

INTERNAL CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND THE NIGERIAN MILITARY: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN THE FOURTH REPUBLIC.

Ekpo, Barnabas David

Department of Political Science and Defence Studies, Nigerian Defence Academy,
Kaduna.

Odey Samuel Odey

General Studies Centre, Cross River University of Technology, Cross River State,
Nigeria.

Udo, Inameti Lawrence

Department Of Philosophy, Akwa Ibom State University, Nigeria.

ABSTRACT

The Nigerian state is confronted with enormous internal security challenges ranging from religious crises, communal conflicts, socio- political upheaval, the Niger Delta militancy and Boko haram insurgencies to the recurrent herdsmen invasion of villages in the northern and southern part of Nigeria. These challenges have brought the Nigerian military to the fore in internal conflict management. The primary responsibility of the Nigeria police is to maintain law and order and the protection of lives and properties but over time the police have failed in her duty thus the quest for the military in internal conflict management. The Nigerian military derives its legitimacy in internal conflict management from section 217 (c) of the 1999 constitution as amended. A cursory look into the history of the military in internal conflict management in Nigeria reveals that the military has performed above board, however like other institutions there are recurrent issues and challenges that are hindering the effective operationalization of the military in internal conflict management. It is these issues and challenges this research seek to address in the fourth republic (1999-2015). The research employed the descriptive and analytical method, through these, the research identified the issues and challenges confronting the Nigerian military in internal conflict management such as; the use of excessive force on unarmed civilians, the violations of human rights of civilians in the crisis area, lack of training for internal security, lack of equipment/ adequate logistics, ethical and moral challenge and the challenge of joint operations. It concluded that there should be domestic legislation which should specifically regulate military interventions in

internal conflict operations. The rules of engagement only serves as guide lines to the military and do not have any force of law.

Keywords: Security, internal conflict, conflict management, Nigerian military.

INTRODUCTION

Security is an important factor in the development of any society thus, in any country the military is saddled with the responsibility to oversee her national security. Against this background, successive constitutions of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1960, 1963, 1979, 1999 and 2011 as amended) provide for the establishment of the Nigerian Armed Forces with her primary responsibility of “defending Nigeria from external aggression, maintaining its territorial integrity and securing its borders from violation on land, sea, or air and suppressing insurrection and acting in assistance of civil authorities to restore order when called up on to do so by the president, but subject to such conditions as may be prescribed by an act of the National assembly.” (Section 217 of the 1999 Nigerian constitution). The latter part of section 217 of the 1999 Constitution “...and acting in assistance of civil authorities to restore order...” gives the Military legal and moral justification to be involved in Internal Conflict management in Nigeria.

The task of maintaining Internal Security, Public Safety and Public Order is the primary responsibility of the Nigerian police force while other internal security agencies are only providing supportive services to the police force. As enshrined in the Nigeria Police Act, the basic function of the Nigerian Police Force is “for the prevention and detection of crime, the apprehension of offenders, the preservation of law and order, the protection of property and the due enforcement of all laws and regulation with which they are directly charged” (The Nigerian police act). It implies that the police is the first layer of defence in the outbreak of law and order. But when the crisis or conflict escalates beyond the capacity of the police then the military is called upon to act in aid of the police.

The role of the Nigerian Military in dealing with the challenges of internal security and the breakdown of law and order is as a result of the frequency of the occurrence of civil unrest and the intensity of violence. As a consequence, the involvement of the military in internal conflict in Nigeria over the years have been at best controversial. Owing to lack of training in Internal Security and the perceive excessiveness, there have been outcries to the effect that the military are usurpers and oppressors (Nwolise 46). The misgivings which the Nigerian public shows towards the effectiveness of the military involvement in the management of internal conflict is premised on the high handedness which some military personal have exhibited in the process. Suffice to say that such perception is premised on the account of the military involvement in the Zaki Biam, conflict, Odi in Bayelsa State, Kaduna Sharia Crises of 2000, the Itsekiri – Ijaw Crises in Delta state etc were the military exhibited brutal highhandedness on Innocent Civilians (Nwolise 48-50).

It is against this background that this work will discuss the issues and challenges of the Nigerian Military involvement in Nigeria's internal conflict management in the Fourth Republic with a view to proffering solutions that will enhance her performance.

DEFINITION OF TERM(S)

Conflict and Conflict Management: Conflict is an intrinsic and inevitable part of human existence. From David Francis perspective, "Conflict is the pursuit of incompatible interests and goals by different groups. Armed Conflict is the resort to the use of force and armed violence in the pursuit of incompatible and particular interests and goal. The worst form of armed conflict include mass murder and genocide against unarmed civilians (Francis 20-21).

Conflict is a phenomenon that is an important part of human existence and a natural part of our daily lives (Isard 1). Though some scholars view conflict as something that is totally negative. Faleti Ademola posits that, this is not always the case depending on how it is handled, it can either be constructive (positive) or destructive (negative). It is as common to come across suggestions that conflict can be used constructively to explore different solutions to a problem and stimulate creativity by recognizing and sensitively exposing conflicts as a way of bringing emotive and non-rational arguments into the open while deconstructing long standing tension (32).

According to the foundation coalition, conflict may be defined as a struggle or contest between people with opposing needs, ideas, beliefs, values or goals (25). From whatever perspective we want to view conflict and whatever the analyses maybe, conflict definitions are not mutually exclusive. On the other hand, conflict management according to Chima and Alokpa "is the attempt to keep a conflict from getting worse. Therefore, it involves the use of skills to control the intensity of a conflict and its effect through facilitation, negotiation and other kinds of intervention and institutional measures, as well as other means such as diplomacy (Chima and Alokpa 32-34). However from the definition, conflict management is distinguished from conflict resolution, in that it usually does not address the deep rooted sources of conflict.

HISTORY OF THE NIGERIAN MILITARY IN INTERNAL CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

The Nigerian military involvement in internal conflict management began during the colonial time. The military continues involvement was because of the effective role it has been playing in the management of internal conflicts in Nigeria. In the post-independent Nigeria it has been more involved in internal conflict management this is because, the various constitutions have empowered her to carry out such functions. For instance, the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria which provides for the military in its section 217 makes it clear that the duties of the military, that is the Army, Navy and Air-force will be to defend Nigeria from external aggression, maintain its territorial integrity and securing its borders from

isolation on land, sea or air, suppressing insurrection and acting in aid of civil authorities to restore order when called upon to do so by the President but subject to such conditions as may be prescribed by an Act of National Assembly. The military is also to perform such other functions as may be prescribed by an Act of the National Assembly. For instance, the military may be required to assist the police in restoring law and order in any part of the country as prescribed in Section 217 (c) of the 1999 constitution.

A cursory look at the history of the Nigerian military in conflict management in Nigeria will reveal that in August 1914, as the First World War gathered raged, an Egba revolt was militarily crushed by ten companies of troops from the newly created "Nigeria Regiment". Also in 1929- 1930, the regiment was called upon for a major internal security operation against Igbo women, mainly at Aba. The Nigerian Air-force and the Nigerian navy have similarly participated in internal conflict management in Nigeria. The Nigerian Air force history in internal conflict management brims with history of its effective participation in military operations Other Than War (MOOTW) against the Maitasine elements in Kano and Maiduguri, against the Taliban in the Mandara Mountains and in Panshekara and are active with the Special Task Force-Operation Safe Heaven on the Jos-Plateau. In the same vein the Nigerian Navy was deeply involved in the management of the Ijaw- Itsekiri crises in the Warri Metropolitan area (Azinge 6-7). Both services, where they maintained a presence have over the course of several decades actively cooperated with the Nigerian Army in Internal Security Operations geared towards restoring peace to various parts of the volatile federation.

These include, but are not limited to the Tiv and Western Nigerian crises of 1962-1965, the post-election violence of 1983 in Western Nigeria, Ife-Modakeke conflict of the 1990s, the 2000 Sharia crisis in Kaduna. The Yelwa-Shendam, Jos and Kano crisis in 2004. In 2011, post- election violence again broke out in some disaffected segments of Northern Nigeria leading to the deaths of over 800 people. It took the intervention of the Nigerian military to restore normalcy to the restive parts of the federation(Daily Trust Newspaper 5).

The Nigerian military were invited to help restore peace in those troubled areas because of the incompetence of the Nigerian police. Reasons have been identified to be responsible for the failure of the Nigerian police in carrying out her primary responsibility of internally maintaining peace, law and order, the protection of life and property and due enforcement of all laws and regulations with which they are directly in charge. These include: intensity of violence, poor intelligence gathering or mismanagement of information by the police, intensity of violence, ineffective communication network and procedure for the release of orders by the police, high level of illiteracy of majority of the police men, the strength of the police force relative to the population of the country, weak training, the police was grossly deficient in equipment, poor motivation in terms of promotion, remuneration and general welfare including accommodation

(Akran lecture notes 28-35). The few instances of deadly attacks highlighted above and the failure of the police to effectively restore peace in those troubled areas buttress the need for the military to remain in frontal role in Nigeria's internal security networks.

However, in many of the cases of military intervention in internal conflict was a political decision often taken at the highest level of government and so political imperatives often overshadowed military considerations, for instance in the 1960s, after the police proved ineffective, the military was deployed to Tiv division several times when the simple act of mediation at the high political leadership level could have resolved the crisis but the ruling political party in northern Nigeria the Northern Peoples' Congress(NPC) preferred to exercise its authority and integrity. More so in the 1965 crisis in the western region, in the face of manifest break down of law and order and the glaring police inability to assent its authority, the Balewa government did not immediately invite the military to quell the crisis because the federal government stood to profit politically from the fractionalized western region. Again in 1980 maitatsine disturbances in Kano, President ShehuShagari delayed unnecessarily to order the military to quell the disturbances even after all constitutional formalities were completed. Such deliberate delay would thoroughly discredit and weaken the Peoples Redemption Party government. Therefore political intrigues and maneuver often play significant considerations and so could worsen the situation more than it would otherwise have been(Akran lecture note 25).

THE ROLE AND TACTICS OF THE NIGERIAN MILITARY IN INTERNAL CONFLICT MANAGEMENT.

Mode of Operation of the military during internal security operations

The Nigerian military has engaged in peace keeping operations in foreign countries on a number of occasions and has been commended for its noble conduct during those occasions, Sierra Leone and Liberia are good examples. It beats ones imagination why such feat is not repeated in internal security operations in Nigeria. The problem of high handedness and insensitivity to the nature and characteristics of civilian dominated areas is always pointed out as a flaw but paradoxically it the same military that the civil populace run to for refuge when conflict becomes intense. Suffice here to analyze the roles of the military in internal conflict management in Nigeria

The deployment of the military for assistance to civil authority in the management of conflict is coordinated by the defence headquarters after the presidential approval has been passed as a political directive through thehonourable minister of defence (Appah 21-28).The method and procedure for conflict management is derived from the DHQ procedure for crisis management which is all embracing. The chief of defence staff who heads the defence headquarters meets with the service chiefs to discuss the situation. Thereafter, through the directives of the CDS the chiefs of various services holds emergency meeting(s) with the directors of training and operations and with the chief of

logistics at defence headquarters. From the meeting, it develops an operational directive and possibly suggests the composition of a force or forces to be used in the operation including the appointment of the force commander; the force commander will be directly responsible to the CDS.

A thorough appraisal is done at the state level of the conflict situation and the extent of violence to see if it will lead to the breakdown of law and order before the military is finally considered to either support the civil police or take over from the police or any organization involved in the management of the conflict. A critical look at the military structure and the disposition of the various formations and units of the military have been deliberately arranged to meet the requirements for crisis management operations. In the eruption of crisis, any of the three services can be directed or tasked to handle the operation in their area of responsibility (AOR) through appropriate standard operating procedures (Appah 33).

However, the provisions of section 217(2) c notwithstanding, the military will only be involved in the suppression of any insurrection when such insurrection becomes overwhelming and unbearable for the police to handle. From whatever state of the federation the civil unrest is coming from, the state executive will make a formal request to the president and commander in chief of the Armed forces for the military to intervene. When the president has approved the use of the military, a formal hand over/ take over between the police and the military is conducted (Appah 36-37).

After the military takes over from the police, the rules of engagement is spelt out whereby there will be the use of minimum force in bringing the conflict to a halt before handing over the operation to the police for peace enforcement. As the military operation is ongoing, the police is on standby to complement the efforts of the military when required. The success of the military in any conflict intervention is dependent on some basic principles such as the cooperation of the locals, intelligence gathering that are necessary to allay the fears, apprehensions or repulsion of the civil populace who are wary of military presence in a civil conflict environment.

There is no uniform tactics by the military in tackling internal conflict in Nigeria. Different tactics are employed by the military depending on the circumstance(s) and situation on ground. The underlying philosophy in internal security operation by the military is the principle of the use of minimum force. The enforcement of this principle vary fundamentally due to the character and intensity of the crisis being confronted. In some cases, the security forces retaliate so massively if the rioters are brandishing and using sophisticated weapons. The philosophy behind the use of minimum force is applied to rioters who play to the rule of the game, where there is no external influence to hostility as well as external interest and sponsorship. Some examples where serious doubts were raised on real adherence about the use of minimum force are the Maitatsine rioters in Kano, Jimeta and Bullumkutu. These operations were not meant to hem

or encircled the rioters for elimination or destruction. Escaped routes needed to have been tactically allowed despite the seriousness of the operation (Appah 38). Some of the tactics employed by the military to effectively contain internal conflict and crisis in Nigeria include: the principle of minimum force, patrols, good intelligence gathering techniques, display of professionalism and expertise in weapon handling, provision of escape routes, range of arms and sophistication of weapons, massive retaliation, and joint operation.

SOME INSTANCES OF THE NIGERIAN MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN INTERNAL CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN NIGERIA

a) Kaduna sharia conflict of 2000

In 2000, Kaduna State witnessed one of the worst religious conflicts in the history of the country occasioned by the introduction of sharia law by the state government. Although sharia is an age-long practice among the Muslim population in the state, what triggered the sharia conflicts of 2000 was the impression of the Christian citizens that the action will turn Kaduna State into a Muslim state. The introduction of sharia law in Kaduna State by the state government was against the backdrop of the heterogeneity and religious plurality of the state and a long history of ethno-religious conflicts in the state (Alao 102).

The Sharia violence in Kaduna State took place in two main phases, which Paden referred to as "Sharia 1" and "Sharia 2." The first phase took place in the Kaduna metropolis from February 21 to 25 of 2000. This was followed by another round of killings in the following month of March. The second phase was from May 22 to 23. On Wednesday, 23 March, 2000, the crisis spilled over to the surrounding Local Government Areas (LGAs), particularly Kachia and BirninGwari. In Kachia LGA, Muslims were attacked, their residential houses, shops, clinics, courts, filling stations and the markets were destroyed. This round of violent religious crisis later spread to neighbouring villages like Sakainu, Katul, Adadgai, Sowai, and Gumel (Okpanachi 10- 12).

The May "Sharia 2" violence occurred while the Judicial Commission of Inquiry set up to probe the February through March 2000 clashes, was yet to complete its work. The clash started at Narayi and Banarwa areas and later spread to other parts of Kaduna Metropolis. While the immediate cause of the crisis could not be fully ascertained, police said that the clashes broke out after residents of a mainly Christian neighbourhood blamed Muslims for the killing of a man.

According to Okpanachi,, others saw it as the continuation of the Sharia-induced February violence. It took a combined team of fully armed soldiers and police officers to restore peace to the city. In the face of this violence, the police was deployed in the first instance to quell the conflict. However, when it became obvious that the police could not contain the spate of killings and wanton destruction of properties, the "Operation Yaki" (a joint military taskforce of the police, army and air force personnel) was drafted to quell the conflict. Only then was the conflict brought under control. Operation Yaki has been patrolling the

streets of the Kaduna metropolis ever since the crisis of 2000, so as to maintain law and order and to forestall any resurgence of similar violence (13). An unconfirmed death toll of 2,000 was speculated (Human Right Watch Report of 2003) But the Judicial Commission of Inquiry set up by the Kaduna state government reported that at least 1,295 people had been killed, while an unspecified additional number were buried unidentified and others were declared missing as result of the February disturbance alone (Kaduna State Government White Paper, April 2001). In all, it is believed that the two Kaduna riots left at least 3,000 persons dead and led to the displacement of over 63,000 people within Kaduna and its surroundings (International Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2007, cited in Okpanachi). These displaced persons sought refuge in the police and army barracks, considered to be the safest places in the heat of the conflicts. The neutrality of the armed forces in quelling the Kaduna State Sharia conflicts of 2000 and 2001 was called to question. It was reported that security agencies deployed to contain the situation were openly biased in the suppression of the disturbance.

Hamman attributes this bias attitude and the inability of security agents to contain national emergencies to cultural imbalance within the Armed Forces, paramilitary organizations and other security institutions in the country. Cultural imbalance, he pointed out, is prompted by the composition of the Nigerian Armed Forces and paramilitary organizations which seems to be increasingly becoming culturally monolithic in spite of the Federal Character principle. That cultural imbalance within the Armed Forces as a major factor that exacerbates security challenges in the country is corroborated by Mohammed who tagged the obvious religious bias that has pervaded the Armed Forces as "social virus". The accusation of bias against the joint military operations by the warring parties during the crisis was that its members were targeted by the intervening soldiers because of their religion. This made the Joint Military Task Force, "Operation Yaki" set up after the sharia crisis of 2000 to forestall subsequent ethno-religious conflicts to be held in contempt. The implication of this is that, the various groups were neither ready to cooperate with the law enforcement agents, nor ready to divulge useful information to bring the perpetrators to book or forestall future occurrence (89-110).

b) **The Jos indigene/settlers crisis of 2001**

Signals pointing towards the manifestation of contentious issues between Muslim settlers and Christian indigenes started emanating in the 1990s amongst residents. This culminated in 1994 into open clashes mainly between the Berom indigenes and Hausa/Fulani settlers over farmland and local chieftaincy titles. Jos metropolis, the capital of Plateau State registered a great deal of crises beginning from Friday 7 to 14 September, 2001 and also on the 2nd of May 2002 in the Etobaba area located within Jos metropolis; followed by numerous attacks by marauding Hausa-Fulani Muslim militias on citizens living on the countryside in the Northern Senatorial Districts of Plateau State. The scene of attacks on both sides

switched to the Southern Senatorial District which eventually culminated with major crises that killed hundreds of citizens, first in Yelwa in February 2004 with the massacre of about a hundred Christians, 67 of them in COCIN Church Yelwa and later again reprisal killings in Yelwa with revenge killings by Christian who massacred between 650 and 700 Muslims in May 2004. The outcry by Muslims against the latter killings led to the declaration of a State of Emergency (SOE) on Plateau State by the then President Olusegun Obasanjo. Due to the magnitude of the destruction and the inaction of the state governor, necessitated the directive by the commander in chief to the military to intervene and restore peace to the state (Danfulani and Sati 243-255).

The Nigerian Army, Nigerian Air force and other security agencies were mobilized. A combined team of Army, Air force and police conducted surprise searches in areas of Jos town known to be strongholds of the warring groups and recovered illegal arms. The military monitored the curfew imposed by the government by mounting road blocks and conducting cordon and search operations. The Nigerian Army later established a standby force known as operation CRYSTAL CALM to continue to monitor the situation and deter any other form of civil conflicts within Jos and its environs (Danfulani and Sati 257).

FACTORS THAT NECESSITATED THE FREQUENT USE OF THE MILITARY IN INTERNAL CONFLICTS

Nweze identified sources of security threats in Africa to include: militarism and military experiences, ethnic/religious pluralism, unemployment, poverty and failure of governance, socio-economic inequalities and demographic factors, small arms and ammunition trafficking, migration and indigene question in Nigeria, Nigeria's socio-economic status in Africa and the illegal alien issues, globalization, porous security heritage and external influence. It is necessary to distinguish between different causes as each may require different remedy. Like in other countries, the sources of insecurity in Nigeria can be traced to a number of factors. Beyond the external-internal dichotomy, sources of insecurity can equally be classified as either remote or proximate and immediate (Nweze 78-79). In Nigeria, the challenge is not so much about external sources but rather that of internal sources.

REMOTE (ROOT) FACTORS

Lack of institutional capacity

There is apparently a breakdown of institutional infrastructure. The foundations of institutional framework in Nigeria according to Achumba et al are very shaky and have resulted in the deterioration of state governance and democratic accountability, thereby paralyzing existing set of constraints including the formal and legitimate rules nested in the hierarchy of social order(79-99). Igbuzor further assert that, the state of insecurity in Nigeria is a function of government failure. This is manifested by the inability of government to deliver public services and provide the basic needs of the masses. Lack of basic

necessities in Nigeria has created a pool of frustrated people who are easily ignited by any event to become violent. It is argued that Nigeria has the wherewithal to provide for her people, but corruption of public office holders has made this impossible (1-7). Nigeria according to Hazen & Horner is a paradox of plenty, a very rich country with very poor people (5). With this kind of situation, insecurity of lives and properties is bound to arise/occur.

Pervasive material inequalities and unfairness

Great disparity in life chances is a major root cause of insecurity in Nigeria. Inequity and unfairness have given rise to grievance by a greater number of people. Some sections of the people may feel marginalized in government development policies, and political offices and this may become a source of disaffection and resentment. A large number of the Nigerian people have become frustrated and lost hope, particularly the youths who have taken to violence.

Ethno-religious conflicts

Among the various ethnic and religious groups in Nigeria have arisen distrust and lack of confidence. According to Igbuzor, ethno-religious conflict is a major source of insecurity in Nigeria. Frequent and persistent ethnic conflicts and religious clashes between the two dominant religions (Islam and Christianity) present the country with a major security challenge. In every part of Nigeria, there exists ethno-religious conflict which according to Ibrahim & Igbuzor have arisen as a result of new and particularistic forms of political consciousness and identity often associated with ethno-religious identities(8-9). As Adagba et al have noted, claims over scarce resources, power, land, chieftaincy, local government council, control of markets and sharia among other trivial issues have resulted in large scale killings and violence among groups in Nigeria (77-99).

Weak security system

This arises from inadequate equipment for the security arm of government both in weaponry and training. This is in addition to poor attitudinal disposition of security personnel. In most cases, security personnel lack the expertise and equipment to handle such situations in a way to prevent them from occurring. Even when this exists, some personnel get influenced by ethnic, religious or communal sentiment and are usually swallowed by their personal interest to serve their people, rather than the nation. As a result, people become saboteurs of government effort by supporting and fuelling insecurity through either lacking vital security information or aiding and abetting criminals to acquire weapons or to escape the long arm of the law (Adagba 99).

IMMEDIATE AND PROXIMATE FACTORS

Porous borders

One major immediate factor which has aggravated insecurity in Nigeria is the porous frontiers of the country, where individuals are largely untracked. The porosity of the Nigerian borders have serious security implications for the country. Given the porousness of our borders as well as weak security system, weapons and small arms get into Nigeria easily from other countries. Small arms and light weapons proliferation and the availability of these weapons have enabled militant groups and criminal gangs to have easy access to arms (Edeko 55-70). According to Edeko, Nigeria is estimated to host over 70 percent of about 8 million illegal weapons in West Africa. Due to the porosity of Nigerian borders, unwarranted influx of migrants from neighbouring African countries such as Republic of Chad, Niger and Benin have become possible. These migrants who are mostly young men are some of the perpetrators of crimes in Nigeria (74-80).

Rural/urban drift

Another major cause of insecurity in Nigeria is the migration of jobless youths from rural to urban centres. According to Onuoha, Nigeria is one of the countries in the world with very high rural/urban drift. Most urban areas in Nigeria have grown beyond their environmental carrying capacities and existing infrastructure and this has resulted to increased poor quality of the living conditions. Out of frustration due to over population, these youths are drawn into crime(26-28).

Unemployment/poverty

As a result of high level of unemployment and poverty among Nigerians, particularly the youths, they are adversely attracted to crime. The failure of successive administrations in Nigeria to address challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequitable distribution of wealth among ethnic nationalities are the major causes of insecurity in Nigeria (Akran lecture note 19).

Terrorism

Today, terrorism is the most fundamental source of insecurity in Nigeria and its primary source is located in religious fanaticism and intolerance, particularly in Moslem dominated states of Nigeria. Terrorism which is a global phenomenon was defined by Onuoha as the premeditated use of threat or violence by an individual or group to cause fear, destruction or death, especially against unarmed targets, property or infrastructure in a state, intended to compel those in authority to respond to the demands and expectations of the individual or group behind such violent acts (7).

THE CHALLENGES OF THE NIGERIAN MILITARY IN INTERNAL CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

A Number of challenges have been identified that necessitated the Nigerian military involvement in internal conflict management in Nigeria.

Lack of training for internal security

Lack of appropriate training for conflict management poses a serious challenge when troops were launched into operations. Though the military train often for conventional internal security warfare and operations, such training for civil conflict management is outdated. There is always the assumption during training that the military will confront a conservative crowd or rioters in 50's or in 60's (Onuoha 30). However, with the number of vibrant ex-service personnel in our present day society, all manner of sophisticated militant groups have emerged. In the Warri ethnic clashes for example all manner of sophisticated weapons and explosives were fired. This shows a new dimension in civil disturbances in recent times. Furthermore, most military personnel do not have adequate training in counter terrorism and counter insurgency making it difficult in handling internal security matters. This has posed a challenge to the military in its focus in internal conflict management (Nweze 75).

Lack of equipment/adequate logistics

Often times the soldiers involved in internal security operations are not properly equipped for the task. Soldiers engaged in internal operations who are only equipped with guns will definitely use it if their lives are threatened by a hostile mob. An average mob in Nigeria can only be in possession of stones and not guns. Using deadly equipment such as guns in this situation will not be suitable. Closely related to lack of equipment is inadequate logistics back up. As asserted by Edeko a challenge faced by the military in the Warri ethnic crisis was inadequate logistics back up. Internal security operations normally involve special consideration for logistics needs, if operations are to be professional, swift and less rigorous. Logistics support must cater for vehicles, petroleum products, personal equipment/ clothing, troops quartering areas etc (92-93).

Ethical and moral challenge

The management of internal conflict by the Nigerian military poses a moral and ethical challenge to the military commanders. A problem that the Nigerian military has been accused of is being biased on matters that involves ethnic and religious conflict. There is no gain saying that there is ethnic and religious factors involved in some conflicts which have found sympathy with some section in the military. Also, the response of the government to the conflict might have been controversial because they might have been legitimate grievances that provoked them. Thus, the principle of positive neutrality which is very vital in such operations could have been missing (Onuoha 105).

However, a decision to stand aside and see Nigeria been destroyed was not an option as this would have been to accept the piecemeal degradation of national security interests and allow hoodlums to hold the country to ransom. Without mincing words, there is need therefore for commanders to ensure that officers and soldiers of questionable ethical or moral stability or with strong

prejudices against any of the groups involved in conflict do not participate directly in the management of internal conflict (Akran lecture note 61).

THE CHALLENGE OF JOINT OPERATION

Joint operation is the working together of the three military arms in checking or containing violence or civil unrest. The military have been involved overtime in joint operations in Nigeria as a means or strategy in arresting internal conflict. Joint operations were carried out in different parts of Nigeria between the Army and the police or between the Army, Air force and police or between the Army, Air force and police or between Army and Navy etc.

The first joint operation in Nigeria took place in 1985 during the Maitatsine riots in Gombe. Other instances of joint operation was in Kaduna state that is, Karfanchan crisis in 1987, followed by the ZangonKataf conflict of 1992 and the Ogoni crisis from 1993. Joint operation became rampant from 1999 to date when Nigeria recorded the highest number of conflicts and crises in any single period in the history of Nigeria. Even the spread of the Sokoto jihad in the 19th century and the Yoruba wars of the 19th century put together did not add up to the number of recorded conflict in Nigeria during this 4th republic. It was due to the rising number of conflicts in this dispensation that many states in the federation set up joint task force for joint operation (Akran lecture note 87).

MILITARY STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCED INTERNAL CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN NIGERIA.

The Nigerian military in its operations adopt strategies that will help in tackling civil crises or internal conflicts in Nigeria. However such strategies are based on the nature and circumstances of the conflict or civil unrest. Suffice to analyze some of the military strategies:

Short, sharp shock

It is the deployment of military force of a certain size to a crisis area with the objective of a quick and decisive suppression of collective violence followed by prompt withdrawal of the units of the armed forces involved and the immediate hand over of the operation to the police. Majority of the conflicts and crises which resulted in military intervention were quelled by this method, example the Tiv riots of 1960,1961 and 1964; western region crises of 1962, Araba riot in the north of 1966; the Isaac ADAKA Boro revolt in Niger Delta in 1966; the Maitatsine riots in Kano of 1980; Jimeta 1984; Gombe 1985; Kafanchan conflict in 1987; Bauchi state crises in TafawaBalewa in 1991 and the Zangokartaf uprising in 1982. These operations lasted for only a few days, as soon as peace was restored. In the case of Isaac Boro's insurgency in the Niger Delta, it lasted for only 12 days from March 7, 1966 when its leader Isaac Boro was captured. The army quickly returned to the barracks. Also the army operation against the Maitatsine riot in Kano on December 29, 1980 was carried out by 146 infantry

battalion, Kano. The operation lasted from 700hrs on December 28, 1980 to 1030hrs on December 29, 1980. After its operation, Major General Jemibewon , GOC 1 Division Kaduna handed over the operation to the Nigerian police (Akran lecture note 91-96).

Excessive use of force

The use of excessive force is another strategy used by the Nigerian military in internal conflict crises. Excessive force is a force generally used beyond that which a reasonable and prudent law enforcement officer would use under the circumstances. This strategy is only used when the rioters are very violent and possess sophisticated weapons or when there is an act of terrorism. This is a last option strategy in check mating internal crisis so as it should not degenerate into a full blown war. This method was used in handling the Boko haram insurgency in the north east of Nigeria. However, this strategy may cause incidental loss of civilian life, injury to civilians, damage to civilian objects, or a combination thereof, which would be excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated.

The military engagement in internal operations have been reported on several occasions as using excessive force. The case popularly known as the Odi Massacre provides an illustration which was an attack carried out on November 20, 1999 by the Nigeria military on the predominantly Ijaw village of Odi in Bayelsa State. The attack came in the context of the conflict in the Niger Delta over the indigenous rights to oil resources and environmental protection. Prior to the Massacre, twelve (12) members of the Nigerian police were murdered by a gang of restive youths near the village of Odi. In an apparent revenge, the military acting on the directive of the Federal government, invaded and raided the village. This attack was characterized by intense and excessive use of force. In effect, scores of unarmed civilians including women and children, were killed. All the buildings in the village, except the bank, the Anglican Church and the Community Health Centre, were destroyed, leaving the village in a woeful state of desolation (Robert 112).

Peace keeping operation

This strategy is adopted to keep the peace after normalcy has returned in the crisis area. It involves protracted and indefinite armed policing by the military to maintain and keep the peace in a crisis area. This strategy does not have a specific time frame because there is no immediate guarantee that the withdrawal of the peace keeping force may bring about the resumption of hostilities. In many places of operation, there were long standing disputes which often aroused powerful feelings of alienation and resentment among the contending forces. For instance, in the Warri ethnic crises of 2000 soldiers were kept in the crises area for a very long time to maintain the peace (Robert 114-116).

CONCLUSION

The military will continually be involved in internal security operations notwithstanding the negative practices associated with her involvement and the flaws identified. The Constitution serves as the main domestic law safeguarding the rights of the citizens thereby indirectly regulating the conduct of the military during operations. There are also international conventions and treaties in which Nigeria is a party to. However, there is no domestic (law) legislation which specifically regulates military interventions in internal security operations. This lacuna has given rise to the Nigerian military in perpetuating all manner of brutality on innocent civilians at the slightest provocation. The Rules of Engagement of the military only serves as guidelines to the military and do not have any force of law per se. This contributes to the lack of respect for human rights exhibited by the military during some internal operations. It is necessary therefore to regulate their operations during these periods through a domestic legislation specifically enacted for that purpose.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following however will serve as recommendations to the Nigerian military:

- a. To improve in managing internal conflict in Nigeria effectively, the Nigerian military should be constantly trained in new techniques and strategies.
- b. The welfare of troops should be given adequate considerations.
- c. To improve on internal security management, a vibrant special force unit should be created in all the 36 states of Nigeria with the primary responsibility of attending to internal crises in such states. The special force unit should be a combination of the three military arms and the police and should be manned on a one year secondment basis.
- d. The head of the special force unit should be allowed some leverage or discretionary powers to intervene in restive or conflict areas without waiting for presidential orders. This will help in saving valuable time, lives and properties.

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