SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEPRIVATION AND SECURITY CHALLENGES IN NIGERIA (A Study of Niger Delta Crises)

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Abstract

The study examines the effect of socio-economic deprivation on security challenges of Niger Delta Crisis in Nigeria. The study covers a time period of twenty years (1995 - 2016) and employs the Descriptive statistics to describe the characteristics and effect of socio economic deprivation on security challenges in Niger Delta. A major findings of the study is that Deprivation Index has a statistically significant effect on security challenges in Niger Delta Crisis in Nigeria. The study recommends that the government should discourage socio-economic deprivation of citizen so as to reduce the deprivation index and insecurity of the Niger Delta.

Keywords: Socio-Economic Deprivation, Niger Delta Crisis and Security Challenges

Introduction

The concept of deprivation explains the condition of a system or a community which is lacking the basic necessities of a society or community. Meanwhile, socio-economic deprivation can be described as the lack of society and economic benefits which are considered to be basic necessities of a society or in a broader sense of a region. The regions with high demand and low supply of basic requirements often exhibit poor social and economic status compared to the other adjacent regions which mark the former as socio-economically deprived region (Pampalon and Raymond, 2000). According to Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, the basic necessities refer to the food, shelter and warmth (Maslow, 1943). The development of any region primarily depends on the fulfillment of these three prime factors. But practically, it is difficult to measure the development of any community or regional system only in terms of availability of food, shelter and warmth. The fundamental factors have more specific and quantified to the degrees of deprivation. Therefore a set of quantitative indicators which collectively represent the three prime factors of development need to be identified to measure the overall development of any regional system.

One the other hand, security challenges can be traced to the early years of military rule when large quantities of arms were imported into the country for the use of the military during and after the Nigerian civil war, some of which got into the hand of the civilians. After the civil war these arms were used by civilians and ex-military men for mischievous purposes such as armed robbery, (Olabanji and Ese 2014). The 1999 constitutions made provisions for the rights of citizens. The inability of government to provide a secure and safe environment for lives, properties and the conduct of business and economic activities has led to resentment and disaffection among business investors. This has resulted in communal clashes, and religious violence and crime in different parts of the country that has destroyed lives and properties, disrupted businesses and economic activities, and retarded economic growth and development in Nigeria. No business investors whether local or foreign will be motivated to invest in an unsafe and insecure environment. In a globalized world investors are not only looking for high returns on their investments but also safe environment for their investments. Thus the alarming level of insecurity in Nigeria has made the economy unattractive to foreign investors and has slowed down the level of business.
activities, and this has impacted negatively on economic growth and development. Consequently the purpose of this paper is to examine the implications of insecurity on business activities.

Igbuzor (2011) asserts that socio economic deprivation is the result of the security challenges in our environment. This implies that the incidence of socio economic deprivation poses various threats to the country. Developed nations such as the United States of America, United Kingdom, Germany and so on experience less security challenges for the simple reason that the governments of these countries provide the basic and social amenities to the populace (Oluwarotimi, 2012). Research has shown that socio-economic deprivation is peculiar to children from poor homes (Omede, 2011, Mohddeh, 2011). However, the focus of this study is to examine the effect of socio-economic deprivation on security challenges in Niger Delta Crisis in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Several studies have established that social and economic benefits are the basic necessities of any country, as lack of its makes that particular country exposed to different kinds of shocks. In extant literature, we found that socio-economic deprivation is capable of resulting in security challenges (Okorie, 2011). Studies such as Benerji and Sen (2014), Klinck and Jennifer (2009), Hesselman and Marhees (2013), Mantouvalou and Virginia (2013) and Mei and Pieter (2014) and several others examined socio economic deprivation on the regime of international protection and its impact on quality of life. However, this current study examines the effect of socio economic deprivation on the security challenges of Niger Delta Crisis. Therefore, this study intends to fill this gap in knowledge.

Theoretical Framework

This study adopts the Democratic Peace Theory as propounded by Doyle (1998) to explain the Security challenges in Nigeria. According to this theory, security largely depends on encouraging liberal institutions to discharge their responsibilities credibly; and a security policy must have as its long-term the spread of liberation. Therefore, the route to peace is to encourage democratic system, the universal respect for human rights and the development of civil society. But such conclusion depends largely on untroubled and robust correlation between the democratic nature of a state and peaceful inclination. Thus, the democratic peace theory assumes that liberal states do fight wars against other liberal states. This theory was first enunciated in a keynote article by Michael Doyle in Journal of Philosophy and Public Affairs (Doyle, 1998). Thus, Doyle argued that there was a difference in liberal practice towards liberal societies and liberal practice address challenges of socio-economic deprivation, poverty, unemployment and inequitable distribution of wealth among ethnic nationalities is one of the major causes of insecurity in the country. Unemployment has a severe negative implication on national development in Nigeria as most of its productive force is unemployed. What this means theoretically is that socio economic deprivation and unemployment increase the number of people who are prepared to kill or be killed for a given course at token benefit Salawu (2010). It could predispose one to engaging in illicit activities that would undermine security of the environment.

From security point of view, the recommendations of democratic peace theory are clear. According to this theory, security largely depends on encouraging liberal institutions to discharge their responsibilities creditably; and a security policy must have as its long-term the spread of liberalism (Doyle, 1998). Therefore, the route to peace is to encourage
democratic system, the universal respect for human rights and the development of civil society. But such conclusion depends largely on untroubled and robust correlation between the democratic nature of state and peaceful inclination. By application of this theory to security challenges and economy of the Nigerian state, we argue that for Nigeria to address her perennial security challenges, the need to adopt and faithfully implement strategic security policies and viable socio-economic programmes capable of strengthening the growth of democracy in Nigeria are the first step to be adopted by government. Thus, we further argue that the increasing state of security threats in Nigeria which if unchecked could further distort the country’s economy is clearly symptomatic of the abysmal failure of the institutions constitutionally charged with the responsibility of protecting the lives and properties of Nigerian citizens (Dinneya, 2006).

The Niger Delta Crisis

The Niger Delta Crisis started with the call for resource control. This call was not evil in itself. It was a simple demand for a part of the proceeds of the huge resources exploited from the area to be used for the development of the area which has since been left devastated through drilling activities leaving the area helpless with poverty, pollution and youth restiveness.

The Niger Delta people have consistently demanded the following:

(i) A larger proportion of Nigeria’s oil wealth should be spent on their communities, basing their demands on the 50% derivation formula under the 1960 and 1963 Federal Constitutions.
(ii) The repeal of the Petroleum Act, the Land Use Act, the National Inland Waterways Authority Act and other laws that concentrate too much power in the hands of the federal government and contribute to the unequal distribution of revenue, and
(iii) A true national development plan that is reflective of the national character and not selective development

The Federal Government has largely ignored these demands. Rather than exploring peaceful alternative in resolving these disagreements and attendant conflicts, the federal government had consistently employed military repression in quelling agitations. In response, youths from these communities have formed militant groups to launch operations against energy infrastructure and authorities. These operations are already short-circuiting the government’s budgetary projection from the energy sector due to constant disruptions in crude oil production in the Niger Delta hence, the present attempt by the federal government at peace-making through the present “Amnesty” programme. The colonial masters had set the constitutional and legal framework for the development of the area under the 1960 and 1963 constitutions respectively by providing for 50% mineral derivation in respect of royalties to the regions/states.

It was only in 1966 that the military junta under General Gowon announced a suspension of this arrangement as a temporary measure in order to pull all our resources together to prosecute the war efforts. The war ended in January 1970. Yet, almost 40 years after, the temporary suspension has not been lifted. Instead, the Federal Government for some mysterious inexplicable reasons has progressively reduced the derivation principle until the 13% or less arising from the onshore and off-shore dichotomy upheld by the Supreme Court. The struggle to regain this unjustified seizure of 50% derivation for development of the area has resulted party in what the Federal Government classified as “military”. The present attempt at amnesty must have to address the root cause or it will not last. From all indications, militant leaders have already alerted on serious threat to the programme. The federal government must be told in divine language. “Thou shall not mussle the horse that treads out the corn. The effect of the Niger Delta crisis is too obvious – it is a veritable threat to national security and development which hinders foreign investment for development.

Methodology

Research Design and Sources of Data

The ex-post facto research design was adopted and the data were sourced from the official publication that the researcher cannot manipulate. The data were sourced from the publication of the Central Bank of Nigeria such as the statistical.
Model Specification

The study builds on the Democratic Peace Theory as propounded by Doyle (1998) which explains the effect of Security challenges in Nigerian economy. However, the functional form of the model is

\[ LSC = F(DI, UPR, MMR, LCR) \]

Meanwhile, the economic form of the model is

\[ LSC = \beta_0 + \beta_1 DI + \beta_2 UPR + \beta_3 MMR + \beta_4 LCR + \mu \]

\[ LSC = \text{Level of Security Challenges} \]
\[ DI = \text{Deprivation Index} \]
\[ UPR = \text{Unemployment Rate} \]
\[ MMR = \text{Maternal Mortality Rate} \]
\[ LCR = \text{Level of Corruption}. \]
\[ \mu = \text{Error Term} \]

Estimation Techniques

The above equation was estimated using the descriptive statistics. The descriptive statistics was used to describe the characteristics of security challenges in relation to socio-economic deprivation. The software used was the E-view 8.0 output.

Regression Results and Analysis

Table 4.1 below shows that the average security challenges of Niger Delta within the period is 2.5 which indicates that Niger Delta crisis affected the level of security in Nigeria during the period under review. The median value 2.1 depicts that the level of security challenges for the Niger Delta are not generally similar within the time period. The standard deviation for the level of security challenges is 4.3 which is relatively high in terms of the mean value. The skweness coefficient of 4.5 indicates that the level of security challenges in the Niger Delta is generally Centred to the right of the mean value. From Table 4.1, it can be observed that the level of corruption (LCR), Deprivation Index, Unemployment rate and Maternal mortality rate have an average mean of 22.16, 67.12, 94.56582 and 11.60595 respectively for the period of twenty two years (1995 - 2016). However, the variables such as level of corruption, Deprivation Index as well as Unemployment rate are statistically significant (Prob value 0.012869, 0.024870 and 0.000022 respectively). The implication of this is that they are the major determinants of the security challenges in the Niger Delta crisis in Nigeria.

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<th>Table 1: Summary Statistics</th>
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<td><strong>LSC</strong></td>
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<td>Observations</td>
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Source: EVIEWS 8.0 Output.
Summary of Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations

Having examined the effect of socio-economic deprivation on security challenges, the following findings were made

1. The level of corruption has a statistically significant effect on the security challenges in Niger Delta crisis in Nigeria.
2. Deprivation index has a statistically significant effect on the security challenges in Niger Delta crisis in Nigeria.
3. Unemployment rate has a statistically significant effect on the security challenges in Niger Delta crisis in Nigeria.
4. Maternal mortality rate does not have a statistically significant effect on the security challenges of Niger Delta crisis in Nigeria.

Conclusion

The various findings from this work have shown that socio economic deprivation has significant effect on the security challenges in Niger Delta crisis for the period of 1995 – 2016. However, the federal government of Nigeria has made concerted effort to curb these challenges as measures have been put in place to reduce it to the bearest minimum.

Recommendations

1. There is need for the government to employ the teeming youths to reduce the incidence of insecurity in the country.
2. The government should enact stringent laws that would ameliorate the corrupt practices of the political office leaders in Niger Delta.
3. The government should discourage the socio-economic deprivation of citizens so as to reduce the deprivation index and insecurity of Niger Delta.

References


