IJAAR PUBLISHING®

International Journal of Advanced Academic Research | ISSN: 2488-9849
Vol. 10, Issue 2 (February, 2024) | www.ijaar.org

SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND NATIONAL SECURITY IMPLICATIONS OF CROSS-BORDER TRADE BETWEEN NIGERIA AND NIGER REPUBLIC

Kawu N. Kola

Abstract

The study identifies policy frameworks that regulate Nigeria-Niger Republic relations, investigates socio-economic implications of trade relations, examines cross-border trade as a factor responsible for threats to national security and evaluates the political implications of cross-border trade relations between the two states. The data gathered through a qualitative method which included interviews and focus group discussions were analysed using descriptive and thematic analysis. The paper reveals that the gains of the multiplicities of international framework have been messed up by the manner and ways in which the policies have been denigrated as exemplified by criminals' incessant attacks within the two states borders. Also, an analysis of the trading activities reveals the negative effect that stifles the progress, growth, and development of the two states due to the level of insecurity imposed by the high rate of criminal activities. The paper discovered that both Nigeria and Niger governments failed to identify one after the other all of the routes that connect the two countries. As a result, the progress, growth, and development expected to be derived from cross-border trade relations have been negated with serious damages that pose serious threats to the security of two states. The paper recommend that government agencies charged with maintaining the security fulcrum should be proactive in their efforts to ensure that all forms of illegality are eradicated through strict monitoring and excellent surveillance. The activities of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) should be strengthened to regulate border points, particularly illegal entry routes that provide safe passage for the smuggling of arms and ammunition. Also, the study recommends the establishment of an ECOMOG base to combat and respond to cross-border crime, with different action plans in place at all times.

Keywords: Socio-Economic, National Security, Cross-Border Trade, Security, Trade

Kola, N. K. (2024). Socio-Economic and National Security Implications of Cross-Border Trade between Nigeria and Niger Republic. *International Journal of Advanced Academic Research*. 10(2), 74-87.

Introduction

Interstate relations is anchored on pursuing state objectives within the international arena in which actions and inactions of a country are determined by the policy goals a country intends to achieve. It goes without saying that countries cannot exist in isolation, both individuals and countries find a way of connecting to realize political, economic and socio-cultural goals. Historically, cross-border trade occurs when people move geographically from one place to another to exchange goods and services. However, cross-border trade does not only serve the purpose of movement of people or goods, it also breaks down artificially imposed barriers between states and generates interactions including socio-economic and political relationships between two or more nations. According to Chang (2010), cross-border trade occurs when traders, merchants, and residents of a defined territory cross a specific administrative or political border. The movement of people and goods across international boundaries can be legal or illegal, depending on the pattern of the movement and the reasons that necessitate such.

Nigeria and Niger Republic have intimate interactions in the defined areas of socio-economic and cross-border trade relationships. At the cross-border level, the two countries developed core foreign socio-cultural exchanges, sharing a common language, culture, customs, religion, and lineage to the extent that the Emir of Maradi in Niger Republic is revered and recognized as Seriki Katsina in Nigeria (Labo, 2000 and Aker et al, 2010). Vividly, Hausa language and cultural ties are strong and are commonly held in high esteem in the two countries. The context cultural affinity and blood relations specifically effects a close bond between Nigeria and Nigers border villages like Ngam, Malam Madori, Gumel, Jibiya, Ilela, Tahoua and Birnin Kuku in Bamle village among others to hold on to brotherly relations while they still maintain and sustain their Nigeria family homes by visiting and regularly attending to various cultural and traditional meetings and festivities in Nigeria as well those that are holding in the Niger Republic.

Before the 20th century, there was no formal border between towns and villages that now fall within Nigeria and Niger Republic until British and French imperialism came around 1890-1905. It was the colonial governments that provided a demarcation of Nigeria and the Niger Republic's border. In 1960, the two countries were granted full independence for self-government. From that moment, they continued to pursue close economic relations which have been sustaining Niger's economy as well benefiting Nigeria. According to the Sahel and West African Club SWAC (2009), data showed that Food crops, processed food, and cash crops such as millet, sorghums, maize, rice, yam, beans, soya beans, flour, onion, fruit, and vegetable are usually supplied to the Niger Republic. On the other hand, cattle, sheep, ram, goat, and camel are supplied to Nigeria.

This scenario accounts for the volume of trade exchanges between Nigeria and Niger over the years. For instance in 2019, the trade volume between the countries stood at $85.90m while in 2020, the trade volume amounted to $18.18 million goods exported from Nigeria to Niger and $40.46 million goods imported from Niger to Nigeria totaling $58,64m during the year (UN Database on International Trade, 2021). Further to this, the volume of unrecorded or undocumented trade that is not subject to mandatory reporting at the foreign trade registration office between the two states multiply the volume of trade documented which largely involves trade in cattle, rams, goats and other agricultural farms produce like beans rice, soya beans, onion among others which are largely cross-border to Nigeria.

Likewise, Nigeria is also a cross-border product like clothing materials, vehicles, and drugs (both human and veterinary drugs).

However, with a large chunk of bilateral trade transactions conversely pave way for regular illegal trades and smuggling activities which have been breeding insecurity in Nigeria and Niger Republic over the past decades. Boko-Haram, bandits, kidnappers among others have taken full advantage of the cross-border process such as the multiplicity of an international framework for relations within the West African sub-region. Criminal activities increased geometrically specifically in Nigeria and Niger Republic and easy access across the two states contributes significantly to arms proliferation which terrorists use to carry out dangerous activities. At the moment, Nigeria is facing the problems of insurgency and banditry, kidnapping etc (Sogo, 2021).

Concerning the criminal group's movements, those operating in Niger appear to have close links with al-Qaeda having a deep element of the crime with narcotics trafficking. In Nigeria, they operate primarily in areas that are ethnically linked to the north (Johanne and Greg 2017). The government's ability to deal with the above socio-economic and national security fallout of cross-border trade emanating between Nigeria and the Niger Republic is questionable and deteriorating. In light of the foregoing, there is a concern and sense that cross-border trade in the West African sub-region particularly between Nigeria and Niger Republic has rendered economic activities inactive and moribund, devoid of progress, development and steady stagnating. Meanwhile, insecurity according to Tella (2012), is like a sore in a man's lap that if not treated properly, spreads to the man's waist and eventually encompasses the entire body.

To further strengthen the trade relationship and continue to sustain the long historical trades between the two states, in 1971 Nigeria-Niger Joint Commission (NNJC) for cooperation was formed and it become a platform for discussing bilateral trade and investment issues that will enhance socio-economic development. Also, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was established in 1975 to improve regional trade between its member states and also a combined multinational formation like Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) was established to curb the vices of terrorism parading the Lake Chad Basin Commission (Boureima, 2014). However, the normative assumption is that the active roles played in joint formation by the two sovereign states will serve as a basis to increase trade volume as well as to regulate foreign exchange tensions or phobia that may inherent in relating with each other.

On this note the paper aims to examine socio-economic and national security implications of cross-border trade between Nigeria and Niger Republic. It aims to identify the policy frameworks that regulate trade relations between Nigeria and Niger, to find out the socio-economic impact of Nigeria and Niger trade relations; examine national security implications of Nigeria and Republic of Niger relations and to evaluate the political implication of Nigeria and Niger Republic relations.

Problem Assumptions and rationale

Nigeria and Niger cross-border trade relation succinctly expresses the extent of flows of goods and services such as agricultural goods and manufactured products. The unabated nature of the security challenges between Nigeria and Niger has not created continuous fear and anxieties threaten the two nation-states. However, the threat to Nigeria and Niger Republic is real as the international community has declared Nigeria as a state where the

security of lives and property is deteriorating with policy incoherence as a result of the multiplicity of international frameworks for relations within the West African sub-region. Further to this, the policy incoherence has contributed significantly to the poor implementation and to some extent has availed opportunities to criminals to cross the border and engage in human trafficking, smuggling of illegal arms that triggered national insecurity. Thus, this becoming an age-long problem that is affecting West African regional states in general and specifically Nigeria and Niger Republic. This can be as well a reason for the call for the ending of the security challenges being experienced across the West African sub-region.

Also, since the recognition of Article 27 of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) treaty 1979 affirmed the need for economic integration, which includes free flow of persons goods and services, criminals have taken it as an advantage to traffic in humans and illegal smuggling of firearms; including small arms and light weapons. Therefore, the protocol can be assumed to be a factor that has paved the way for the easy passage of criminal and light weapons used by terrorists to carry out their nefarious activities including bombing, murder and arson e.t.c.

Noted as well, is the intensity of insecurity in Nigeria as orchestrated by Boko-Haram terrorists, armed bandits, and kidnappers among others that carrying out nefarious activities are being covered by Nigerien because each time criminals perpetrated evil they ran away for protection in the Niger Republic and this is no doubt a factor that pointed to Nigeria as a state of "Alert" as a result of the active presence of all the social vices that cause conflict and commissioning of crime that is affecting economic performance, loss of investors' confidence, social, physical and institutional structures (Global Terrorism Index, 2019). In essence, trans-border trade between both countries has made national security to be a major threat, and issue for the government of the day to handle and manage.

More so, unprecedented level of insecurity since the advent of the present democratic dispensation among which are Boko Haram insurgency, armed banditry, kidnapping and the proliferation of firearms among others. And it is not making Nigeria's economy translate into a better socio-political environment within the West African sub-region because the existing political relationship allows informal economies at the two countries borders to thrive on crime. However, the implication is that Nigeria is not safe due to ineffective border control and could be presumed to be a factor for the prevalence of insecurity most especially in Northeastern Nigeria because of the limited presence of security and law enforcement officers who are also poorly equipped, poorly paid, and lack training in modern-day border policing and patrol. It is against this backdrop that the study also takes a critical look at socio-economic and national security implications of cross-border trade between Nigeria and Niger Republic.

Research Objectives and Questions

The general objective of this paper is to examine socio-economic and national security implication of cross-border trade between Nigeria and Niger Republic. However, the specific objectives are to; identify policy frameworks that regulate Nigeria-Niger Republic relations. Investigate the socio-economic and political implications of Nigeria and Niger Republic, to examine national security implications of Nigeria-Niger Republic relations in the last five years. To examine how Nigeria's socio-economic and national security outlooks can be improved through cross-border trade between Nigeria and Niger Republic. These objectives give rise to a number of questions in this paper. (1) To what degree do policy frameworks

regulate Nigeria and Niger Republic relations? What are the socio-economic and political implications of Nigeria and Niger Republic trade relations? To what extent has trade relations between Nigeria and Niger Republic affected Nigeria's national security within the past five years? How can Nigeria socio-economic and national security outlooks be improved given the realities of cross-border trade between Nigeria and Niger Republic?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK IN LIEU OF REVIEW

For long, the idea of security has been a central principle as well as a debated issue amongst international relations scholars. However, security is supposed to be something we understand in all ramifications, from state safety to individual safety. On this note, several theories have been developed to understand the subject matter. In this paper, securitization theory and linkage theory are used to explain the socio-economic and national security implications of cross-border trade between Nigeria and Niger Republic as well as the insecurity that comes with it.

The Securitization Theory

This theory is used to explain and understand the root of security threats. The proponents are Barry Buzan, Ole Waever, Jaapde Wilde, and others. Their work was centred on how to prevent something from becoming a security threat and they agreed that three elements have to be present. The three elements are the identification of existential threats, emergency actions, and effects of inter-unit relations by breaking free of rules (Balzacq, 2005). This theory also assumes that political situations are constituted as extreme security issues to deal with urgently when they have been labelled as dangerous, menacing, threatening, alarming, and so on by security actors to have the issue beyond politics. The securitization theory conceptualizes security as a process of the social construction of political threats by securitization actors (mostly politicians and business elites). Threats are then declared as a matter of urgency that poses a significant danger to the survival of states. Further to this, securitization theory assumes that national security policy is a man-made design; it is not naturally given, politicians and decision-makers create this policy. According to securitization theory, if there is an extreme security issue, it must be given full attention and dealt with immediately because of its urgency. That is, issues are not debilitating in themselves but by virtue of labelling, they become security issues. However, constructivist thought on security is the strength of the securitization theory as it provides a more extensive and deeper point of view on security issues and enabled people to be more aware of security issues and deepen their knowledge about such issue.

Securitization theory has faced much criticism; the weakness of the theory is that it appears to be problematic narrow (McDonald, 2008) because it focuses on the actor who decides what actions are to be taken when there is a security issue. Also, the theory failed to consider external factors by ignoring the culture and national differences of each country facing threats. This was stressed by second-generation scholars that focus on external factors of securitization as institutional setting and regional environment.

Linkage Theory

The beginning and the end of linkage theory are explained as input and output. The input and the outputs are therefore linked together and refer to as a linkage which includes penetrative, reactive, and emulative linkages. According to Frankel (1972), linkage theory evolves from systems theory analysis; that is, having its starting point from the systems analysis. Linkage

means any recurrent sequence of behaviour that originates in one system and reacted to another (Rosenau, 1969).

1. Penetrative linkage is one in which one polity serves as a participant in the political processes of another and shares the authority to allocate values within the penetrated units,
2. Reactive linkage is what is caused by boundary-crossing reaction without participation in the decisions made within the unit, while
3. Emulative linkage is where the response is essentially the same as the action triggering it off.

There are multiple theories behind linkage theory; the difference is that the parties involved are either different or similar concerning the issues in question and for those that are different in assumption are the government or parties involved. On the other hand for those that are similar, the assumption is based on the observation that mutually beneficial exchanges are more prevalent between similar countries. This theory is a way of negotiating influence or determining the process or outcome of relationship between states. It is effective when explaining relationship, negotiation and its relevant environment. The theory has been used to explain external events in the multilateral, regional, or bilateral environments especially how it influences the negotiation process and its outcomes. Furthermore, there are different uses of the term which often lead to debate over the true meaning of theory. Historians and academics have portrayed the meaning in different lights. Although, their common understanding is that linkage means leverage. That is, taken advantage of one event and another using bargaining power or pressure by the opposing party involved. The linkage theory is important in studying and explaining the relationship between and among countries of the world. In this wise, this theory was employed in explaining the socio-economic and national security implications of cross-border trade between Nigeria and Niger as the name of the theory implies because of intimate interactions in the defined areas of socio-economic and cross-border trade relationships and because of core foreign socio-cultural exchanges. That is, whatever that happens here in Nigeria as a matter of insecurity can be penetrative, Reactive and emulative in Niger Republic.

METHODOLOGY

Generally, qualitative research methods are ideal for studies with outcomes that are not measurable or quantifiable and these were adopted to meet the aims and objectives. Qualitative data was used to acquire information about cross-border trade between Nigeria and Niger Republic, as well as the implications for both countries' national security. The paper used Key Informant Interviewees (KII) Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). This study is transnational; as a result, only a few interviewees have in-depth knowledge of the subject and were able to provide unbiased judgments. A semi-structured interview guide and focus group discussions protocol was employed as the instrument of data collection. The rationale for adopting interview and focus group discussions was to source vital information which was believed could not be obtained through the use of library materials or other means so as to serve as a comparative research advantage on other instruments.

In conducting the interview, the study put up the research objectives and related questions. This therefore, determined the nature and type of questions that were asked from the respondents. The instrument was named Cross Border Trade Security Question Guide (CBTSQG) and anchored on the objectives of the study. Similarly, the decision to use the semi-structured method was based on the fact that, it allows for the extraction of in-depth

information from respondents and the flexibility of gauging and probing certain necessary issues which needed more exploration. The semi-structured questions dwelt on issues of how insecurity has been affecting persons and trade movement in the Nigeria and Niger borderland and how quick action should be taken for free-flow of movement to go on a long way to promote integration and unity among West African countries.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Respondents' Opinions on the policy implications of regulating Nigeria and Niger Republic Relations

To make cross-border relations or cross-border trade relations, that is socio-cultural, economic, and political relations to be formal, Nigeria and Niger Joint Commission was established in 1971 to further economic integration and trade relations. This platform was born to discuss bilateral trade and investment issues that will foster their socio-economic development. The Commission pursued its aims by organising sessions to discuss and make decisions on issues such as formalisation of border markets, the establishment of a warehouse in Konni and Maradi in the Niger Republic, development of enterprise clusters, and a bilateral chamber of commerce. Also, the two governments (Nigeria and Niger) collaborate to establish a local cross-border initiative forum to improve market information systems, enhance the cross-border movement of cereals and livestock and improve the ways and means of capital transfer between both countries; establish joint border communications facility such as community radio networks to encourage information dissemination, improve the practical mechanism for food security and encourage banking and money transfer systems to reduce risk to traders. Further to this, in 1975, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) that was also formed to facilitate integration and economic development; to improve regional trade and movement; and also a combined multinational formation like Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) that was revamped in 2014 to curb the vices of terrorist parading the Lake Chad Basin Commission. They are still not sufficient to forestall rages and rave of various insurgencies that daily arise and spread like wildfire in the entire West Africa, particularly Nigeria and Niger.

It has been remarkably noted in the responses of various respondents that were selected for the interview and they commented as follows;

> The sprite of borderlines has overshadowed our thought and mind and gave birth to promulgation and adoption of free trade movement and any other policy on cross-border relations. However, these policies among others were abused and turned upside down by a high rate of criminal insurgency and trading in goods of all sorts. Formulation and implementation of policy is one thing, sustaining and maintaining the policy is another thing entirely. The role of all the organizations as shapers and strengtheners of the relationship between two or more nations particular Nigeria and Niger suffers a serious decline.

Similarly, the above comment tallies with the general opinion and findings of many scholars and various individuals. Abubakar (2018) noted that the repeated changes in government policies by governmental bodies and officials have posed several threats to the country's development economically and socio-politically. The policy covered advantages and disadvantages, causes, pleasure, irritation, and pain and collectively have important

consequences for our well-being and happiness as well as constituting a significant portion of our environment. Though some may claim that certain circumstances, such as economic hardship or emergency crises need a policy shift, the following are the reasons why public policies usually fail;

i. poor monitoring;
ii. disregard or oversight of recurrent cost implications of capital projects expenditures;
iii. insufficient and unreliable data;
iv. unexpected economic disturbances;
v. Institutional weaknesses;
vi. Resistance to change and innovation;
vii. Lack of national interest;
viii. Lack of commitment and political will to implement policies;
ix. Inadequate consultation;
x. Vague plans and policy objectives, therefore, performance targets and benchmarks cannot be meaningfully specified;
xi. Inconsistencies and policy summersaults;
xii. Inadequate follow-ups and poor sequencing.

Also, another respondent affirms the above that, ties of neighbourliness and brotherhood, spirit and motivation of all the combined multinational organizations has overshadowed the eventuality and series of criminal's atrocities. Kidnapping and incessant raids of various city centres, towns, and communities have been on the increase and reports indicate that communities were at different times been held hostage in broad day light.

Another response on policy implications of regulating Nigeria and Niger Republic was that the shortcomings and challenges posed by the Nigeria-Niger Joint Commission (NNJC), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) among others organizations making policy to regulate the relationship between nations is lack of monitoring and surveillance mechanism and manpower needs.

Also, a respondent noted that the circumstantial effect of the free trade movement contributed to so many social ills that are threatening the development of the West African sub-region, Nigeria and the Niger Republic in particular. This refers to the ferocious criminal activities and progress of cross-border human-trafficking which has a spillover of ECOWAS free trade movement.

Another respondent noted that the implications of policies regulating free trade between Nigeria and Niger Republic are that the two countries are internally and externally exposed to the risk of insecurity of lives and properties. This is a situation whereby many people or groups benefiting from Nigeria and Niger trade relations inflict series of damages on both countries under the guise of culture, economic, political, religion, language among others.

Respondents' opinions on the implications of cross-border trading activities on Nigeria and the Niger Republic Trade Relations

Nigeria and Niger Republic have a long history of socio-economic, cross-border relations, and cross-border trade relations which are premised not only on exchanges of foods and services but as well cultures and customs ties in all areas where the two countries are linked. Further to this, the towns and cities between Northern Nigeria and Southern Niger are

bounded by common language, culture, customs, and religion and this explains why the two nations have mutual relationships. Commenting on issues relating to the impact and implications of cross-border trading on Nigeria and Niger Republic relations, some respondents noted unanimously that;

> Cross-border trading activities has enormously help to progress, smoothing and fasten relationship particularly on socio-economic activities among neighbouring states in West African sub-region particular Nigeria and Niger Republic. It provides avenue on economic exchanges by making various type of goods produced in one country to be available in another country.

Further, on the above position, a respondent opined that the Niger Republic could not avail itself of the opportunity provided by River-Niger to generate electricity on their own despite their closeness to the river, and that makes Niger so largely dependent on Nigeria for electricity. Large rivers and natural falls abound in Nigeria, the Niger and Benue Rivers as well as the Lake Chad basin, are the key water resources with enormous hydroelectric potential.

Also, a respondent noted that cross-border trading has equally weakened both the internal and external security arrangement of nation-states within the West African sub-region particularly Nigeria and the Niger Republic and it encourages all sorts of crime such as gunmen, kidnapping, banditry, human trafficking, trafficking of arms among others.

Other respondents commented that cross-border has slowed down the part of progress, growth, and development of Nigeria and the Niger Republic because cross border formally is lengthy and costly, cost of clearance, processing fees, tariffs, and taxies are generally above the values of goods being traded through illegal routes and these are the routes that criminals who wanted to perpetrate evil pass through to carry out their activities.

It was further noted by another respondent that, The presence of a large number of customs officers who check goods coming in and out, as well as immigration officers who check people's movements, has turned their job into exploitation, encouraging people to follow illegal routes, which also contributes to arms proliferation and other types of crime that occur as a result of illegal trade.

Expanding the above, a respondent noted that there are many borders between Nigeria and the Niger Republic that security agents can not cover due to the limited presence of security and law enforcement agencies poorly equipped, poorly paid, or not trained as a modern-day policing or border patrol, the respondent further emphasis that Nigerian and Nigerien are similar in the black race and very difficult to identify together with all area where the countries are links. However, the Niger Republic borders can be found in seven states in Nigeria, they are; Borno, Jigawa, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto, Yobe, and Zamfara states.

To buttress the above, Ali (2013), noted criminal activity is on the rise in West African countries, particularly Nigeria and the Republic of Niger. Over the year, simple access between the two countries in question has played a big role in the arms proliferation gained by terrorists to carry out their activities.

Respondents' opinions on the level of national security implication of Nigeria and the Niger Trade relations

With a smooth and harmonious relationship in the import and export of goods and services between Nigeria and the Niger Republic, cross-border trades on the other hand pave the way for cyclical illegal trade and smuggling activities, which have bred insecurity in Nigeria and the Niger Republic for decades. The socioeconomic, political, and security situation of legitimate countries' cross-border trade is based on the incessant movement of criminals who have taken full advantage of the cross-border process for their selfish economic interests, posing a threat to peace and development in Nigeria and Niger, as well as other West African sub-regions.

Some respondents noted that the extent and height of culpably of cross-border trade in the security unbalancing in Nigeria and Niger border is true, enormous, and quite alarming when taking cognizance of the series of gunmen to attack, kidnapping, armed bandits, and other substance and element that are involved in the insecurity of lives and properties which occurred on daily basis. This means that Cross-border crimes tend to destabilize political, economic, and social interactions between the two nation-states. According to Hatchard (2006), when it comes to combating transnational crime, African countries confront at least three obstacles. The first is how to deal with criminal activity that occurs outside of their domains. The second involves tracing and recovering the proceeds of crime that have been transferred out of the country where the crime occurred, and the third involves tracing and recovering the proceeds of crime that have been moved out of the country where the crime occurred.

As a result of the number of illegal and notorious activities carried out by individuals and groups across national and international borders, either for financial or economic benefits and also socio-political or religious considerations, a respondent believes that farmer economic activities of the people that are very close to Nigeria and Niger Republic border area are been affected. This in addition also affected the high cost of food and making hunger and starvation to be threatening the lives of the people living near or closer to the border areas because they are been deprived of the opportunity to carry out their farming activities as a result of the threat posed by the gunmen, kidnapper among others.

According to some respondents, the problem which free trade movement by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) inflicted on the nation-states was damaging in itself because so many goods are been counterfeited and smuggled into the country without being regulated by the appropriate agencies and particularly small arms, light weapons, hard drugs are been ferry across the border. To advance on the above, the finding is similar to Onuoha (2013) that in recent years, the movement of persons and weaponry across borders in regions of north-eastern Nigeria has caused serious security issues. Large groups of shooters, relics of the last decade's rebel warfare in Niger and Chad, have sneaked into Nigeria and turned into bandits, posing a threat to major routes and numerous rural towns and villages. Also, various scholars have conducted studies on border security and the rate at which crimes are committed, yet security employees in border areas are not given appropriate attention, thereby making national security of each of the two nation-states to be affected and deteriorating in all angles of the country.

Respondents' opinions on the political implications of Nigeria and Niger Republic Trade Relations

The problem of insecurity in Nigeria and the Niger Republic is increasingly sharpening local conflicts over access to resources and government capacity to deal with all sorts of these like terrorism, armed bandits menace and to continue to safeguard the sustenance of the country which becomes a burden on the national budget and inconsistencies in the governmental policies that seem to exacerbate the image of the two countries have made the two government to confused, undecided and even perceived as complacent. According to Smith (2003), there has been a persistent criticism that the Nigerian state, like its counterparts in Africa and other developing nations, underperforms due to a lack of state capacity to deal with modern governance problems.

Also, on the opinion of respondents on the political implication of Nigeria and Niger Republic relations, some respondents posit that the political implication of Nigeria and the Niger less and gradually becomes a cat and mouse affairs leading to loss of trust and belief in one and another bearing the thought that Nigeria government thinking that the gunmen, kidnappers, armed banditry and others that are carried out nefarious activities are been covered by Niger government because at each time whenever they struck they normally ran away for cover in the Niger Republic. This made the Nigerian government believe that they are not doing more as expected toward effecting an arrest of the culpable armed bandits.

A respondent as well noted that the effect of armed bandits has caused a lot of misunderstanding and high-level incidents of mistrust threaten the peaceful coexistence of Nigeria and Niger which in the past lead to rages of verbal word particularly on the issues of their nationality. Further to the above, another respondent opined that the relationship between Nigeria and the Niger Republic was equally threatening the way and manner in which arms are been smuggled into Nigeria from Niger and the atrocity been committed with these arms and various teams and gangs of criminals high devastating rendering the state of security to zero level. Nevertheless, some respondents described that Nigeria and Niger over the year have not been engaging in serious border conflict but the fact is that the two countries have long relations dealing with one another; free trade movement by ECOWAS and various routes linking their border together is a factor of the continual increase in security threats. The Nigerian state and the Niger Republic without a doubt straddled the line between state's collapse and states failure. According to Mimiko (2010), Nigeria's state has devolved to the point that it is unable to offer even the most basic social protection to its most vulnerable citizens.

Conclusion

Based on the aforementioned research questions set out for this paper, it was discovered that both individuals and countries do not exist in isolation, each finding a way of connecting for goals realization which includes political economic, and socio-cultural objectives. It is indeed that cross-border trade occurs when people move geographically from one place to another with the aims of exchange of goods and services. However, it was discovered that cross-border trade does not only serve the purpose of movement of people or goods, it also breaks down artificially large chunk of trade barriers between states and generates interactions including socio-economic and political relationship between or among states. This partly explains why the country has been described as one in transition as a result of the unpardonably low performance in the area of delivery of democratic dividends including the safety of life and freedom of trade and tariffs.

It is also discovered that the nature and configuration of the repeated changes in government policies by Nigeria and Niger Republic governmental bodies and officials which have posed several threats to the country's development economically and socio-politically such as the Nigeria-Niger Joint Commission (NNJC), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) among others organizations making policy to regulate the relationships between states lack monitoring, surveillance mechanism and manpower need which arises as a result of inadequacies

The paper discovered that nefarious activity is on the rise in West African countries, particularly Nigeria and the Republic of Niger. Simple access between the two countries has played a big role in the arms proliferation gained by terrorists to carry out their activities. commenting that cross-border has slowed down the part of progress, growth, and development of Nigeria and the Niger Republic because cross border formalized movement is lengthy and costly, cost of clearance, processing fees, tariffs, and taxes are generally above the values of goods being traded through illegal routes and these are the routes that criminals who wanted to perpetrate evil pass through to carry out their activities and these factors conceive as one of the major reasons for the unending nature of the security bedeviling the two states.

Administratively, the paper also discovered that Nigeria and Niger Republic have not been engaging in serious border conflict but the fact is that the two countries have long relations dealing with one another, free trade movement by ECOWAS, and various routes linking their border together is a factor of the continual increase in security threats.

Recommendations

Since people can only fulfill their potentials in the right peaceful environment and in line with research findings, the following are preferred as recommendations to reduce the problem of security that has come up as a result of cross-border trade between Nigeria and the Niger Republic.

1. The government agencies that are mandated to bear security fulcrum should be more proactive in their activities to ensure that illegality of all forms are wiped out by strict monitoring with excellent surveillance to help forestall and nip in the bud, the efforts and activities of criminals (gunmen, armed banditry, human trafficking and so on) to eliminate or reduce the rate of the activities. Also, people should form themselves into vigilante groups and report any suspicious persons and movement moving around the vicinity.

2. There should be closer border monitoring by the appropriate agencies in each of the two states to supplement the effort of the Nigeria and Niger border patrol team.

3. The two states should gear up their efforts to ensure that there is substantial improvement on Nigeria and Niger borderlands to stop rising wave of insecurity of lives and properties in the region.

4. There should be efficient border control measures to eliminate and further prevent criminals across the border. That is, to further strengthen the activities of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) to step up to regulate border points especially illegal entry routes that provide safe passage for the smuggling of arms and armed groups movement among others.

5. Individual countries in West Africa should be encouraged to establish border security units and to collaborate through information networking sharing and intelligence gathering to forestall the movement of criminals across the border.

6. Individual countries in West Africa should deal with their internal weak security system the internal weak security system like inadequate funding of the security agencies, lack of modern equipment, poor welfare of security personnel, and inadequate personnel.

7. There should be ECOMOG base to fight and respond against any crime across the border that would at all times integrate different action plans against all transnational criminal activities in the sub-region.

8. The two countries in question should be proactive in dealing with security issues and threats and this can be done through modern methods of intelligence gathering, intelligence sharing, training, motivation, and advanced technological aid.

References

Ali, A. D. (2013). Security and Economic Development in Nigeria since 1960. Kuwait Chapter of *Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review*, 2 (6), 1-7.

Abubakar, A.N and Abubakar, T (2018)"Counting" The Cost of Policy Inconsistency in Nigeria: The Case of Privatization Policy

Balzacq, T., (2005) 'The Three Faces of Securitization: Political Agency, Audience and Context', *European Journal of International Relations* 11(2), 171-201

Boureima, G.(2014). " Action Plan for Trade Exchange Improvement and Food security in the Kano-Katsina. Maradi Corridor Zone (K2M) A Paper Presented at the Validation Workshop on K2M Initiative Action Plan Draft Report on 25th June 2014 in Maradi Nigeria Republic

Chang, B. (2010). "The Power of Geographical Boundaries: Cultural, Political and Economic Border Effects in a Unity Nation. Lowa state University Graduate theses and Dissertation. Retrieved on 3/10/17 from https://ub.dr.lastate.edu/riew

Global Terrorism Index 2019, November 2019, 8

Hatchard, J. (2006). Combating transnational crime in Africa: Problems and perspectives, Journal of African law, 50 (2). School of oriental and African Studies, 50 (2), Retrieved from www.jstor.org/stable/27607969

Frankel, J (1972), *Contemporary International Theory and Behaviour of State*. Free Press. New York in Rosenau, J.N (1969) "Towards the study of National –International linkages" *Linkage Politics.* New York; The Free Press 35-15

Johanne, S. and Greg K (2017), Identifying, Structuring, and Comparing the Objectives of Al Qaeda and ISIL. Retrieved from www.cambridge,org

Labo, A. (2000). The motivation and integration of immigration on the Nigerian-Niger Border area. A study of Magama Jibia. Trans-Border studies. Institute francais de recherché en Afrique

McDonald, Matt (2008). Securitization and the Construction of Security. December 1

Mimiko, N. O. (2010, October 12). Swimming against the tide: Development challenges for the Long-disadvantaged in a fundamentally skewed global system (Inaugural Lecture Series 233). Ile-Ife, Nigeria: Obafemi Awolowo University retrieved form Google Scholar

Onuoha, F.C. (2009). Corruption and National Security: The three Gap-Theses and the Nigerian Experience. *Nigeria Journal of Economic and Financial Crimes* (12),1-13

Rosenau, J.N (1969) "Towards the study of National –International linkages" Linkage Politics. New York; The Free Press 35-15

Smith, B. C. (2003). Understanding third world politics: Theories of political change and development. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan. Google Scholar

Sogo, A.O (2021), The Intractable Malaise: Understanding the Patterns That Maintain the Terrorist Stronghold in Nigeria

Tella, S.A (2012) "Cost of Corruption on the Nigerian Economy."Lecture presented at the 2012 Independence Day Lecture Organised by the Muslim Congress on Octomber 6 at MKO Abiola In Idoko, C.U and Dajuma, A. M (2014) "Security Challenges in Nigeria and National Transformation In *International Journal of Managerial Studies and Research* 2 (Online) www.Researchgate.net.

United Nations COMTRADE Database on International Trade (2021) Nigeria Import from Niger. Retrieved from www.tradingeconomisc.com