THE ROLE OF NIGERIAN SECURITY AGENCIES IN THE 2015 GENERAL ELECTIONS

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Abstract: Elections are critical to the success of any democracy just as security is an essential ingredient of successful organised elections. Security is a determined factor on the part of election organisers, contenders for political offices and the electorate is in agreement to be the pre-condition for a successful process. It is practically impossible to hold credible elections in an insecure state. The involvement of the Nigeria police in the electoral processes in Nigeria is seen as a war like situation by her citizenry. However post elections pose further security threat. Its source of data is essentially secondary involving books, journals, articles related to the subject matter under review. Data sourced were qualitatively analyzed using descriptive method for data analysis and qualitative reporting. The paper examines the role of Nigeria security agencies in the 2015 election and recommended solutions.

Keywords: Elections, Nigeria, Police Force, Security Agencies

1. INTRODUCTION

Free and fair elections are key criteria for evaluating whether a nation is democratic. Elections create opportunities for political participation in any political system. Electorate is a determinant factor in the selection of their representatives. The votes give the electorate power politically, and their votes become a crucial factor of the political space. The electioneering exercises in the developed democracies are much interesting with less tension in the polity. All stakeholders passionately devote their whole time for the allotted periodic exercise of election.

They most at times disallow vote buying and selling as their voters' education is high. Such countries include those in Europe, America and some parts of Asia. The exercise on the other hand in the developing democracies in most cases do witness some hitches majorly in procedures and security issues (Gyimah-Boadi, 2015). However, this gets abates with every subsequent election exercise. The countries that fall to this category include those in Africa, most countries in Asia, some Latin America countries and the Arab countries.

This goes to suggest that security networks can make or mar the electoral institutions and consequently, jeopardize the democratic process of any nation as a whole. Thus it is paramount to have very effective and efficient security systems that would be capable of facilitating the entire electioneering process to strength the democratic status of any country. The security condition in the Nigerian nation as reported by Ehkomu (2011) is that of a mixed posture. On one hand, security agencies have, over the time, been able to stay on top and contain acts of criminality arising from several factions. On the other hand, the security agencies report card contains cases of assassination and other crimes that require intelligence to address. This however, implies that Nigeria's security systems still lack intelligence expertise.

Advanced countries rely more on intelligence security networks than physical or manual security approaches. A good security system should be pro-active in nature. The achievement of sustainable democracy in Nigeria and any other nation in Africa as well as the entire world may not be possible without having good, efficient and effective security systems. Ironically, many people seem to attribute the relative success achieved from the 2015 general elections in Nigeria (which is part of democratic processes) to the efforts of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) without giving any serious thought about the roles of security agencies toward making the country achieve what has so far been acknowledged globally, as free, fair and credible elections in Nigeria ever since different transitional process of countries in West-Africa.

In this article, an attempt would be made to zoom an analytical lens on and to offer some informed thoughts on the role of Nigerian Security Agencies in the 2015 general elections especially in the light of emerging trends in the build-up to the elections .The channels in which the skills and role performance of security agencies can be strengthened and sharpened to help deliver free, fair, non-violent, credible and democratic elections in the polity are also tendered.

1.1 Conceptual Clarification
The need in ensuring secured environment during the electoral process is vital component in the organization of free, transparent and fair elections in a polity. It requires extraordinary conditions. One of them is to decide in a practical and reasonable manner, the role of security agencies in the electoral process. The requirements for participation of security agencies especially in terms of the means and conditions of their involvement. Another condition is the need to pay particular attention to possible problems that could arise from the involvement of Security agencies in the electoral process. Management of the electoral process gives rise to a series of violence and insecurity risks. Certain risks are traced to the drafting of the law and political manipulations subjected to. Others can trace their origins to the manner in which the electoral law is applied by all those in charge of implementation and enforcement. Other categories are directly inherent in the behavior of certain key stakeholders in the electoral

process. Some risks of electoral violence which require that some stakeholders in the electoral process agree on values to be respected, for example, in the form of codes of ethics and of good conduct. In addition, it is interesting to note that there are still other risks of violence and insecurity during electoral periods which can only be prevented by Security agencies. This concerns mainly cases of violations of the electoral law, with consequences that can only be stopped by using brutal force or resorting to dissuasion. This applies when the risk of possible confrontations among political thugs, attempts to attack election staff and violence that follows the declaration of election results.

As should be expected and like security problems relating to elections, the role of security agencies in the electoral process have many facets. In other words, it is a multiple and varied role. The intervention of Security agencies is necessary at all stages of the electoral process and concerns all key stakeholders as well as the major factors of the process. That is why, to ensure the integrity of the electoral process, security agencies are responsible, at every stage of the process, for the protection of persons and property, election materials, officials and institutions involved in the process. Security agencies, besides ensuring the security of the electoral process at all stages, can also be involved, if need be, in the resolution of certain logistic problems. Indeed, the critical role of security agencies in the exercise cannot be overemphasized. Alluding to this, Ralph Egbu wrote in the Sunday Sun of March 6, 2011 that: *"The role of the security agents...determine to a great extent how much an election turns out be free, air and transparent. In the past, we saw the tendency by the apparatus to favor, in fact, protect the ruling parties. And in the current dispensation, we have observed some incumbents use the state security apparatus to intimidate the opposition by raising false allegations and closure of their offices."*

Before we discuss crucial roles, we must ask what roles do the security agencies serve? Although the roles may seem straight forward as ideas, it can be hard to say exactly what they mean in practice. Although there are many security agencies in Nigeria, there are a few ones that have dominant roles to play in the 2015 polls. Consequently we shall concentrate on select security agencies for discussion here. These are the Nigeria Police and the State Security Services. The Federal Nigerian Government announced the decentralization of the National Security Organization (NSO) on June 5, 1986. The country now has three security agencies carved out of the original body: the State Security Service (SSS), the National Intelligence Agency (NIA) and the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA). The SSS serves the domestic intelligence needs; the NIA is responsible for external intelligence and the DIA handles defense –related intelligence at home and abroad. SSS therefore is the government agency which operates at the domestic level that gathers intelligence, infiltrate terrorist and conducts espionage, etc in the interests of national security.

The police and the military have constitutional roles to play in any democracy. Section 215 (3) of the 1999 Nigeria Constitution spells out that the Nigeria Police Force is saddled with the maintenance of public safety and public order. The police is responsible for the arrest of crime and criminals, and prosecution of criminals. It has the responsibility of protecting lives and private and public property. The Nigeria Police is also constitutionally empowered to protect harbours, waterways, railways and airfields (FRN, 1999 section 214 [2c]). In the same vein, the 1999 constitution recognizes the role of the Armed Forces in the nation's constitutional democracy. According to section 217 (2), the Armed Forces have responsibilities of:

a. defending Nigeria from external aggression b. maintaining its territorial integrity and securing its borders from violation on land, sea or air c. suppressing insurrection and acting in aid of civil authorities to restore order when called upon to do so by the president d. performing such other functions as may be prescribed by an Act of the National Assembly The Armed Forces constitute a deterrent force against any external aggression on Nigeria. They defend the nation's sovereign integrity and protect the people of Nigeria. The role of the police and armed forces in the contemporary times especially since the 1950s has transcended the original traditional/ constitutional duties within and outside the shores of their countries. The police and the military have been engaged in international peacekeeping operations. Peacekeepers perform the military duties of inter-positioning and monitoring cease-fire lines between warring groups. Since the end of the cold war in about 1989, however, the responsibilities of peacekeepers have changed from the traditional military sphere. The role of modern peacekeeping missions includes tasks such as human rights monitoring, civilian police monitoring, electoral assistance and election monitoring, voter education and democratization programs (De Coning, 2001:17). In essence, the police and armed forces can be used to provide and maintain security for voters and electoral officials during elections and thereby provide a free and conducive environment for the conduct of elections

1.2 Nigerian Police Force and 2015 General Elections
In March 2015 marked the fifth general election since the country returned to democratic rule in 1999. Previous elections in Nigeria have been marked by allegations of fraud and disputes over results .The 2007 general elections in particular were widely adjudged a general flawed (Suberu 2007;Ibrahim and Ibeanu 2009; Onapajo 2014). This forced the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), the government, civil society groups and Nigeria's development partners to initiate and implement electoral reforms. These reforms contributed largely to the success of the 2011 elections, yet the risk of flaws affecting Nigerian elections still remains (Akhaine 2011; Lewis 2011).

In addition to its "routine" policing duties, the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) is also the lead agency for providing security for voters, candidates, and party workers during elections (Ol). Its responsibilities focus on manning polling stations, and the police are deployed by the hundreds of thousands for this function. Violence has been a feature of every Nigerian election since democracy was restored in 1999(Orji, 2012). Elections in Nigeria are a matter of "do or die." In the words of Etannibi Alemika, "politicians turn electioneering and elections into warfare in which violence and ethnic, religious, and other forms of primordial sentiments and prejudices are employed."

Election security will be a major mission for the NPF in the 2015 general elections. The success or failure of those elections will in some measure be a function of the performance of the police. The widespread violence that accompanies elections is often too much for the NPF to grip. We might find in such situations where military forces can be called to assist. The need for military reinforcement is a fairly common occurrence since the NPF cannot be relied on to provide security in challenging environments .The police are known to melt away when trouble arises .If they do stay, they are often part of the problem when it comes to election violence, using their position to harass and intimidate voters aligned with a party opposing the candidate who has paid the highest price for loyalty.

In 2015, the Jonathan Administration promised to deploy vast numbers of policemen to provide security and stressed the importance of preventing the kind of violence that marred the 2011 elections. These have given room for little reason for optimism. In the view of many observers, the NPF remains plagued by corruption ,inadequate training ,and a lack of resources, incompetence, predatory behavior, and wide spread human rights abuses have deeply alienated the force from the population, the NPF is intended to serve. However these factors have made it impossible for the NPF to develop the intelligence information necessary to anticipated and thwart electoral –related violence.

2. THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
2.1 Chaos theory

Chaos theory goes back at least as far as the late nineteenth century. Meteorologist Edward Lorenz, in an effort to increase the level of predictability of complex weather phenomena, initially described chaos as an inherent property of systems. Lorenz (1963) found that a very minor modification in weather models led to unanticipated, wildly fluctuating, and seemingly contradictory outcomes. More recently, chaos theory (CT), along with related work in the complexity sciences, catastrophe theory, and non-linear dynamic system theory, is applied broadly to the social sciences, including psychology, economics, sociology, decision-making, political science, medicine, criticism, urban development, organizational studies, and crisis communication and management.

However, most of present-day chaos theory as a unified discipline has developed since the late 1960s or early 1970s. The number of publications on chaos began increasing sharply in the early 1990s. Chaos occurs only in deterministic, nonlinear, dynamical systems. (Garnett 1997). Chaos theory, then, represents a loosely related body of concepts, including sensitive dependence on initial conditions, bifurcation, self-organization, fractals, and strange attractors, that seek to describe the behavior of non-linear systems at higher levels of complexity. Taken together, these concepts help explain both the chaotic and the organized features of complex systems which includes a political system (Sellnow, Seeger and Ulmer 2000).

Before advancing into the more precocious and advanced areas of chaos, it is necessary to touch on the basic principle that adequately describes chaos theory, the Butterfly Effect. The Butterfly Effect was vaguely understood centuries ago and is still satisfactorily portrayed in folklore: For want of a nail, the shoe was lost; For want of a shoe, the horse was lost; For want of a horse, the rider was lost; For want of a rider, the battle was lost; For want of a battle, the kingdom was lost. Small variations in initial conditions result in huge, dynamic transformations in concluding events. That is to say that there was no nail and, therefore, the kingdom was lost. A butterfly flapping its wings in Beijing could cause heavy rainfall, instead of sunshine, in New York. Two paper boats placed exactly next to each other on a river could follow two completely different routes and end up in two completely different places. These are examples of systems which display extreme sensitivity in the variation of their initial conditions. Such dynamical systems are called chaotic, and unpredictability is endemic in them.

The term chaos introduces jarring connotations into a public relations context, implying crisis, disunity, loss of control. Despite these negative connotations, however, the relatively new field

of chaos theory may help to establish some coherence within public relations situations whose salient feature is the unmanageability of public perceptions. A complex brew including physics, topology, and systems theory, chaos theory developed in the natural sciences during the 1970s, and the social sciences during the 1980s. Recent applications include epidemiology, ecology, geography, economics, and social organization (Richard Lucking 1991). In fact, chaos theory appears relevant to such a broad array of disciplines that some view it as a scientific version of postmodern-ism; a scientific metaphor for late-20thcentury cultural values of relativism, plurality, and chance (Best 1991; Hayles 1990).

The word dynamics implies force, energy, motion, or change. A dynamical system is anything that moves, changes, or evolves in time. Hence, chaos deals with what the experts like to refer to as dynamical-systems theory (the study of phenomena that vary with time) or nonlinear dynamics (the study of nonlinear movement or evolution). Motion and change go on all around us, every day. Regardless of our particular specialty, we're often interested in understanding that motion. We had also liked to forecast how something will behave over the long run and its eventual outcome. The conditions required for chaos in our physical world on the other hand, aren't yet fully known (Bergé et al. 1984: 265).

Three possible causes have been proposed: An increase in a control factor to a value high enough that chaotic, disorderly behavior sets in. The nonlinear interaction of two or more separate physical operations is another cause and the effect of ever-present environmental noise on otherwise regular motion (Wolf 1983). At the least, such noise definitely hampers our ability to analyze a time series for chaos. Chaos theory provides a particularly good model for crisis situations. Typically a crisis forms as a sequence of events that seems, over time, to gather volume and complexity with increasing speed. Its dynamic therefore resembles that of a chaotic system as it iterates through increasingly complex phases toward a disordered state. At the onset of a crisis, an organization may have power to influence events, but after a certain escalation point, it often loses this capacity.

While chaos theory offers few practical guidelines, it does suggest three caveats about intervention with highly unstable publics. First, change has to evolve within the target group itself; it cannot be imposed from outside although seeds of change may be introduced. Second, intervention works most efficiently at cri- sis points, when a group is well on the road to destabilizing on its own. Third, one should act quickly at such crisis points, lest events take their own shape, one that might be uncongenial to the organization. At this stage, however, chaos theory is more useful as an analogy than a source of practical solutions for relationships between organizations and their publics.

3. METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted uncovers the perception of people in Nigeria to the democratic regime which is currently in administration (2015). It centers on the measurement of the level of trust Nigerians have on the security sector taking the police as a yardstick. The level of their corruption is also assessed so as to draw out an inference on the probable reason why the polity in Nigeria does not trust the police (the security sector) in handling civic duties including election.

The research conducted by afro barometer round five (5) in 2012-2015 is used; validated, analyzed and interpreted. The total sample size is two-thousand four hundred (2400) participants across the country. The sample selection technique is simple proportionate purposive random sampling. Simple percentage, ration and graphical illustrations will be use to analyze the result. This research is appropriate as it reflect the true mind set of Nigeria populace on the level of trust Nigerians have on the roles the police (security agencies) played in the 2015 general election in the country. It also reveals the perceptions of the people on the extent of corruption within the security agencies.

4.   ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS
4.1 Trust the Police
This section of the analysis considered the perception of the people on the trust they have on the role of the security agencies (Police) in Nigeria especially on the 2015 general elections.

Table-1:Trust the Police

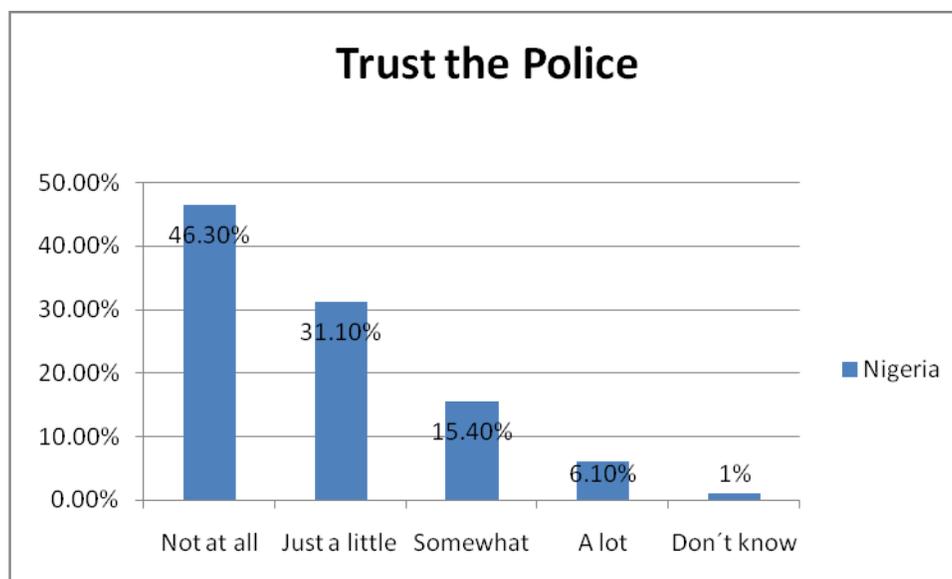| Trust the Police	Nigeria
Not at all	46.30%
Just a little	31.10%
Somewhat	15.40%
A lot	6.10%
Missing	0
Don´t know	1%

Figure-1 Trust the Police

The role the security sector in the recently concluded 2015 general elections in Nigeria cannot be underestimated. However, the measure and perception of Nigerians on the trust on the roles the police in particular took in the general has mixed feelings among the populace. About forty six Percent (46%) of the populace remarked that they do not trust the police at all. A total of

forty six percent (46%) has just a little and somewhat trust on the role of police in the general election while a fraction of six percent (6%) perceived that they had a lot of trust on the police and their roles in the general election in 2015 Nigeria. These perceptions implies that a large and significant fraction of Nigeria has little trust in the security agencies (police) in Nigeria while a little and less significant fraction has little trust in the security agencies on the conduct of the general election in 2015 and the general security of the country at large.

4.2 Corruption in Police

This section of the analysis considers the perceived reason on the factor that conditions and affect the trust of the populace on the police roles in security and the 2015general elections in Nigeria.

Table-2: Corruption in Police

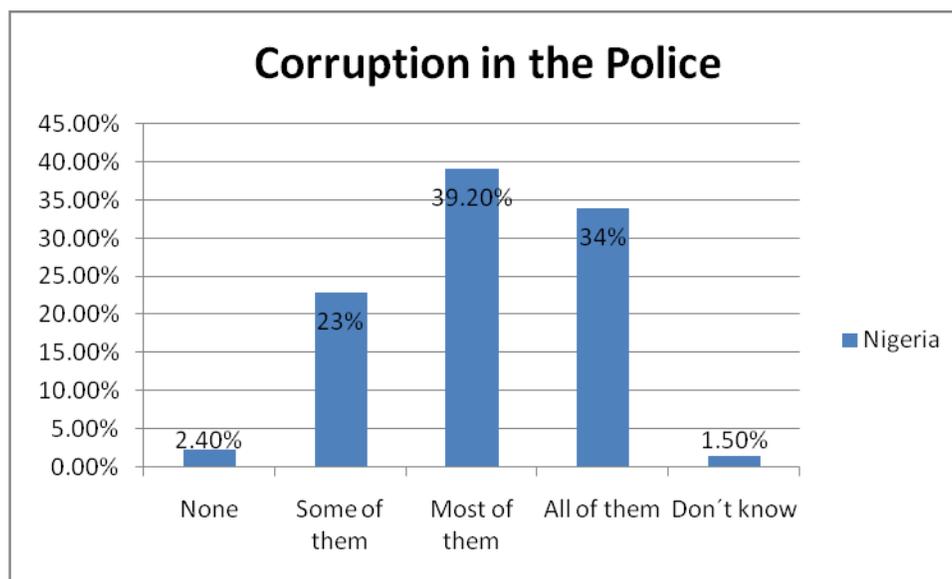| Corruption in Police	Nigeria
None	2.40%
Some of them	23%
Most of them	39.20%
All of them	34%
Missing	0%
Don´t know	1.50%

Figure-2: Corruption in Police

The role the security sector in the recently concluded 2015 general elections in Nigeria is been jeopardized by the level of corruption as perceived by the Nigerians. However, the measure and perception of Nigerians on the corruption in the police in particular took a unilateral feeling among the populace. About twenty three Percent (23%) of the populace remarked that some of the police are corrupt. A total of thirty nine percent (39%) perceived that most of the police are corrupt. Thirty four percent (34%) of Nigerians perceived that all of the police are corrupt while a fraction of about two percent (2%) perceived that none of the police is corrupt. These

perceptions imply that a large and significant fraction of Nigeria perceived that the security agencies (police) in Nigeria are corrupt and their resultant roles played in the 2015 general elections is not trusted. A little and a very less significant fraction perceived that the security agencies (police) are all corrupt free. These perceptions tells much on the personality and comportments of the police and all other security agencies in the community as not satisfactory to the populace, on the conduct of the general election in 2015 and the general security of the country at large.

5. WAY FORWARD AND CONCLUSION

There are a lot of challenges faced by the Nigeria and the electoral processes. The logistics and the security are the most challenging factors. The pre election preparation need to be adequately monitored which should be preceded by series of academic conferences of relevant issues relating to good governance, political party registration, electorates' data base build-up, election sensitization and mobilization of electorate. The Election Day preparation of voters and voting materials should be tested and satisfied good for a free and fair election.

The security units in the pre and Election Day should be seen as agents of good moral enforcement and decorum and not to be a political party supporter and anti state action perpetuators such as conniving with party agents for ballot stuff-up and ballot snatching. Also it is important for the security agents to monitor and make sure there is calmness in the polity at the post election period. The losers should be sensitized to use the appropriate medium to express their grievances such as the electoral tribunal and not destruction of lives and properties of the state. The security agents should be well equipped with the relevant equipments meant for their optimum performance such as the right uniforms and weapons.

Generally, the Nigeria election over the years had witness a tremendous improvement in the pre election preparations, Election Day affairs and the post election violence control. The role of the security agents cannot be over emphasized because without their presence at each polling units there is a high tendency of electoral violence outbreak and other election mishaps. The security agents however need to be specially trained for election and post election violence control. The image of the security agents needs to be refocused from individual centric to state centric so as to ensure a good, free and fairer elections in the subsequent elections in the country.

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