VOL. 02 NO. 2,
DECEMBER, 2023
E-ISSN 3027-1401
P-ISSN 3026-9148



African Scholar Publications & Research International
www.africanscholarpub.com

Journal of Arts and Sociological Research (JASR)

Nigeria-Benin Border Migration and its Implication for Nigeria's Security

Odey Rosemary Anya; Mohammed Bello Baban' Umma Ph.D; & Ruth Caleb Luka Ph.D
Department of Political Science, Faculty of Social Sciences, Nasarawa State University, Keffi.
anyaodey123@gmail.com

Abstract
Nigeria national security has been seriously threatened for years back and a lot of factors have been attributed to be the root cause of insecurity in Nigeria. The country is facing a lot of security and economic problem which has been as a result of her borders not well policed. Nigeria and Benin Republic share a lot in common linguistically and racially which explains the dynamism of cross-border migration. This study examines Nigeria-Benin border migration and its implication for Nigeria's security. The Migration Network Theory was used to anchor the study. With the aid of both primary and secondary methods of data collection, especially from questionnaire and interview together with elicited information from library and official (government) sources, books, journals and internet materials, findings indicate that the nature of border migration between Nigeria-Benin which is characterized by influx of illegal migrants contributed and continued to encourage cross-border crimes, terrorist attacks, drug trafficking, illegal trade such as smuggling of contraband goods like shoes, frozen poultry products, duty non-paid cars and foreign parboiled rice thereby undermining Nigeria's security. The study recommends that there is need for the government to construct adequate fences, auto-gates or border plazas. This will help to reduce the size of illegal migration, smuggling of goods and trafficking of persons.

Keywords: Benin, Nigeria, Border, Migration, Implication, Nigeria and Security.

Introduction

As a result of migration and activities of migrants, border security has come to assume heightened importance in the world today as the rate of criminal activities have also increased in scale especially since the end of Cold War and in the wake of globalization. It has become easy for transnational crimes to be conducted such as the moving of money, people and goods across the world because of advancement in telecommunications, transportation and technology in general. The world has turned into a 'global village' with its own peculiarities as well as problems. Globalization has allowed criminals to move across the borders unhindered and even continue with illicit business with impunity as this affects the socio-economic development and security of lives and property.

Border security is very essential for the protection against any potential threat to national security and sovereignty of a nation-state. In the United States of America, it is pursued in order to stop illicit smuggling of goods that are prohibited and deemed illegal from entering the United States. For example, USA has 50,632,836, Germany with 15,762,457, Russia with 11,636,911, Saudi with 13,454,842, UK with 1.16 million, France with 7,784,418 and Canada with more than 8 million (IOM, 2023). States in international relations out of their interests try to protect both their citizens and the territory from international aggression but because of today's state interdependence and globalization, and migration it is often difficult to fully control border porosity or to stop it in general, but can be minimally controlled. This is because globalization today has made the state borders weak with the name of development and civilization, and not only globalization, migration also is among the factors that bring about border porosity.

Africa has been described as the continent with the world's most mobile population. One of the greatest migrations in human history was recorded in sub-Saharan Africa involving the Bantu people who left the area now encompassing Nigeria and Cameroun and formed settlements throughout the entire southern half of the continent (Castles &Miller, 2009). Migration is increasingly driven by economic, political and social changes. In West African sub-region migration can better be explained theoretically from economic standpoint, other factors do play a role but economic remain outstanding. In West Africa, migration has been part of the most dynamic feature because most ethnic groups of each country settle in more than one country in the area. The artificial borders created by the Europeans made the migration to become a serious factor among the African countries. This is because before colonial time, almost all Africans live together, and even today

because of the closeness, there are inter-marriages in far remote areas (Adeola & Oluyemi, 2012).

The country is facing a lot of security and economic problem which has been as a result of her borders not well policed. According to Adewoyin (2019), security of borders, no matter where it is located is a way of protecting territorial integrity of a nation as borders are places where illegal arms and ammunition can easily come into country and which is a security threat to the country and where illegal goods come in to country and country losing revenue that comes in form of tax.

Nigeria and Benin Republic share a lot in common linguistically and racially which explains the dynamism of cross-border migration. The Yoruba, gun (Egun) and other Ajo speaking people in the south, the Beriba (Borgwa) in the middle and Fulani and Hausa in the north. Historically, southern and central Benin was part of old Oyo empire. The cultural affinity coupled with Nigeria's policy of good neighbourliness informed Nigeria's participation in joint economic, industrial and agricultural ventures with Benin counterparts. Such was the cement factory at Onigbolo (Queme province) and sugar factory at Save (Zou province): Both towns are located in the republic of Benin. The two companies have since been privatized. Even with this spirit of enterprising and promising neighbourliness the borders linking the two countries are the most problematic because of the activities of internationally reputed criminals engaging in smuggling and trafficking of virtually everything from human trafficking, ammunition, arms, drugs manufactured goods, agricultural produce, prostitution, child labour to religious fanaticism, terrorist attacks and insurgency.

Statement of the Problem

Nigeria is facing a lot of security and economic problem which has been as a result of illegal migration along her borders with Benin Republic. The country has been battling with transnational crimes which pose a serious threat to national security ranging from drug trafficking, money laundering, illegal arms trafficking, smuggling of all kinds (contraband, stolen cars, firearms) theft, Advance fee fraud known as 419, kidnapping and many more. These activities constitute a threat to global and national security as they affect the socio-economic development and tarnishing the image of the country as Nigeria is daily embarrassed base on financial scams and other related trans-border crimes.

The 2020 Human Freedom Index shows that Nigeria ranks 131 out of 162 countries in terms of security and safety. By the same token, the 2022 Global Terrorism Index ranks Nigeria as the sixth most terror-impacted country in the world. Although this 2022 ranking is a marginal improvement relative to the country's previous ratings, terror alerts from security and intelligence agencies around the world often suggest that Nigeria is one of the world's most dangerous places to visit and/or live. According

to the Center for Democracy and Development (2022), over 61,865 people died in Nigeria over the last decade as a result of various forms of conflict.

To ensure trans-border security management, Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS), Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) and Police, and the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) are security operatives constitutionally mandated to undertake the task of manning the borders and monitoring entry and exit of goods and people in Nigeria. Despite the security architecture outfits put in place, there are still daunting challenges of trans-border security management in Nigeria. It was reported that Nigeria is responsible for about 70% of illegal small arms in the West Africa sub-region. It is worthy to note that 70 per cent of estimated 500 millions of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) that are circulating in West Africa is domiciled in Nigeria (UNO, 2016). This shows the height of porosity of borders and its implication in Nigeria with focus on Badagry/Semeborder between the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Benin Republic.

Research Questions

The study is guided by the following questions:

i. What is the nature of Nigeria-Benin Republic border migration and Nigeria's security?
ii. What is the implication of Nigeria-Benin Republic border migration on Nigeria's security?

Literature Review

Border

Borders globally, are actually fundamental elements of human lives and at the same time elements of relations between individuals and society. From the time immemorial, ingredients of humanity have always been separated and also connected by a network of borders at all territorial levels (Kolossov, 2012). Therefore, the realization that borders characterize complex social and territorial phenomena has definitely had a profound impact on the study of borders. Trans-border commerce between Nigeria and her neighbouring states usually remains mutually beneficial. The concept of state border dictates the understanding of, and indeed the very condition for both local and international legal and political systems. The above submission implies that borders are recognized by a define boundary with a line of separation from others.

From the foregoing, border can be comprehended as a space demarcated by symbolic limits linked with social representations, whether they coexist with physical and official barriers or not. It has also been noted that border could be seen as a limitation that is mental or imaginary, constrained by variables such as space, identity, time,

desires, actions, etc. Border, therefore, becomes a locale in which "we" and the "other" are conceptualized, and which is in some circumstances identified by its permeability, in variance to the stringency of the identity. This is the most related to geographical borders. However, it was suggested that borders are highly complex, social spaces that need interactive and dialogic assumptions to be comprehended in their full extension. This study considers the definition of border as submitted by the 29th Report of the European Union on the proposal for a European body guard, (2003:9) which asserted that:

> …borders are natural points at which to make checks on entry to a country, not only on people but on goods for customs, health, plant health and other purposes; and to enforce rules on prohibited and restricted goods. The border is also a natural focus of police activity, as it provides an opportunity to check people arriving and it is also the place where by defining the act of smuggling takes place. Border control therefore have a role to play in combating illegal immigration and various forms of cross-border crime ranging from small smuggling to organized crime and international terrorism. The above is what Nigeria's borders connote. These borders exist all over the country where Nigeria geographically connects different countries such as Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Benin Republic.

Migration

The review on migration will not be complete without making analogy to differentiation of migration. Castles & Miller (2009) states that most countries do not simply have one type of immigration, such as labour migration, refugee or permanent settlement but a whole range of types at once. Typically, migrating chains which start with one type of movement often continue with other forms, despite government efforts to stop or control the movement. Cross border migration between Nigeria and her surrounding neighbours may start with one motive and end up with another. As remarked by Everett (1969) the difference between both in terms of economic and amenities become heightened especially between Nigeria and her neighbours. Again, as Castles & Miller (2009) observe, the growing politicization of migration resulting from domestic politics, bilateral and regional relationships and national security policies of states are increasingly affected by international migration. In effect, the security implications are these days dictating foreign policy directions of most countries all over the world. Globalization has complicated migration issues in security terms in such a way that state security has become a deciding factor in shaping the direction of diplomatic and foreign policy of countries in the sub-region. In consideration of the stated issues, the theoretical exposition shall be articulated.

For purpose of this study, International Migration is the movement of nationals from other West African states to Nigeria (South-South) and also the movement of Nigerians to the developed countries (South-North). International Migration is seen as a reaction to the "pull" and "push" factors exposed to migrants (emigrants and immigrants) as they are expected to act as human beings first before acting up as migrants. International Migration of individuals as earlier stated can be voluntary or involuntary.

National Security

The term national security does not have a single definition. National security lacks specific definition, but has been described as the concern of government about the stability and safety of a state. National security policy could equally be seen as a measure taken by a state to ensure its survival and national policy. The essence of national security is the protection of the national interest/value of a state and upholding what the state believed to be valuable to it and its people. Some issues of national security are found in the grand norms of a country. The constitution of any country could provide a platform for understanding of national security policy. According to Marsh (2011) national security of a state is usually at the expense of security of the people. It is easy to see that this is too simplistic and unsuited for national security. This confusion is worsened because of the fact that most people that subscribe to the distinction between human security and national security adopt the aforementioned definition of security. It is important to note that an effective and secure state is a crucial condition for the existence of human security. National security covers economic security, social security, psychological security in some circumstances. National security could equally be viewed from opposite direction to have and suggest that national security has to do with the security of the state as opposed to the security of the individuals within it.

According to Ronis (2011) national security concerns on how we view our world responsibilities. Therefore, national security is the pivot on which the prosperity, governance and the general welfare of the citizens of any country turns. In other words, security considerations are paramount to transform Nigeria into a country that is economically and politically stable. National security is the bedrock of nation's prosperity, peace, good governance and general welfare of the citizens. Therefore, security is the antidote for development of Nigeria. National security is seen as the physical protection and protection of citizens and our territorial integrity, and contributes to the economic well-being and prosperity of Nigerians in a safe environment that promotes our national interests and the interests of our foreign partners. In addition, safety refers to the prevention of hidden dangers and harmful interference in daily life in the home, office, or community.

In this seminar paper, the focus on national security is based on state's ability to protect lives and property, ensures economic development (increase in revenue and high standard of living), protection from harm, control of crimes and violent attacks.

Nigeria-Benin Border Migration and its Implication for Nigeria's Security

Uzoma & Eudora (2016) examined the effects of poor border security on Nigeria's national security and identify the challenge of effective border security in Nigeria. Theory of transnationalism was adopted as a framework for analysis. The work sourced data through secondary sources and the data were analyzed qualitatively. The paper observed that the problem of achieving effective border security has posed a great threat to Nigerian national security because it has contributed to infiltration of terrorists/ insurgency; loss of government revenue; smuggling or trafficking of illegal goods etc. In addition, it was revealed that the issue of corruption; poor technological gadgets, porous nature of the borders etc serve as strong challenge to effective border security in Nigeria. The study suggested that adequate provision of funds; use of modern technological gadgets; adequate training of security personnel; strengthening of Multinational Joint Task Force etc, will go a long way in achieving effective border security in Nigeria in order to promote national security and development. The study is significant in making bold attempt to analyze the effect of insecurity of the border to Nigeria's national security, but weak in describing the nature of Nigeria-Benin Republic border migration and its implication for Nigeria's security which is the focus of this study.

Aliome (2019) wrote on Migration and National Security: A Study of Nigeria's Porous Borders. The study adopted content analysis techniques and comparative analysis. While, data collected through secondary sources were analyzed through expository mechanism. Rational decision theory provided the theoretical framework for the study. The study argued that the nefarious activities of the dreaded terrorist group known as Boko Harram which has made lives and properties insecure in Nigeria could be attributed to the incursion of migrants from the Republics of Niger and Chad to Nigeria. Therefore the burgeoning migrant smuggling and human trafficking industries do not only undermine the sovereignty of our country but also weaken the public confidence in the integrity of government policy. This undoubtedly, impact on the practical implications of our resource allocation as well as conceptual models of integration and national identity. As panacea to mitigate the inflows of migrants and curtail the challenges pose by Nigeria border's porosity, the Nigeria government should articulate and develop more sustainable socio-economic cum security policies to prevent labour and refugee migrants. Nigeria government should also adopt environmental peculiaristic surveillance paradigm to combat the incursion of migrants by improving on her border security personnel, equipping them with sophisticated

hardware and weapons, work on her legal framework for punishing corrupt border personnel and simultaneously intensify border patrol. However, the study did not adequately provide explanation for the nature of Nigeria-Benin Republic border migration and its implication for Nigeria's security from 2015.

Henry (2021) worked on Border Security Governance and the Challenges of Effective Security in Nigerian state: An Inquiry into Nigeria-Benin Border. The study posited that *the Nigeria-Benin Republic border is one of the sources of insecurity to the Nigerian state due to its porosity. The study then examined the effective security challenges at the Nigeria-Benin Republic border. Ex-post facto research design, which relied on secondary sources inquiry and structural functionalism theory, was adopted in the paper. The study looked at the danger of inadequate security of Nigeria-Benin border to Nigerian National security and security challenges at the Nigeria-Benin Republic border. The study revealed the challenges of management, ECOWAS protocol on free movement, lack of development of border communities, and historical ties committed in Nigeria. It was recommended that proper regular training on border security management of the involved security personal and demarcation of the border with built wall with Iron Gate rather than bamboo sticks.*

Theoretical Framework: Migration Network Theory

Migration Network Theory was propounded by Douglas (1999). Some other notable proponents of migration network theory include: Charles Tilly, Nicholas Van Hear, Monica Boyd, and Edward Taylor (Stamm, 2006). Migration network theorists conceive migration as embedded in social networks; they fit individual decision makers within groups, and further interpose groups between macroscopic social/economic conditions and actual migration. Proponents of this theory opine that individual migrants are members of numerous formal and informal networks that affect their migration outcomes. Migrant networks are viewed as sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants, and non-migrants in origin and destination areas through ties of kinship, friendship, and shared community origin. These networks increase the likelihood of international movement because they lower the costs and risks of movement and increase the expected net returns to migration. Thus, social networks pave way for establishing transnational migration networks.

The theory opines that migrants are participants in social networks that encompass places of origin, transit and destination through social interaction among actors related to one another not just through close family ties but by a variety of characteristics. These characteristics can be tradition, religion, extended family, friendship, acquaintance, political ideology, gender, age, ethnicity, tribe, neighbourhood or work experience. Such networks, thus, provide a coherent structure for the movement of

migrant populations. Opportunities and constraints as well as the form, volume and direction of the movements are determined within the social network of the migrants. The relevance of this theory to the study shows that the decision of transnational migrants to migrate to Nigeria is strongly influenced by the interpersonal ties that connect them to other people in their countries and in Nigeria. These ties that exist in form of kinship, friendship, and shared common origin create networks which help them lower the costs and risks of transnational migration. While their family members probably provide social and financial supports for them, former transnational beggars and those currently involved in street begging in Nigeria serve as important sources of information to them on the available illegal routes to Nigeria and ways to circumvent border-security arrangements aimed at combating illegal entry. Similarly, transnational street beggars, who are already residents in Nigeria, probably serve as important contacts to the newcomers. The Economic Community of West Africa States' protocol on free movement which allows the stay of ECOWAS citizen for ninety days in Nigeria without permit, probably, aids their migration, and thereby helping them to further strengthen their network in the country. The network theory also helps to explain the reasons why smuggling patterns are not evenly distributed across countries, but rather how they tend to form so-called crime regimes.

Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The targeted population of the study is one thousand seven hundred and forty-one (1,741) consisting of the officers in the Nigeria Customs Service, Nigeria Immigration Service, Border Communities Development Agency, the Nigeria Police Force and Nigeria Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA). However, to arrive at the sample size, the researcher made use of the Krejcie & Morgan (1970) method of determining sample size. The sample size for 1,741 populations under the Krejcie & Morgan (1970) formula for determining sample size for an academic research is **313.**

The purposive sampling strategy was used for selecting respondents for interview while the simple random sampling technique was used for administration of questionnaire. This means the study is premised on both primary and secondary methods of data collections. A modified five point Likert Scale with the response mode of strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), strongly disagree (SD) and Undecided (U) respectively was used for questionnaire while the in-depth interview method was adopted. The study relied on qualitative descriptive method of content analysis for analyzing information from interview and secondary sources. The data that was collected from questionnaire was presented and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16 and simple percentage table.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Three hundred and thirteen (313) copies of questionnaire were distributed to the respondents who are officers in the Nigeria Customs Service, Nigeria Immigration Service, Border Communities Development Agency, the Nigeria Police Force and Nigeria Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) respectively. However, three hundred and six (306) copies of questionnaire were filled and retrieved. Thus 306 out of the 313 copies of questionnaire were used to analyze the data. The responses from questionnaire were presented according to the objectives using frequency table (frequency, count and percentage). Interviews were held with six (06) senior staff from the above mentioned organizations. The interview results were supplemented with information from the extant literature, including newspapers, reports, and official documents.

Table 1: Irregular Nigeria-Benin border migration result to transnational crimes which pose a serious threat to Nigeria's security

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	157	51%
Agree	135	44%
Disagree	8	3%
Strongly Disagree	6	2%
Undecided	-	-
Total	**306**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey Data, October (2023).

On the question of whether irregular Nigeria-Benin border migration result to transnational crimes which pose a serious threat to Nigeria's security, the data supplied by respondents show that majority representing fifty-one percent (51%) or one hundred and fifty-seven (157) respondents strongly agreed, forty-four (44%) percent or one hundred and thirty-five (135) respondents agreed. Eight (08) respondents representing three (3%) percent disagreed while six respondents (06) accounting for two (2%) percent strongly disagreed. None of the respondent was undecided. This shows that the irregular Nigeria-Benin border migration resulted to transnational crimes which pose a serious threat to Nigeria's security. The analysis is further supported with the following interview responses and secondary information:

According to a respondent at the Nigerian custom office:

> The traffickers live around the borders and familiar with the routes more than the attached military personnel who have the sole

> responsibility of manning the border. It is of no surprise that there is an open ground for migration as there is little or no obstacle and restriction to the inflow of people and goods in the region. This in turn leads to indiscriminate and easy movements of people into territories of neighboring countries. Therefore, the porosity of border has enhanced the illegitimate economic interactions such as human trafficking, drug trafficking and many more (October, 2023).

He expressed further that the porous borders contributed and continue to encourage the cross border crimes and instability in the region. Also, promotes the increasing number of illegal trade such as smuggling of contrabands goods, adulterated drugs, stolen cars including cars that have exceeded the permissible age limit prescribed for use in Nigeria and other goods like shoes, poultry products and many more. The porous borders could also be explained in the use of dried tree, oil drums as well as rims of tyres to demarcate the national borders, this makes the border to be disorganized, poorly managed and insecured. This promotes the unrestrained influx of illegal migrants and cross border activities. However, there are indefinable corridors or regions that served as a route to these illegal migrants, thereby posing a serious threat to the country and the national borders.

> The nature of border migration between Nigeria-Benin contributed and continued to encourage cross-border crimes, terrorist attacks, drug trafficking, illegal trade such as smuggling of contraband goods like shoes, frozen poultry products, duty non-paid cars and foreign parboiled rice (interview with an official of the Nigeria Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) - October, 2023).

The respondent explains further that the porous borders in the country have put the nation in a very precarious state. It is the porosity of the borders that made it possible for contraband items, unwholesome goods, light weapons and criminals from neighboring countries to find their ways into the country. Besides, the ongoing armed attacks in some parts of the country, and some persons possessing AK 47, automatic and assault rifles, illegally and automatic rifles could have only found their ways into the country through borders. Also, smuggled goods such as rice and vehicles whose importations have since been banned through the land borders still flood the country through the numerous unapproved land border routes.

On the other hand, Muoghalu, (2019) noted that “our borders with Chad, Niger, Cameroun and Benin are so porous that we have so many non citizens troop in daily, commit crimes and leave undetected”. However, he observed that there was need for Nigeria to step up security surveillance to checkmate the porosity of the porous borders in Nigeria. However, respondent from Nigerian Immigration Service submitted that:

> Of the countries in West Africa, Nigeria is one that has the largest land space unmanned, unreached, unused, or without a functional governmental presence. This is also compounded by the high level of poverty in the neighbouring countries. This in turn made Nigeria, a hot spot of human trafficking activities, where traffickers are taking advantage of lack of effective documentation, security and identity systems. Visas are acquired through illegal means or through falsification of documents often in collaboration with immigration officials. In addition, lapses in border security and ineffective identification systems in Ghana and Nigeria have availed to traffickers, many hidden recruitment points for trafficking activities. In rural areas where there is poverty and lack of education, children are often recruited from rural zones to urban areas. It is important to note that the final destination of trafficked individuals is dependent on the purpose of their exploitation. Nonetheless, in the case of most female victims, Italy is the preferred target from Nigeria (October, 2023).

Adewoyin (2019) highlights that poverty, weak state institution, and the porosity of the border constitutes the drivers of trans-border crimes in Nigeria. There are so many unmanned border paths through which criminal elements, smugglers, and traffickers alike access the country.

Table 2: Implication of border migration between Nigeria-Benin on Nigeria's security are smuggling of arms resulting to high rate of insecurity and death in the country

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	121	39%
Agree	161	53%
Disagree	13	4%
Strongly Disagree	9	3%
Undecided	2	1%
Total	**306**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey Data, October (2023).

On the question of whether the implication of border migration between Nigeria-Benin on Nigeria's security are smuggling of arms resulting to high rate of insecurity and death in the country, the data supplied by respondents show that majority representing fifty-three percent (53%) or one hundred and sixty-one (161) respondents agreed, thirty-nine (39%) percent or one hundred and twenty-one (121) respondents strongly agreed. Thirteen (13) respondents representing four (4%) percent disagreed while nine

respondents (09) accounting for three (3%) percent strongly disagreed. Those who are undecided are two (2) or one percent (1%). This shows that the nature of border migration between Nigeria-Benin has negatively implication on Nigeria's security. The analysis is further supported with the following interview responses and secondary information:

The role of border remains a very critical factor in finding solutions to Nigeria national Security challenges. Just like the skin protects the body, the border protects the Country from dangerous and unforeseeable elements. It is quite obvious that Nigeria's borders have become very porous due to years of neglect by Nigeria government. Such neglect has led to the serious National Security Challenges today like Boko Haram insurgency, armed bandit, Herdsmen, illegal bunkering, drug pushing, and weapon trafficking to name but a few which degenerated into the worrisome large scale destruction of lives, properties and economy of the Country.

Respondent from Nigerian Police Force expressed that:

> Regrettably, the Nigeria national security challenges have become very problematic and cumbersome because of unhindered influx of criminals and arms through the Country's porous borders. It is imperative to note that if a country cannot regulate and control its borderline, there is every tendency that outsiders will infiltrate and unleash mayhem on the citizens of the Country and that is exactly what Nigeria is undergoing currently in the hands of Boko Haram insurgency and Fulani Hedsmen. Nigeria undoubtedly has witnessed numerous gruesome attacks on police stations, army barracks, schools, Churches, Mosques, Markets, Social Gatherings and Farms from the hands of the deadly monsters called Bokko Haram and Fulani Herdsmen and their attack has continued with impunity while Nigeria government seems helpless (October, 2023).

Consequently, an interview response from an official of Border Communities Development Agency revealed that border security and the management of borders in ways that promotes national security has generally been given low priority in Africa and Nigeria in particular compared to security provided for political elites and their assets in the national capitals and other urban areas far-removed from the borders. While national security strategies of the country are left to be suffered. The negligence of border security and poor, border management in Nigeria has largely contributed to a prevalence of threats such as cross-border crimes; Nigeria border security issues are distinctive, when compared to the other countries of the world. Because of this fact, these borders are not monitored, patrolled or controlled (October, 2023).

These migrants who are mostly young men and women form the bulk of trans-border criminals. They constitute serious challenges to trans-border security management by engaging in human trafficking, smuggling, the proliferation of arms, and drug trafficking. This indicates that there have been incidences of trans-border crimes resulting from the relaxation of borders in line with ECOWAS regional integration programmes. In fact, illicit trade, smuggling, drugs, human trafficking, and other ancillary trans-border crimes have been on the increase (Okorn & Ndum, 2021). Such illicit activities are inimical to the goal of the ECOWAS regional integration project and thus undermine its success. This is manifest in illegal activities such as money laundering, arms smuggling, leading to the local proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALWs) as well as illegal oil bunkering and illicit trafficking in mineral resources, and business fraud.

Respondent from Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) lamented that the implication of the Nigeria-Benin Republic border migration on Nigeria's security is that going by the rate at which arms are infiltrating the shores of Nigeria, as a result of the operations of the arms smugglers who are illegal migrants; the state is bordered with both internal and external factors. Internally, it has a major challenge of safeguarding the lives and properties of the citizens who are at the receiving end on the use of those smuggled arms and ammunitions. The activities of various groups in Niger Delta and the blood bathing operations of Boko Haram for over a decade have remained an uphill task for the government and its security agencies to manage. On the other hand, the external factor is one that requires the head of government to have a good bi-lateral or multi-lateral deal with bordering nations. This is because some of the countries bordering Nigeria are seen as safe haven for perpetrators of those illicit acts. They smuggle these arms and ammunitions through the neighbouring states into the country with such ease due to the nature of our porous borders. All these are products of a state that has an inexplicable lacuna on security operation and intelligence.

Discussion of Findings

The study found that irregular Nigeria-Benin border migration result to transnational crimes which pose a serious threat to Nigeria's security. This is supported by the data supplied by respondents which show that majority representing fifty-one percent (51%) or one hundred and fifty-seven (157) respondents strongly agreed, forty-four (44%) percent or one hundred and thirty-five (135) respondents agreed. Eight (08) respondents representing three (3%) percent disagreed while six respondents (06) accounting for two (2%) percent strongly disagreed. None of the respondent was undecided.

The study also revealed the implication of border migration between Nigeria-Benin on Nigeria's security are smuggling of arms resulting to high rate of insecurity and death

in the country. Evidence from questionnaire show that majority representing fifty-three percent (53%) or one hundred and sixty-one (161) respondents agreed, thirty-nine (39%) percent or one hundred and twenty-one (121) respondents strongly agreed. Thirteen (13) respondents representing four (4%) percent disagreed while nine respondents (09) accounting for three (3%) percent strongly disagreed. Those who are undecided are two (2) or one percent (1%).

Summary of Findings

i. The nature of border migration between Nigeria-Benin which is characterized by influx of illegal migrants contributed and continued to encourage cross-border crimes, terrorist attacks, drug trafficking, illegal trade such as smuggling of contraband goods like shoes, frozen poultry products, duty non-paid cars and foreign parboiled rice thereby undermining Nigeria's security.

ii. The negligence of border security and poor border management in Nigeria has largely contributed to a prevalence of threats such as cross-border crimes. Nigeria border security issues are distinctive, when compared to the other countries of the world. Because of this fact, these borders are not monitored, patrolled or controlled.

Conclusion

Migration processes are important factors of socioeconomic, cultural and demographic development and largely determine the state of national security at all levels ranging from Citizen Security, Public Security and Security of the State as a whole. This is why uncontrolled Migration represents Security threat to sustainable socio-economic development of Nigeria. Coincidentally, the synergy between migration and national security is often viewed through economic, internal and public safety lens and this informs the reason. Notwithstanding, the basic elements of National Security cannot be diverged or distanced from the prism of socio-economic paradigm which encompasses job, water, good environment and food security otherwise a national security policy would be of no use to unemployed and hungry citizens that constitute majority of the country's populations. Therefore, national security goes beyond military might, defence and law enforcement to include far reaching issues as highlighted above.

The significant impact of migration on national security is such that Nigeria as a sovereign nation-state should take cognizance of the fact that globalization or openness without control encourages border crimes: smuggling, child and women trafficking, small and light weapons trafficking and trafficking of narcotics across the border. And at the same time the victims suffer physical assault and threat of violence of self and family, psychological issues, constant rape and harassment by security officials. In sum, migration and national security remains an integral part of economic

activities, movement of goods and services, regional cooperation and territorial integrity and every approach to its proper management should not be swept under the carpet.

Recommendations

i. There is need for the government to construct adequate fences, auto-gates or border plazas. This will help to reduce the size of illegal migration, smuggling of goods and trafficking of persons.

ii. There is need to strengthen the cooperation and coordination of Nigerian security agencies involved in border control or management. A well coordinated effort and intelligent sharing between security agencies like the Police, Customs, Immigration, Civil Defence Corps, the Military etc will go a long to ensure effective border security.

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