Exploring the Barriers to Human Insecurity in North-East Nigeria (2019-2023)

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Abstract
This study examines the barriers to human security in Northeast Nigeria, highlighting the threats faced by the population, including food insecurity, crimes, terrorism, organized crime, poverty, environmental factors, and violent crimes such as the Boko Haram insurgency between 20019 and 2023. The primary objective of this article is to identify the barriers to human security. To achieve this, a qualitative methodology was employed, utilizing secondary data sources and discourse analysis to discuss the findings. The findings indicate that economic, health, environmental, personal, community, and political insecurities are prevalent in the study area. For instance, individuals and households lack access to basic income, including salaries, wages, public funds, and adequate food. The findings reveal that poverty, hunger, social injustice, and income inequalities significantly affect the population. Additionally, increased cases of physical injuries, trauma, and death are common during conflicts. Forced displacement leads to people living in camps with inadequate basic human needs, such as clean water, sanitation, shelter, food, and medications. Ecological destruction threatens humanity, leading to resource scarcity and loss of livelihoods. The study recommends that policymakers urgently adopt a multifaceted approach involving regional cooperation, community involvement, and regulatory reforms to address these obstacles.

Keywords: Barriers, Human Insecurity, Northeast Nigeria, Secondary Data

1. Introduction

The Global Institute for Economics and Peace reported that Boko Haram insurgents were responsible for the deaths of 6,644 people in 2014, significantly contributing to human insecurity and making Northeast Nigeria one of the most insecure areas globally (Adamu & Rasheed, 2016). The activities of these terrorists have caused one of the worst humanitarian crises in the country's history (Hamid et al., 2017). Consequently, numerous threats to human security have emerged, including food insecurity, crimes, terrorism, organized crime, poverty, environmental factors, and violent crimes, particularly the Boko Haram insurgency.

Between 2009 and 2023, Northeast Nigeria suffered severe human security issues, such as the devastation caused by Boko Haram's insurgency and kidnappings. Human rights abuses, food insecurity, and mass displacement have resulted from these conflicts. Understanding the human security obstacles in this area is essential to developing workable solutions. Despite efforts to address the humanitarian situation, human insecurity continues to persist in Northeast Nigeria, exacerbating the suffering of vulnerable communities. Food insecurity, displacement, and severe human rights violations have been intensified by the ongoing Boko Haram insurgency, abductions, and environmental destruction.

This study investigates the obstacles to human security in Northeast Nigeria between 2009 and 2023, examining the various factors that hinder the resolution of these issues (Adamu & Rasheed, 2016). The seriousness and complexity of the human security situation in Northeast

Nigeria prompted the conduct of this study. Despite efforts to mitigate violence, displacement, and humanitarian needs, this study aims to educate policymakers, practitioners, and academics by identifying and evaluating these problems, ultimately aiding in the creation of evidence-based plans to improve human security in the area. The results also offer valuable insights for addressing similar issues in other conflict-affected contexts.

Introduction

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Several studies have examined the human security challenges in Northeast Nigeria. For instance, Adamu and Rasheed (2016) highlighted the significant impact of Boko Haram insurgency on human security, while Hamid et al. (2017) discussed the broader humanitarian crisis resulting from terrorist activities. These studies provide a foundation for understanding the multifaceted nature of insecurity in the region.

The current state of knowledge indicates that human security in Northeast Nigeria is influenced by a complex interplay of factors, including socio-economic disparities, political instability, and environmental degradation. Ongoing debates focus on the effectiveness of government and international interventions in addressing these challenges. Some scholars argue that existing strategies are insufficient and call for more comprehensive and context-specific approaches.

Despite the extensive research on human security in Northeast Nigeria, there is a gap in understanding the specific barriers that hinder the achievement of sustainable security. Most studies have focused on the impact of insurgency and violence, with limited attention to other contributing factors such as environmental issues and socio-economic inequalities. This study aims to fill this gap by providing a holistic analysis of the barriers to human security in the region.

The seriousness and complexity of the human security situation in Northeast Nigeria prompted the conduct of this study. Despite efforts to mitigate violence, displacement, and humanitarian needs, human insecurity persists, exacerbating the suffering of vulnerable communities. This study aims to educate policymakers, practitioners, and academics by identifying and evaluating these problems, ultimately aiding in the creation of evidence-based plans to improve human security in the area. The results also offer valuable insights for addressing similar issues in other conflict-affected contexts.

In achieving this, the study seeks to examine the barriers to human security in Northeast Nigeria. The research question posed is: What are the obstacles to human security in the study area? The article is structured into the following sections: abstract, introduction, literature review, theoretical framework, methodology, results, discussion, recommendations, conclusion, and references.

2. Literature Review

This section of the study reviewed the related and previous studies on the phenomenon of human insecurity, characteristics of human insecurity, and dimensions among others.

Human Security

Human security is defined as the ability to fend off socioeconomic dangers, such as poverty, hunger, pollution, and diseases, and access to a wide range of public services, wages, employment, income, shelter, health care, and education. According to Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy (2007), several forms of structural violence affect personal security, including intimidation, violence, anxiety, worry of having shoddy access to healthcare, fear of losing one's work, cross-border crime, terrorism, state torture, abuse of children, domestic violence, suicide threats, and more. Environmental hazards are risks to the atmosphere posed by the destruction of natural resources, which has an impact on humans and increases susceptibility to contamination, which causes shortages of food and water. Political dangers correspondingly include harm to civil rights and human rights restrictions as a result of armed conflicts. Inadequate enforcement, an imperfect legal framework, irresponsible actions by dishonest public officials and civil servants, and institutional instability (Tadjbakhsh & Chenoy, 2007).

Characteristics of Human Security

Evans (2004) listed some qualities that make someone feel secure. First, there is a decent correlation between the level of security thinking and local realities in terms of human security. Its adaptability to indigenous traditions of human dignity, its connection to developmental challenges, and its reference to security that encompasses both persons and communities are its strongest points. It contributed to the change from the regime's ideological or national basis. Second, the broader idea is simpler to accept. This is demonstrated by the 1954 human security developmental challenges, which include communicable diseases, poverty, inequality, cross-border pollution, drug and people trafficking, and climate change. Thirdly, the field of human security is still lacking. Officials and political figures participating in global diplomacy are followed by academics, and civil society organizations have just lately emerged.

Ghana's economy has proven resilient, yet it still confronts difficulties. The World Bank (2023) reports that following a decline in GDP growth in 2022, Ghana's GDP growth resumed at 3.8% in 2023. But the nation has been suffering from excessive inflation, which reached a peak of 54.1% in December 2022 before progressively falling.

According to the Kenya Forest Service (2023), reforestation efforts and community-based forest management programs have increased forest cover from 7.2% in 2010 to 8.8% in 2023.

Ogutu et al. (2024) highlight the ongoing challenge of wildlife conservation, noting that while poaching has decreased, human-wildlife conflict has intensified due to habitat loss and climate change impacts.

Dimension of Human Insecurity

Literature has indicated seven characteristics of human security, firstly, economic security in terms of unemployment and requirements for social and public safety. Second, access to food, both financially and physically. Thirdly, health security includes things like having access to public health initiatives and private medical treatment. Fourth, resource and environmental degradation, safety against natural disasters, and environmental security. Fifth, personal safety, protection from violations of human rights, violent disputes, marital disputes, maltreatment of children, self-harm, violence, and criminal activity. Ethnic conflicts and community security rank sixth. Last but not least, political security includes being free from tyranny by the state (Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy, 2007).

Global Human Security

The expansion of global markets has created an environment that undermines human security as nations, businesses, and individuals compete with one another to

lessen their own economic efficacy. Monetary instability, a lack of job security, murders, violent crimes, and conflicts all surfaced. Surprisingly, there are insufficient international corporations protecting social safety and human security everywhere. As a result, stronger global alliances between nations, NGOs, and businesses are needed (Fukuda-Parr, 2003). Human security is a multidimensional phenomenon which manifested across the globe with notation on food, health, economy, environmental, community, personal, political security among other elements of the well-being of humanity (UNDP, 1994). The perils of human insecurity in Greece, Jordan, Austria, Costa Rica, Slovenia, Mali, Ireland, Thailand, the Netherlands, and Norway, have made efforts to support measures that pose a threat to violent crimes, violations of human rights, regulation of small arms, child protection, climate change, human rights education, and issues related to poverty (Fukuda-Parr & Messineo, 2012). Across the globe, India still faces major obstacles to food and economic security despite its fast-economic expansion. While India has made strides in lowering absolute poverty, inequality is still a significant worry, according to Drèze and Sen (2013). The persistently high rates of child malnutrition raise serious concerns about the nation's nutritional outcomes performance.

Human Security in Africa

The continent's multifaceted challenges in the stages of human security and development were handled through a cooperative and supportive approach to human security in Africa. Organizations and associations as a whole embraced the ways to issues, occasions, and attire (Nana, Neil & Joao, 2007). The African Union (AU), the New Economic Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), and other regional economic organizations were subsequently established. The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) has now been

voluntarily accepted by twenty-five nations, and proceedings have already been started with Senegal, Tanzania, Ghana, Madagascar, Kenya, Nigeria, and Malawi. Additionally, the regions that were considered acceptable were threatened by insurrection, chaos within the country, rebellion, and other forms of chaos, particularly Liberia, Senegal, Ghana, Sudan, Nigeria, and Ethiopia. Chad, Somalia, and Uganda (Nana, Neil & Joao, 2007).

For instance, Mali confronts challenges to human security, especially concerning conflict and environmental vulnerability; Political and Individual Security, Political turbulence and continuing warfare have a serious adverse effect on human security in numerous ways (International Crisis Group, 2023). Nutrition insecurity is made worse by conflict and environmental change, especially in rural areas (FAO, 2023). High rates of poverty and a lack of economic potential continue to be major problems, particularly for youngsters (World Bank, 2023).

Human Insecurity in Nigeria

Nigeria is considered to be among the world's poorest developing nations; it scores poorly on socioeconomic measures such as life expectancy, death rate, crime rate, and access to water (Ewetan & Urhie, 2014). Furthermore, Ewhrudjakpor (2008) contended that despite Nigeria's substantial oil wealth—roughly 70% of the country's total, the country's socioeconomic foundation was poor and poverty persisted. Despite the several manifestations of human insecurity in the country. The north east faces regional disparity and culmination of poverty and unemployment, low education, inequality, inadequate infrastructure, proliferation of small arms, religious issues, bad governance, the failure of the government to address the needs of the masses and the insecurity bedevilling the area (Muhammed 2013). Similarly, the insecurity especially insurgency in the northeast Nigeria has causes the death of

twenty-seven thousand people and two million displaced people between the years 2009 and 2018. The effects had damaged properties worth nine million Dollars (NAN 2016).

Empirical Review

This section of the study discusses the viewpoint of literature on the phenomenon under study for instance Ogunode, et al, (2021) outline various manifestations of insecurity in Nigeria consist of militancy in the Niger Delta, farmers-harder's clashes, ethnic conflicts, kidnappings, religious misfortune, robbery, mob attacks, ritual killings involving, mob attacks, policy brutality and extra-judicial killings constituted to human insecurity in Nigeria. Furthermore, Nigeria has had several conflicts, such as the terrorist activities in the Niger Delta, farmer-herder disputes, and the Boko Haram insurgency. Significant problems with human security have arisen from these conflicts, including violence, displacement, and violations of human rights. Climate Change: Nigeria has been severely impacted by climate change, especially in terms of drought, flooding, and desertification. Food hunger, water scarcity, and relocation have resulted from the country's increased susceptibility to climate change, which has also intensified social, economic, and political problems. Economic Inequalities: With large differences in income, access to healthcare, and education, Nigeria is among the most unequal nations in the world. Poverty, social unrest, and human insecurity have all been exacerbated by economic inequality.

Theoretical Framework

Resilience theory is a conceptual framework that studies how well people, groups, and systems can tolerate hardship, adjust to change, and heal from trauma or adversity. It is also referred to as Resilience Framework or Resilience Approach. The theory's applications include: i. Disaster Risk Reduction Recognizing a community's ability to withstand natural disasters ii. Ecosystem Management: Managing ecological resilience to environmental changes iii. Mental Health: Fostering individual resilience to trauma and stress i.v Organizational Development: Creating organizations that can withstand uncertainty and change. Researchers and practitioners can better address the complex issues that affect people, communities, and systems and encourage resilience in the face of adversity by having a working knowledge of resilience theory. This theory examines the resilience of communities in North East Nigeria in the face of human insecurity. It analyzes the key factors that enhance resilience, including social support networks, capacity building, and self-organization. The theory also investigates how human insecurity affects individual and community resilience and identifies effective strategies to strengthen resilience and promote sustainable peace in the region. By exploring these dynamics, this theory aims to deepen our understanding of how individuals and communities in North East Nigeria cope with and adapt to human insecurity, and how to better support their resilience and well-being.

Pfefferbaum, B., Wyche, K. F., Stevens, S. P., Norris, F. H., & Pfefferbaum, R. L. (2008) & Holling, C. S. (1973).

3. Methodology

The study applied a qualitative research approach. This approach was chosen to learn more about the phenomenon under study. The research was conducted in the northeast specifically Bauchi, Borno, and Yobe states. The data was collected from secondary sources, particularly from the published and unpublished thesis, conference proceedings, journal articles, and other relevant secondary literature. The data collected was analyzed through discourse analysis.

4. Discussions of Findings

The results explored economic insecurity, health insecurity, environmental, personal, community and political insecurity. Firstly,

economic insecurity includes a lack of access by individuals and households to basic income especially salaries, wages, public funds, and self-employment (Stewart, 2016). The second barrier to human security discovered is food insecurity it is inadequate access to food and the required nutrition readily available to individuals for intake to offer them the opportunity to undertake their daily activities (Lawal and Mbiba 2020). The report of the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Food Programme indicated that 795 million people worldwide lack access to food to live a healthy life. Specifically, developing countries account for a higher portion of malnourished people due to inadequate food (FAO, IFAD, and WFP 2015). Similarly, Health insecurity was also explored as a threat to human security. These are the practices that lead to the loss of significant lives due to parasitic and infectious diseases across the globe. These are caused by malnutrition, conflicts, unhealthy environmental practices, and other lifestyle detrimental to healthy living. Health insecurity is a global threat to humanity, it defers according to region, age, type, and income groups. Statistics indicate that the mortality rate is higher in developing countries and low-income regions. (UN 2013; Population Report Bureau 2014; Lawal and Mbiba 2020). Categorically, poverty, hunger, social injustice, and income inequalities affect health security. Similarly, health challenges situation worsens during conflict due to the increased risk of infectious diseases, mobility, and transmission. Other include increased cases of physical injuries, trauma, and death are very common during conflicts. Force displacement leads to people living in camps with inadequate basic human needs especially clean water, sanitation, shelter, food, and medications (Gayer et al. 2007; Mowafi 2011). Personal insecurity implies protecting and empowering individuals against physical violence and empowering

individuals against physical injury or violence. This threat to individual security or safety of the people comes in many forms particularly, militarization, group gangs, based on age or gender, and even own self (Lawal and Mbiba 2020). Categorically, threats come in the form of harassment, extra-judicial killing, torture, and state-sponsored assassination. For instance, the abuses of human rights and other killings carried out by Shiites and Boko Haram groups constituted a significant threat to personal safeguard by individuals in Nigeria (Alao 2013; Zenn and Pearson 2014). Furthermore, community insecurity entails a lack of protection who share a particular communal identity from concrete or immaterial harm to their affiliation (political, racial, ethnic religious cultural, demographic, or gender) these has often. The vulnerability from these stems of protection and security derivable from being associated with some culture or community either ethnic or religious groups and other social communities especially cooperative clubs and youth movements as a result of social benefit (HDR 1994; Lawal and Mbiba 2020). Community security might be threatened by the state, foreign nation or persons and groups (McLean, 2009) categorically, community security deals with freedom from fear and want (socioeconomic opportunities) in which individuals' lives and livelihoods are in risk due to their relationships. These pressures may manifest in many instances through torture, intentional political alienation, and hatred. Community insecurity has caused disagreement as a result of ethnic rivalry and the struggle for power, extremism, religious intolerance, gender, social inequality, child abuse, and violence (Caballero-Anthony 2015; Christensen 2018).

Environmental insecurity is a contemporary challenge and complex. These are caused by unexpected or long-term alterations of the natural environment due to inhuman processes and human adverse practices on

the ecosystem. Threats to the environment are evident in many forms of pollution (water and air) global warming, drought, degradation, desertification, marine destabilization, and disappearance of different species from the ecosystem (Elliot, 2015) environmental destructions cause danger to human security and safety through propelling health challenges, resource disappearance, scarcity and loss of livelihoods. These uncertainties and environmental destruction threaten human security and safety in such a way that they create vulnerabilities through health challenges, exhibit poverty, resource depletion and scarcity, and loss of livelihoods (Ohlsson, 2000).

The results indicated that health insecurity was also explored as a threat to human security. This is the practices that lead to the loss of significant lives due to parasitic and infectious diseases across the globe. These are caused by malnutrition, conflicts, unhealthy environmental practices and other lifestyle detrimental to a healthy living. Literature agreed with the aforementioned threats, it further attested and identified seven categories to dangers in the aspect of the economic, food, health, personal, environmental, community, and political threats which causes dangers the livelihood of people (Bariledum, 2013).

Categorically, threats come in the form of harassment, extra-judicial killing, torture and state-sponsored assassination. For instance, the abuses of human rights and other killings carried out by Shiites and Boko Haram groups constituted a significant threat to personal safeguard by individuals in Nigeria are examples of personal insecurity. Previous studies upheld the results and indicated that these insecurities differ in many connotations especially chronic and absolute poverty, human trafficking, armed violence, health pandemic, weak civil-military relations, political exclusion, and sudden economic downturns were revealed as interconnected to human insecurity (Akokpari, 2007).

Community insecurity entails a lack of protection who share a particular communal identity from concrete or immaterial harm to their affiliation (political, racial, ethnic religion cultural, demographic or gender) these has often occurred. The threats to the environment are evident in many forms of pollution (water and air) global warming, drought, degradation, desertification, marine destabilization and disappearance of different specifies from the ecosystem. Previous studies indicated that the northern part of the country displays different manifestations of human insecurity for instance 71 percent of the people live in abject poverty, with many cases of malnourishment, illiteracy, and a high rate of unemployment. These parameters had further culminated in poor governance and socioeconomic disparities; thus, establishing the jeopardy of human security (Adamu & Rasheed, 2016). Despite the Boko Haram insurgency in the north east, other parts of the country equally suffered from militancy and kidnapping in the south east; herdsmen-farmers mayhem constituted another serious threat to human security in the north-central, Nigeria; militancy in south-south; separatism in the south east; agitation for resource control and ethnoreligious conflicts; Oodua People's Congress in the south west, paradoxically, the country is culminated by human insecurity theatre (Adeola & Gafar, 2020).

Summary
The expansion of global markets has created an environment that undermines human security as nations, businesses, and individuals compete with one another to lessen their own economic efficacy. Monetary instability, a lack of job security, murders, violent crimes, and conflicts all surfaced. Surprisingly, insufficient international corporations are protecting social safety and human security everywhere. As a result, stronger global alliances between nations, NGOs, and businesses are needed (Fukuda-Parr, 2003). The recurrences of threats to human security

especially in Nigeria through threats come in the form of harassment, extra-judicial killing, torture, and state-sponsored assassination. For instance, the abuses of human rights and other killings carried out by Shiites and Boko Haram groups constituted a significant threat to human security safeguard by individuals.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations
Conclusion
The study concluded that the barriers to human security especially, the economic, social, political, health, and environmental insecurities were discovered in the study area, and the cases of physical injuries, trauma, and death are very common during conflicts. Force displacement leads to people living in camps with inadequate basic human needs spotless water, sanitation, shelter, food, and medications. The Boko Haram insurgency became a danger to national security and the parameters of all aspects of human well-being. viewed that the spread of diseases, unemployment, hunger, food insecurity, displacements, violation of human rights, shelter, political repression, conflicts, and environmental degradation undermined the insurgents.

Recommendations
This study recommended the following, firstly, political officeholders should embrace the principle of good governance through public accountability, transparency, the rule of law, and openness in managing the affairs of the state for effective and efficient service delivery. The government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the governments of the Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, and Yobe states should initiate regional programmes for environmental, health, and community initiatives to address these barriers to human security. Secondly, a multifaceted approach that includes regional cooperation, community involvement, and regulatory reforms to remove these obstacles. By examining the complexities of human insecurity in north-east Nigeria. Lastly, at the level of individuals, the study suggested coping strategies by individuals through initiative, hard work, and industrious exhibition to overcome personal insecurity. The study's insights into the complexities of human insecurity can aid in long-term planning and development efforts. By addressing the underlying factors contributing to insecurity, stakeholders can work towards creating a more stable and secure environment for future generations. These implications highlight the multifaceted impact of the study, offering valuable insights and actionable recommendations for various stakeholders involved in addressing human security in Northeast Nigeria.

Acknowledgment

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