionalism approach is a macro-sociological analysis, with a broad focus on social structures that shape society as a totality. Explanations of social phenomena had therefore to be constructed within this level, individuals being merely transient occupants of comparatively stable social roles. The central concern of structural functionalism is a continuation of the Durkheimian task of explaining the apparent stability and internal cohesion needed by societies to endure over time. Societies are seen as coherent, bounded and fundamentally relational constructs that function like organisms, with their various (or social institutions) working together

in an unconscious, quasi-automatic fashion toward achieving an overall social equilibrium. All social and cultural phenomena are therefore seen as functional in the sense of working together, and are effectively deemed to have "lives" of their own. They are primarily analyzed in terms of this function. The individual is significant not in and of himself, but rather in terms of his status, his position in patterns of social relations, and the behaviours associated with his status. Therefore, the social structure is the network of statuses connected by associated roles.

The basic assumption of the theory sees society as a living organism made up of inter-related components parts, which functions harmoniously for the survival of the whole system. If any parts fails to contribute to identifiably useful function neither does it promote values consensus among members of the society – it will not be passed on from one generation to the next (Schaefer, 2002). Merton's theory of deviance is derived from Durkheim's idea of anomie. It is central in explaining how internal changes can occur in a system. For Merton, anomie means a discontinuity between cultural goals and the accepted methods available for reaching them. Merton believes that there are 5 situations facing an actor.

- **Conformity** occurs when an individual has the means and desire to achieve the cultural goals socialised into him.
- **Innovation** occurs when an individual strives to attain the accepted cultural goals but chooses to do so in novel or unaccepted method.
- **Ritualism** occurs when an individual continues to do things as proscribed by society but forfeits the achievement of the goals.
- **Retreatism** is the rejection of both the means and the goals of society.
- **Rebellion** is a combination of the rejection of societal goals and means and a substitution of other goals and means.

Thus it can be seen that change can occur internally in society through either innovation or rebellion. It is true that society will attempt to control these individuals and negate the changes, but as the innovation or rebellion builds momentum, society will eventually adapt or face dissolution.

The anomie theory is intimately associated with the theory of crime prevention through the proper design of open spaces. The theory addresses the issue of why certain social spaces are conducive to crime. Anomie or alienation can occur in any society where social disruption, such as sudden economic depression or prosperity, or rapid technological change, leads people to aspire to goals that are structurally unattainable (La Gory and Pipkin, 1981). According to Merton (1957), the five strategies of adjustment to a situation of anomie are conformity, innovation, ritualism, retreats and rebellion. Innovation, which is more relevant to this study, involves a situation in which the individual accepts culturally defined goals but chooses illegitimate means to achieve them. Highly segregated lower-class communities are likely to have many more of these innovators simply because the legitimate means to achieve such goals are out of their reach.

When applying the theory to explain the social problem of crime in Nigeria, and its implication on the socioeconomic and politico- legal developments; structural functionalism assumes for instance that, the economy which is part of the social system is not functioning well. This is due to the mismanagement that occurs within the political sector. This dysfunction within the system causes high level of poverty, unemployment, deprivation as well as marginalization. The result is visualized in the high crime rate of which kidnapping and armed robbery are at the fore front. The crime of kidnapping has been identified as profitable, less risky with smaller penalty and functional with quick returns to its perpetrators. The lucrative nature of kidnapping makes it very attractive. Kidnapping as observed in some parts of Nigeria, is identified as a functional measure of unemployed youths and vandals and politicians to fight the states and their opponents. The money collected as ransoms are means to destabilize the state and opponents and as well force them to back-out of the political race.

In the Niger Delta, kidnapping of foreign expatriates has drawn government attention to look into the plight of the region. This is visualized in the post-amnesty program initiated by Yar'adua/Goodluck administration in 2009, which is expected to restore the much needed peace in the region and the country at large so that socio-economic activities could be conducted without obstruction. However the structural functionalism theory is criticized for not being capable of explaining change and also for addressing the issues of a system as "closed" concept (Charles, Ikoh, Iyamba & Charles, 2005). Despite these criticisms, the theory is justified for its ability to highlight on the functional aspect of crime in our society.

Crime and Insecurity in Anambra: An Overview

Anambra State came into being on 27th August 1991. It was part of the former Eastern Region part of the former Eastern Central State, part of the former old Anambra State. It derives its name from Anambra River. The predominant language is Igbo with minor dialectical differences. Anambra people are known to be resourceful and very enterprising especially in the area of commerce. The high level of commercial activities in the state attracts people from different part of the Nigeria and across the borders of Nigeria. This probably accounts for the cosmopolitan nature of towns like Onitsha, Nnewi and Ekwuluobia.

The people of the state have different rich cultural festivals of which now from major tourist attractions. New yam and Mmanwu festivals in different localities in the state and shrines like Otutu – nze and caves like the Ogbunike cave and Agulu Lake form major tourist attractions, drawing a lot of visitors. The above festivals together with other types of festivals remain the traditional means of entertainment and recreation. Christian religion is the predominant religion in the state. The extended family system is a major characteristic especially in traditional society. The state is largely patriarchal as the man is regarded as the head and leader of the family or household. The estimated population of over four million for Anambra (projected from the 1991 National Population Census) makes it one of the most populous states in the Southeastern geo-political zone.

Since its creation the state has had three military administrations, a short – lived civilian administration of Dr. Chukwuemeka Ezife (2nd January, 1992 to 17th November 1993), the civilian administration of Dr. Chinweoke Mbadinuju (May 1999 to May 2003), Dr. Chris Ngige (May 2003 – March 2006) and the present administration of Mr. Peter Obi.

The return to democracy in 1999 raised the hope of Anambrarians in terms of realizing better democratic dividends. These hopes were dashed as the life of the civilian regime of 1999 – 2007 became married with all forms of civil crises labour restiveness, economic hardship and insecurity questions. The attempted physical abduction of the Chief executive of the state by highly placed figures was a very big threat and a new dimension to the crises in the state. Political instability has continued to generate social tension with, threats to the state's security. A direct consequence of this is the concentration of government's energy and resources on security and political survival to the detriment of development needs of the state. The table below captures the crime statistics in Anambra state between 1999 to 2015.

Table I: Classification of Crime in Anambra State between 1999–2015

Year	Assault	419/OBT	Arson	Murder	Robbery	Rape	Stealing	Kidnapping
1999	1092	2005	95	400	500	75	1001	Nil
2000	1009	1152	125	390	315	80	608	5
2001	1201	960	75	200	616	50	709	2
2002	1800	419	49	391	231	91	900	8
2003	2000	1317	61	202	600	136	217	5
2004	1909	800	49	198	496	100	798	10
2005	1396	706	68	516	760	98	632	Nil
2006	800	699	139	610	298	72	800	4
2007	720	400	610	279	800	136	881	10
2008	600	515	200	407	430	72	911	139
Total	13337	8973	1541	3593	5046	910	7457	183

Sources: Anambra state Police service and Newspaper Cut-outs

From the table above, robbery incidents on the highway has become a great source of concern to the Anambra state Police Command. In Onitsha, the situations appear worse cases of murders and robberies are reported every six hours. Between January and now, the police recorded 500 incidents of murder and 2,116 cases of robbery. Uche Nwoke, who resides in Onitsha, said no part of the town is spared. "No one is safe. Today the situation has reached the point that any one who goes to bed in the night and wakes up alive gives thanks to God because even one is now living in perpetual fear, Nwoko said.

Recently, an official of one the commercial banks to *Daily Independent* that “Banking in becoming unsafe in Nnewi; and it I have my way I will advise for something drastic things to be done”. I have witnessed about six robbery incidents and at every time it happens money is lost. I just wonder if Nnewi town is jinxed.

Meanwhile, the five states of the South east zone: Abia, Anambra, Ebony, Enugu and Imo in the last two years have been a haven for criminals, especially armed robbers aid kidnapers. For instance, reports have it that within the past one year, over 250 cases of kidnapping have taken place in the zone; with Anambra topping the chart with about 80 cases, followed by Abia, with 73, Imo and Ebony have a joint recorded of 95 cases while Enugu has 20 of such incidents recorded. The amount of money that the victims and their relatives have lost to these abductors is apparently unquantifiable, as the amount runs into billions of Naira. Those that are usually the targets of these hoodlums are wealthy and important individuals, their children and or loved relatives.

For instance, when on January 28, 2007, Ogbuawa has; all agedly; abducted by Orji and his gang, he claimed that he paid as ransom a whopping N20million to regain his freedom. But seemingly determined to ensure that he was not the only one who would expenses such horror, Ogbuawa reportedly decided to give a list of fellow-multi millionaire business colleagues in Nnewi to his abductors.

Too many Nigerians and given the litany of unresolved murder cases in police files, it is rhetoric for the populace to agree with the police that it would track down culprits following the brutal murder of Barnabas Igwe and his wife; Chukwudi Okafor among others, the assessment is not assigned. Their killings remain mysterious as those committed before them. Infact, the list of murder cases yet to be resolved is longer than what the public can keep track of. For instance, the public is yet to hear the outcome of police investigations into the murder of Chukwudi Okafor, who until his death early June was the chairman, Association of Ex-Council chairmen of All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA) in Anambra State.

In terms of arsons, indigenes of Anambra State would wants the former governor, Chris Ngige and his estranged godfather pay for reconstruction of destroyed state properties in 2004. Within this era the state lost most of the facilities it worked hard to put in place since it was created. The latest blowout is said to have destroyed public property estimated at over N10 billion.

The tragedy of the situation is confounding because their killers have not been found. Thus giving the wrong signal that everybody is on his own and that life is the state is short, brutish and nasty. The statistics supports this thesis expressed above. Economic crimes are equally on the increase as the interactions below expresses.

From the tone of his voice, “Chief (Dr)Okeke Bension” had been expecting the call for weeks. “You are welcome”, he told the caller; adding in a much more polite way “can you give me your fax number so that we can discuss?” The caller asked “Chief Benson” whether he was denying sending a fax message to him. Cleverly, “Chief Benson” cut the line. The caller had obtained several of “Chief Benson’s” type of letter. The confirmation from “Chief Benson” was additional evidence that this sort still dot the advance – free fraud (popularly called 419) space of Nigeria’s new order economy.

This is despite the effort of the Nigerian government to achieve total crack down on the operators of the scam who have continually soiled the country’s and state’s image and reputation in foreign countries.

The efforts do not be seem to be yielding the desired result but Governor Peter Obi has said the government will not rest on its oars in its war against economic crimes. He posits that without the extermination of economic crimes, which he listed to include money laundering, the state will not grow.

Related to the 419 activities are credit card racketeering and document forgery by Nigerians. These crimes, which are rampant in the United State, Europe, Asia and Far East, include stealing of genuine cards both for manufacturing counterfeits and making illegal purchases of goods, which are, in many cases shipped to Nigeria. They also engaged on forging official government documents and other documents to facilitate their dubious transactions; including bank cheques, drafts, airline tickets, passports and visas.

Another crime Nigerians abroad and at home are involved in is the human trafficking and prostitution. Some Nigerians are known to have sent their children and wards to Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Cote d’Ivoire, and Central African Republic among others.

Nigeria; especially teenagers; under the under the guise of being assisted to secure job in Europe and America, are made to pay between N500,000 and one million to agents who provide them with fake passports, visas, tickets and other traveling documents. A large number of these youths are either stranded in along the routes in Mali Libya, Algeria or Morocco where they get involved in crimes including armed robbery or in jail. The females among them take to prostitution to earn a living.

In recent times, Anambra State, that prides itself as the Light of the Nation had its horrible share of the kidnap saga, get on a scary scale. The kidnapers unleashed their terror on both regal and the everyman. Without no sense of remorse, the kidnapers on April 26, 2008, seized 73 years old traditional ruler of Abagana in Njikoka Local Government Area, Patrick Mbamalu Okeke and two others including, Hon. Amachi Mike Elobi and Mrs Lucy Anyacho. They staked N100million for their release.

Other high profile victims included Hon. Joseph Dimobi of Anaocha 11 Constituency in the State House of Assembly. Another case was that of the newly wedded couple, Mr Michael Aguowa and his Liberian born wife, Angy that just got married at Nibo, on Awka South Council Area. The kidnapers asked for our N30 million and N60 million ransoms in exchange for their lives.

Another high-profile kidnap that sent cold shivers down the spines of the people was the recent snatching of Chief Anthony Erukeme; Chairman, State Traditional Prime Ministers Council and Chief Godwin Ibekwe, president of the state Branch of Nigeria Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE) with incidents like this, the kidnapers show that they are no respecter of persons and positions.

The high crime statistics constitutes a real threat to the security of Anambra State. Since the beginning of the Fourth Republic, robbers and kidnapers, rapists, and other criminals have intensified their activities. They are everywhere, on the streets and highways, in our homes, and in the banks. They rob, kill and maim. What is responsible for the upsurge in crime statistics in Anambra State? The next section will provide answers to the upsurge.

Thematic Explanations of the Causes of Crime in Anambra State

Several forms of criminality involved military, police and other paramilitary institutions as well as various arms of the organized civil society such as trade unions, ethnic militia, these groups promotes forms of organized physical violence and economic banditry. Outright physical brutalization, Vandalization of properties, armed robbery, hostage – taking and large scale deceit and fraud in the name of human right and civil liberties activism characterized by some of these groups.

So far, many kidnapping incidents have been recorded across the state since the last decade. But the infamous crime is preponderant in Awka, Onitsha, and Nnewi respectively. The gang members are unemployed youths between 18 and 38 years. The rate of undergraduates' involvement is alarming based on police records; criminologists and development expert all agreed that unemployment is fuelling the kidnapping business in the state. With moribund industries all over the place and the state government unable to provide jobs; even in the civil service, one of the highest in Nigeria.

The primary cause of insecurity question in Anambra state is political instability. Although political instability promotes crime and insecurity, it is not their only cause. It does, however, lie behind some of the other causes. Other conditions that may give rise to an increased crime rate include poverty, unemployment; the collapse of traditional family values and the imposition of “Washington consensus” inspired programmes. All these have further economic hardship for the masses. This has worsened the crime situation in the continent since the 1980s.

These phenomena relate in various ways to the political instability, which usually precedes, military reentry in governance. This is because political instability breeds economic recession and makes it difficult for people to achieve their legitimate aspirations through lawful means. This implies that the deprived populace will tend to seek fulfillment through illegal means. The state and civil society thus suffer as victims of crimes, which, as we have posited, they themselves encourage in various ways. The instability in the system consequently deepens, and weakens democratic governance.

Antonia – Alonsi – Yakubu citing Oka Orewa (1997:88 – 89) succinctly elaborated on the fund raising activities of government and party officials in Nigeria:

1. 10% levy on prices of all contracts awarded at state and local government levels.
2. In some local governments, there is another 15% known as the executive distribution poll, which is shared by the chairman and members of this executive. The chairman uses his own share to generate funds to recoup his own past election expenses.
3. In some local governments, legislators insist on getting another 5% + 10% of the contract price to recoup their own election expenses.
4. The party executives at the local government level get fertilizer and sell them at 300% to 400% profit, claiming that a substantial proportion of their profit goes into the party funds.

5. There are allegations that prospective public servants now pay substantial sums as bribe to party executives in order to obtain sponsorship for appointment.
6. The same party executives, on the approach of general elections or local government elections, claim demand and receive from prospective candidates huge sums of money that they claim are for whispering campaign, usually; a very small percentage of such funds gets unto the hands of the voters.

As the traditional ruler of Awka town in Anambra State puts it in an interview with Human Rights Watch: "Here (In Anambra) elections are connected to how much money you have put into and your ability to intimidate others.

Government officials and the non-governing elites, who could not benefit sufficiently from the new form of settlement, resort to other forms of economic illegality. Through these sources, they often raised enough funds to satisfy their extravagant desires and meet the demands of their clandestine activities. Today, there are cases of the involvement of highly placed government officials in organized crimes such as the advanced free fraud (419) politicians and big names in the private sectors, as well as actors in the political process. There were widespread cases of drug trafficking, petroleum bunkering, ritual murders, increased banditry and outright assassinations for economic-political reasons.

Many Nigerian politicians see violence both as an offensive weapon and as a component of personal security. Some of them posit that they must maintain some capacity to unleash violence as a measure of self-defense. Senator Ben Obi, the Action Congress vice-presidential candidate in the 2007 elections explained to Human Rights Watch during an interview at his home in Awka during the campaign that:

Earlier I had 20 boys here to see me. If anyone tries to attack me, my boys will unleash terror. I help them to secure a little patronage from government or to start small businesses. It is not possible to have a campaign without your boys. If you are around, they too must be around.

Key actors in the political process quite often perpetrated these crimes. Not only did they pose major threat to the Nigeria's security; they often enjoyed the collaboration of the country's top security agents, thus bringing about the collapse of law and order at the upper echelons of society

In other cases politicians posit that their use of political violence by pointing out the ineffectual or partisan response of law-enforcement agencies to violence that targets them. In January 2007, for example, a group of thugs linked to a powerful Oyo State godfather attacked and nearly killed former Senator Lekan Balogun on the steps of the Oyo State House of Assembly¹⁸. Four weeks later, he complained to Human Rights Watch that the Police had held no one to account even though he could identify his assailants and said that:

I will fight back. If the law will not address the issue. I will fight back using the same means---- if the law falls to address the issue, I would mobilize thugs too. There are boys that I know. I don't like them, but it's not that anybody has a monopoly on violence. Anybody can do it. Students are waiting to be mobilized (Onwubiko, 2009: 16)

In Anambra State, in 2006, Pa Simon Soludo, father of the former Central Bank Governor, Professor Charles. Soludo and his stepmother were severely battered by yet – to – be established assailants. Instructively, the state was later to be engulfed in orgy of violence, allegedly perpetrated by the outlawed National Association of Transport Owners (NARTO) and the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) Both organizations which have since been dislodged from the state by Governor Peter Obi, were reportedly being remote controlled by disjointed godfather, Chris Uba and other disgruntled politicians.

Since 1999 competitive electoral politics has assumed ruthless dimensions. Recent day political leadership and democracy is flawed by fraudulent electoral practices instead of being hinged on tolerance, moderation, fair play under the rule of law (Joab- Peterside, 2007). Many politicians aim at securing power and by all means and manipulating power for self aggrandizement. The political process is viewed as a war and the era of the use of cult groups and militias by political parties was born. Campus cult groups like the Vikings, Black Axe and KK were recruited by politicians to operate as thugs because of their fire-powers and paid heavily for their services thereby transforming violence into a commodity priced and purchased in the democratic process. (Joab-Peterside, 2007). Perhaps, the first reported and pronounced case of abduction in the Niger Delta is the January 11, 2006 abduction of four foreign Shell Petroleum workers working on the AE fields by militants in Port-Harcourt.

Put differently, Former Governor Peter Obi sees the growing rate of crime in the state as politically – motivated. The answer to this question why is this trend of peace and security suddenly changing is the desperation and lawlessness of politicians who create a semblance of insecurity and lawlessness with a view to giving the impression that the governor has failed as the Chief Security Officer of the State

The above criminal activities have also permeated into the various sub-sectors of the Nigerian Society. For instance, as a result of a deliberate attempt by the various military and civilian regimes to pauperize the universities, in order to check their anti-dictatorships and dictatorial activism, many universities and the academic aid non-academic staff had to resort to corrupt practices in order to make ends meet. They sold admission letters to the least qualified; they sold grades to students who did not deserve ordinary passes; and they award honorary doctorate degrees to notorious criminals and to the highest bidders, in order to run their institutions.

In 2008 a visitation panel that investigated abuse of office by the former Imo State University Vice-chancellor, Professor Innocent C. Okonkwo made the following discovery. On admission racketeering, the panel found that the VC sexed up figures of number of admitted students. For instance, while he told the panel that he admitted 2,800 students for the current academic 2008/09 sessions, records at the disposal of the panel revealed a quadrupled figure of 9,380 students in take for the current session. He diversified the avenue of extorting money from students. He treated the university as his personal fiefdom; dispensing patronage and sanction as only he saw fit and not at all based on merit, and in the process, corrupting the system.

The Guardian noted in its editorial of March 22, 1994: The decay in the university system is pervasive: it runs deep in the academic sphere as well as in social life. No strata of the university community – Student's, teachers, workers or administrators – stand above the rot. Professors can no longer inspire their junior colleagues or their students. Discipline has broken down not only among the students but also among their teachers. The educators are in dire need of education. In the area of corruption, immorality and debasement of social values, the university is as bankrupts as the society. University administrators can no longer maintain law and order.

In fact, students unions, which have often been perceived as one of the pro-democracy elements, have become an avenue for hooligans to extort money from “defenseless” students. The widespread insecurity in the university and in society at large in such that many students have been driven to establish their own forms of self-protection: secret cults. Nigeria's notorious “cult's groups are a particular variety of criminal gang that began as campus fraternities, the first of which emerged in 1952 when a group of University of Ibadan students, including noble laureate Wole Soyinka, organized a fraternity called the Pirates Confraternity. They have seen proliferated and evolved into violent gangs that are most widely feared criminal enterprises in Nigeria. The power and prevalence of these groups has grown steadily over the decades and especially since the beginning of the Fourth Republic. Many groups maintain ties with powerful politicians, some of whom themselves have associations with cult organization dating back to their days at university. This is so even though the Nigerian Constitution expressly outlaws many cult groups.

These cult groups became laws unto themselves, thereby worsening the state of insecurity bath on the campuses and in the country at large. This has led to the unprecedented presence of police and military personnel on the campuses. Reliable statistics about the on campus human toll of Nigeria's cult violence epidemic do not exist, but former minister of Education Obiageli Ezekwesili estimated that some 200 students and teachers lost their lives to cult related violence between 1996 and 2005.

Human Rights Watch interviewed more than 20 current and former members of cult groups and ordinary criminal gangs not associated with cult organizations who had been recruited by PDP politicians either during the 2003 elections or in the run-up to the 2007 polls on Oyo, Anambra, and Rivers States. Many spoke candidly about being paid to target the political opponents of their sponsors or to attack and intimidate ordinary voters.

Many of the interviewed cult and gang members described their work in graphic terms. One of the former cult member told Human Right Watch that his group was recruited by the PDP in Rivers State to prevent people from voting during the 2003 elections. “My duty was to send people to hell” he said. Members of one Ibadan based gang acknowledged having ties to Oyo State political godfather late Lamidi Adedibu and said that they had been paid to carry out political assassination²⁴. And just ahead of the 2007 elections, one member of the Buccaneers cult in Anambra state told Human Rights Watch matters – of – flatly that, “if there is a need to cause commotion during the election, they (local politicians) will call us”. Two members of

the Vikings cult group in Anambra State; for example, told Human Rights Watch that during the PDP primaries in late 2006, they and many other Vikings members from the Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka had been recruited by PDP aspirants in several South eastern states to accompany them on the campaign trail.

The National Drugs law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) posits that the increasing usage of hard drugs in the southeast remain a major contributing factor to the crime wave; including kidnapping. “The abuses of narcotic drugs have led to an upsurge in violent crimes such as armed robbery and social crimes such as kidnapping and prostitution in Aba and entire Abia State, said the state commander of NDLEA, Mr Justice Arinze.

Okoli (2009) linked the upsurge of kidnapping in Nigeria to high consumption and trafficking on hard drugs. He used Abia State to illustrate the correlation between kidnapping and hard drug consumption and trafficking. According to him, Abia State on the one hand is admired for its commerce and flourishing entrepreneurs that have contributed significantly to the economy of the country. On the other hand, Abia State has acquired the notoriety as the highest hard drug consuming and trafficking state, East of the Niger. The barons have ensured the ready availability of drugs not only in Abia State but also in the five neighbouring states of Imo, Akwa Ibom, Rivers, Cross River and Bayelsa. This has led to the upsurge in violent crimes such as kidnapping and armed robbery within the states. Cocaine and heroin have become common drugs of abuse with arrest and seizure recorded in most Local Government Areas of the State. Numerous drugs sale joints are springing up everyday where criminal activities are planned perfected and executed. He further noted that, some streets in Aba such as York and Park have turned into no-go areas for law abiding residents of Aba metropolis as unscrupulous miscreant have turned them into ghettos and haven for their hard drugs operations.

Key findings:

The following are among the key findings in this paper:

1. Politics is extremely competitive and elections are perceived as zero – sum contests in Nigeria in general and in Anambra state in particular. This has led to the increasingly militarized nature of politics, the use of violence as an electoral tool, and the inculcation of a culture of violence in society.
2. Armed groups are not a new phenomenon in Nigeria. There are numerous groups of varying character and intent operating in the state. However, 4today’s armed groups are better armed, better trained, and increasingly sophisticated in their actions compared to those of the past.
3. The militarized nature of politics combined with the prevalence of armed groups has provided an easy linkage between politics and violence. Armed groups have taken advantage of the opportunities presented by being hired hands; and have now developed their own resource bases of economic support, thereby freeing themselves from their political patrons. This has led some group to engage in aid try to influence the political process them.
4. Armed violence is not a random event. Acts of armed violence in the polity are purposeful in intent and directed at key targets, whether economic or political. Armed violence is about more than oil, religion, ethnicity or politics. In essence, such violence is about access to scare resources, whether through committing crimes playing on communal tensions, stealing oil, or winning elections.
5. While Nigeria supports international instruments to limit illicit proliferation and has put in place in national legislations to restrict the ownership and use by light and small arms, these laws are poorly enforced and as a result largely ineffective in addressing illicit proliferation. The inability of the police and other security agencies to maintain law and order in the polity, and the resulting insecurity among the populace, has led some people and communities to acquire small arms for protection.
6. The security vote is an opaque budget line item that provides vital amount of finding for “security – related issues”, but which remains uncontrolled by requirements for disclosure. At best, this provides an easy source of money for political corruption; at worst, it provides politicians with money that allows them to use violence as a tool of political influence and control by purchasing the services of armed gangs.
7. The government’s response to armed violence has been a mixed strategy of carrot and stick. The former in the form of development programmes. This has failed to deliver substantial economic

benefits and development progress. The latter, an attempt to meet force with force, has provoked an escalation of violence rather than curbed it.

Implications of the Findings

It is axiomatic to posit that nights of bliss and ecstasy are now past and the cold hands of fear and apprehension and nightmare have gripped the once bubbling state. Once it is size (6) O'clock every evening, the state rush home for safety and the ghosts of armed robbers, kidnappers and assassins take over till the next day. Anambra state now sleeps with one eye closed and horror has taken over the fun in the state.

The fun and psychological harmony that were enjoyed in those hospitality centers are now mourned in church halls. Night prayers made in the mode of crusades, tarry nights, vigils and Holy Ghost assemblies have been on the increase. But it does not depict how God fearing or religious Anambra state residents are. It only tells one that instead of being awake all through the night in the discomfort of your home, the church is the best place to be, after all the hoodlums are at least God fearing.

But the gentlemen of the night do not always fear God cases abound of situations where a church security man tied with hands at his back and the next morning one or two state of the art cars would be found missing.

The anxiety has become so overbearing that the sight of Okada vehicles with young men that dressed suggestively like Mafias sends cold shivers down the spine of road users. Today, one can count the number of jeeps, customized saloon cars that ply the major streets in Anambra state. Even company vehicles and commercial bank official vehicles are not even spared. Indeed, the state is sitting on the edge and human traffic and activities are suddenly witnessing a hushed serenity akin to peace of the grave yard.

The lull is made more manifest when most rich men in Anambra state have virtually relocated their families to nearby states of Enugu, Delta and Abuja for safety. Most hotels, restaurants and beer parlours are now chewing their nails and indeed singing dirges over the epileptic climate of tourism industry. The manager of one of the five star hotels in Awka who pleaded anonymity told Daily Independent that rodents were fast taking over the hotel rooms.

You know that if a building is not put to use it will start dilapidating. Some rooms in this hotel have remained unoccupied for weeks now. Who would occupy them when our customers are in Enugu, Abuja and even Asaba? The state of insecurity in Anambra has now scared them away and we are now country loses. In a hotel of more than 30rooms, only 12 are occupied and some times the bar is empty. But upon must burn diesel to render services for your guests. At the end of the day; you do not break even. All we do is to go into those rooms; clean them again, remove cobwebs and close them behind us, he moaned.

However, another salient factor that has affected security question in Anambra State is the presence of policemen and other security forces at every junction. The state Acting Police Commissioner; Mr Amusa Bello in the Command's determination to fight crime has deployed, policemen and Armored Personnel Carrier (APC) every nook and cranny of the state and the zealotry of the security forces has always produced results. But the gunmen factor to this development is that some of the officers and men do overstep their bounds.

It is currently the norm that when about three or four young men are in a vehicle, the first suspicion that calls to mind are that they may be criminals. Hence, they must be searched and scrutinized properly. A cluster of youths in a beer parlor raises suspicion of people set to commit crime. They would be frisked from the nails of their toes to the hairs of their hearts. All these are happening because of the increment in crime statistics.

Furthermore, it is not in doubt that business in Anambra State is no more what it used to be. A situation whereby banks close at 12noon and 1.00p.m makes matters worse. Where would people get the money to enjoy them? The populace needs the bank to do business.

But now in the last few weeks, it has been very, very terrible because of the attacks of armed robbers and kidnappers. What is happening now is that people do not even go out at all. People who can spend money are outside the state and they are now in Abuja, Lagos and Asaba running for their dear lives. As a result of the fact that there is no money in the economy of the state, the rate of insecurity is increasing. One of the major consequences of the above scenario is high rate of urban youth unemployment. Business can only work well when we have security to lives and properties.

Other implications of insecurity question in Anambra include: disruption of family and command life; general atmosphere of mistrusts, fear, and frenzy; dehumanization of women and children e.g Rape, child

abuse and neglect; deepening of hunger and poverty in the society and atmosphere of political insecurity and instability including declining confidence in the political leadership and apprehension about the system

Recommendations

Based on the foregoing analysis, a number of measures seem to suggest themselves in developing a framework for conflict prevention and management and ensuring security and effective policing in Anambra State. To address this ugly situation Government has set up a special task in security with members of the body drawn from the army, the police and the state security service. Expectedly; security has been beefed up generally in the state and in particular around the bank and other sensitive places. To add bite to the force, there is a need for the Inspector – General of Police (IGP) to reinforce the police strength in the state. Related to the above, there is a need for the special joint task force of military, State Security Service and police to take over crime – fighting in the state.

Again, the state government cannot tackle security issues alone. The state needs the help of both the federal and corporate bodies like banks, and neighborhood watch to come together and fashion out ways of checking crime in Anambra State. The security agencies are trying their work but they need to be encouraged by providing them with logistics, bullet proof vests, more communication gadgets and of possible helicopters to fight crime. There should be effective neighborhood watch in the communities.

To curb criminal activities in the land, the society must come to terms with the fact that we have lost our morals as a country. The reasons that account for this are many. Prominent among the reasons are the parents. Parents have abandoned their responsibilities in the quest for subsistence living. They no longer have time for their children. The children group either through a nanny or a day care centre. Parents need to revisit this nanny – Day care syndrome in curtailing their excesses.

Furthermore, there is a need for the economy to be diversified and for the government to create job opportunities. Crime would not reduce until job opportunities are created which would make criminal activities unattractive to the populace. Again, there is a need to decentralize the police force to allow for the establishment community or state police. The decentralization has so many benefits. First of all, we have so many unresolved as a result of the police force lacking crime-detecting capacity occasioned by now the centralized police force posts her personnel. Community or state police will address this issue.

Finally, there is a need to improve the quality of governance. Security and criminal justice reforms are equally required.

Conclusion

The statistics is damning, even in a state as highly populated as Anambra, which mirrors the country to the international community. No nation can afford to lose its human resources, at that rate, to mindless people in misadventures. That toll portrays an atmosphere of insecurity across the country; it should be redressed by the relevant authorities. Sadly, a substantial number of the murder incidents were caused by politically motivated and cult-related activities and street fights, according to the study. More worrisome is the shift in cult clashes from the conventional university campuses to the streets of Anambra where artisans are now cult kingpins. Police authorities may also wish to worry about an upsurge in ritual killings and kidnap for ransom.

In the past fortnight (outside of the stated figures), there are series of ritual murders, all women, were reported in some location where headless bodies were deposited in uncompleted buildings. The police should strive hard to bring the culprits to book; else they will be encouraged to perpetrate the crime. No matter who is involved or for whatever purpose, the law against taking of human lives unlawfully subsists, and must be made to take its course. The country can do without this culture of bestiality. The police must take full responsibility for poor investigations which have resulted in a high number of unresolved murders even of high profile citizens in the recent past. Perplexing as it is, the situation calls for a drastic review of crime investigation processes. More or less, there is a serious need for security agencies to raise the bar in protecting the people. Crime prevention and bursting capacity would be a great plus in the fight to keep peace and assure citizens of protection by the state.

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