Migration, Porous Borders and Insecurity in Nigeria

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Abstract:

This study's objective was to examine the role of porous borders on insecurity in the West African sub-region with emphasis on Nigeria. It has been noted that the porousness of the borders in West Africa is a major cause for worry since it has given birth to organised crime groups that have used the lax border security to engage in a variety of transnational criminal activities. In-depth interviews with key informants and documentary evidence from secondary sources served as the study's data sources. The push-pull hypothesis and the social disorganisation theory were both used to explain this research. The results of this research showed that transnational migration has a detrimental effect on Nigeria's degree of insecurity. It should be stressed that this in no way absolves the government from its inability to offer effective governance that may divert people's attention from committing or participating in crime. The governments of ECOWAS member nations have been advised, among other things, to put in place the necessary steps to guarantee that our borders are effectively safeguarded in light of the aforementioned conclusions. Accordingly, government of countries in the subregion should ensure that they do their part of the bargain by providing a safe and secure environment for business to thrive.

Keywords: Borders, Crime, Insecurity, Migration and Trafficking.

Introduction

The porosity of African borders had been one major issue affecting the development of the continent, West Africa in particular. For instance, the porosity of Nigeria's borders spans a total land mass of 923,768 square kilometers has remained a source of concern over the years (Adeola & Fayomi, 2012). These have contributed and continued to encourage cross-border crimes (Akinyemi, 2013). The nature of the Nigerian borders makes it unparalleled in Africa for its complexity and dynamism. According to the 2015 Report of Royal Institute of International Affairs, Nigeria shares land borders of 773 km with Benin, 1,497 km with Niger, 87 km with Chad and 1,690 km with Cameroon. Policing of the vast boundary is therefore a task beyond the control of one state agency (Jatau, 2014).

There is no effective policy to curtail the rate at which people migrate and transact trade without being duly checked at the borders. Various scholars have researched on the safety at the borders and likewise the rate at which crimes are perpetrated but adequate attention is not given to the security personnel across the border areas. Furthermore, the challenges of cross-border crime on the security of Nigeria are not adequately researched upon especially with the current trend in the international community terrorism. The porosity of the borders in West Africa poses a serious concern as it has

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given rise to criminal syndicates who have taken advantage of the weak security network at the borders to perpetrate all sorts of trans-border criminal activities like smuggling of banned items, crossing over of stolen items/goods, trafficking of drugs/humans, arms dealings, etc.

International and domestic organised crimes pose a severe danger to the growth and stability of nations and the whole world. As a result, throughout the last three decades, governments, groups, academics, and individuals from all over the globe have shown interest in and worry about the expansion and effects of organised crime in various regions of the world. Since the middle of the 1980s, the rise and expansion of drug trafficking, money laundering, human and weapons trafficking, theft of natural resources, and piracy have drawn the attention and action of several nations and organisations.

The ease of entry across what Osimen *et al.*, (2017) refer to as "borderless borders" continues to be a source of worry in the area, as was before noted. Worse still, since the majority of these nations in the area are members of the Economic Community of West African States, syndicates frequently operate under the cover of the ECOWAS Free Trade Area (FTA) Protocol, which greatly simplifies the free flow of people, goods, and services. This turns into a gap through which trans-border gangs continue organised crimes like smuggling, drug and human trafficking, car theft across borders, and the spread of small arms, among other crimes (Obot, 2004, Ogene, 2013). All of these crimes have serious repercussions for the insecurity of the nations in the region.

There is no question that the phenomena of crime in modern society have stifled the development of international relations. Because criminals often organise their assaults months or even years in advance, it might be difficult to identify the parent area of the crimes. Crimes that are often committed in a certain area typically have connections to another nation outside. The effectiveness of crimes that take place in Benin Republic often depends on connections with people in Nigeria. For instance, sellers in the Benin Republic are often willing to sell automobiles that are typically stolen in Nigeria (Martin, 2017). This makes it difficult to locate and recover, which raises the rate of crime.

Trans-border crime rate is rising in modern time especially with porous borders and unpatriotic activities of security agencies and this has been a major problem to security condition of countries in relation to other countries. The co-option of government officials into criminality in Nigeria has debased the country's institutional efficacy and responsiveness and this is another major implication of criminal business on Nigeria's security. It is in response to this that Aning (2010) cited in Aning and Pokoo (2014) points out that well placed officials of government were found to be involved in several cases of cocaine and heroin trafficking seizures in the late 2000s, noting that both formal and traditional security systems in West Africa are parties to trans-national criminal networks.

Another major risk posed to the country by these criminal enterprises is the defamation of the nation's character. Morgentau (1949) cited in Ukpong (2017) describes the national character as those fundamental intellectual and moral characteristics which are expressed at all levels of thoughts and deeds, giving every nation an unmistakable distinctiveness. These criminal businesses portray Nigeria in bad light and create an erroneous impression that the country is incapable of maintaining security and providing for their citizens especially in terms of employment and social welfare (Njoku, 2015).

From the foregoing, the problem of this study is to examine the role of porous borders on insecurity in the West African sub-region with emphasis on Nigeria. This study also interrogates the effects of the crimes on Nigeria's security and the possible solutions that can be employed to curb the situation.

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Literature Review

Borders

The concept of border has been described in different perspective by different scholars with related terms of meanings and ideas. According to Momoh (1989), a border can be a margin around the edge of something, such as a lawn, garden photograph, and sheet of paper even a country. It could also be seen as a line or narrow area that divides two countries or areas; the lands near this line. In a broad sense, borders define geographic boundaries of political entities or legal jurisdictions, such as governments, sovereign states, federated states, and other sub national entities (Edward, 2012).

Meagher (2003) argued that under international law, each country is generally permitted to define the conditions which have to be met by a person to legally cross its borders by its own laws, and to prevent persons from crossing its border, when these laws are violated adequate sanctions are applied. In order to cross borders, the presentation of passports and visas or other appropriate forms of identification are required by immigration. Also to reside or work within a country's border, foreigners may need special immigration documents or permits that authorize them to do so.

Three types of borderlands were identified by Momoh (1989) and Afolayan (2000), based on the level and pattern or movement and trading activities within each of the borderlands. These are:

i. Closed, inert or zero borderlands.

ii. Open, transit or minimal borderlands.

iii. Porous 'nation-peripheral' or maximal borderlands.

The international border between Nigeria and her neighboring countries is roughly 4745sq.km. The major border countries with Nigeria are Cameroon (1,690 kilometers) in the east, Niger (1,497 kilometers) in the north, Benin (773 kilometers) in the west, and Chad (87 kilometers) in the north-east. Nigeria also shares maritime boundaries with Equatorial Guinea and Sao Tome and Principle. The current border corresponds to the inter-colonial border between British and French territories that was set up in 1889. Due to the fact that between these countries hardly any natural boundaries exist, in some parts its exact demarcation remains unclear (Osimen *et al.*, 2017).

It would be difficult to find any state in the world capable of effectively controlling such extensive borders. The porous nature of these border lines and fears of its attendant consequences have for the past few decades made the Nigerian government to show commitment in bringing to an end the issue of porous borders and illegal activities committed through the national borders by closing the illegal borders and strengthening the security agencies charged with border control. Despite efforts of the government, smuggling activities, proliferation of arms and ammunition, drugs and human trafficking etc, have been on the rise (National Bureau of Statistics, 2018).

Insecurity

The concept of insecurity would be best understood by first presenting the concept of security. In the view of Akin (2008) security refers to "the situation that exists as a result of the establishment of measures for the protection of persons, information and property against hostile persons, influences and actions". Beland (2005) defined insecurity as "the state of fear or anxiety stemming from a concrete or alleged lack of protection." It refers to lack or inadequate freedom from danger. This definition reflects physical insecurity which is the most visible form of insecurity, and it feeds into many other forms of insecurity such as economic security and social security. Two views are of essence to this paper. First, insecurity as the state of being open or subject to danger or threat of danger,

where danger is the condition of being susceptible to harm or injury, and secondly, insecurity as the state of being exposed to risk or anxiety, where anxiety is a vague unpleasant emotion that is experienced in anticipation of some misfortune. A major point about insecurity implied in these definitions is that those affected by insecurity are not only uncertain or unaware of what would happen but they are also not able to stop it or protect themselves when it happens.

Empirical Literature

Segun & Ufuoma (2018) looked at the effects of Nigeria's porous borders on national security. Nigeria's borders are porous, permitting all kinds of cross-border criminal activity such as illegal migration, terrorism, and insurgency; in spite of the country's border security services' best attempts to keep the borders secure. This research investigates the herdsmen and their assaults on several rural villages in Nigeria against this background. Does Nigeria's national security suffer as a result of its porous borders, which allow innumerable illegal immigrants—including herders from Chad—to enter the country? The paper explores the security issues created by the transnational operations of Fulani herders in Nigeria, using the fragile state concept as a theoretical compass. Secondary sources were employed to collect the data, which was then analysed using textual analysis. According to the report, Nigeria's national security is at risk due to the herdsmen's recent outbreak of cross-border actions, including the death of innocent locals and the damage of agricultural products. The report suggests, among other things, the need for efficient border surveillance to stop unauthorised immigrants from jeopardising Nigeria's security.

Illegal Trans-Border Migration in Nigeria: Implications for Nigerian National Security was addressed by Goyin, John, and Micah in 2019. The study's goal was to identify the numerous problems caused by unlawful cross-border migration and how they have an adverse effect on Nigeria's national security and continue to do so. This occurrence was linked by the research to global and African forces. The African factors are poverty, unemployment, better job opportunities, permeable borders, insufficient manpower, a lack of logistics and critical facilities, and low law enforcement agent motivation, while the global factors are authoritarian regimes, political instability, and environmental factors. Due to the connections between illegal immigration and organised crime, the terrorist network, and human and drug trafficking, this practise has an impact on national security. Once more, it encourages illegal immigration-related activities including gang violence, prostitution of women, and the smuggling of weapons. It also results in increased costs for the destination and tarnishes the image of the migrants' home country. The following were suggested as potential remedies by the paper: building border plazas; providing law enforcement personnel with the necessary technology and logistical support for better performance; inspiring staff to work efficiently; and, most importantly, demonstrating political commitment by the government to ensure sanity in Nigerian borders.

In Nigeria and the Benin Republic, Ezeabasili and Nwanolue (2021) looked at the relationship between cross-border migration and food security. The research included secondary data from organisations including the National Bureau of Statistics, the World Bank, the International Organisation for Migration, and the International Organisation for Food and Agricultural Organisations, to name a few. The study's theoretical underpinning was classical migration theory, and descriptive statistics and the Pearson correlation coefficient were used to examine the data. According to the study's results, there is a marginally negative link between cross-border migration and food spending in Nigeria and the Benin Republic as well as a marginally positive association between cross-border migration and the index of food production in those two countries. According to the study's findings, there is no discernible link between food security in

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Nigeria and the Benin Republic and cross-border migration. The report also suggested that the governments of Nigeria and the Benin Republic support and expand the economic alternatives available to the rural people beyond farming, foster fiscal linkages between the rural and urban areas, and make investments in sectors of the economy that would provide greater economic prospects.

Okoye (2022) undertook a study on Cross-border migration and human security in Nigeria. Examining international migration and financial stability in Nigeria was the major goal of the study. Descriptive and content approaches were used to assess the data that had been gathered. The theoretical foundation for this investigation was classical migration theory. The research found that immigration from abroad did not reduce impoverishment in Nigeria but instead aided in the development of illnesses including the Ebola virus disease and the Hydro Immune Virus within women. Once again, the ECOWAS protocol's facilitation of cross-border movement increased the prevalence of cross-border crime in Nigeria. The research came to the conclusion that movement across borders did not increase financial stability but rather exacerbated poverty rates, aided in the spread of illnesses, and increased the frequency of cross-border crime in Nigeria. Based on the findings, the study advised the Nigerian government to control migration by developing policies that aims to tackle migrant flow and illegal migration, lessen youth migration by fostering an environment that is conducive to learning and business, and provide infrastructure facilities, among other things.

Theoretical Framework

The social disorganisation theory (Shaw & McKay, 1942), the push-pull theories (Lee, 1966), and the neo-classical migration theory (Castle and Miller, 2009) are the theoretical frameworks used to describe this research.

The Social Disorganization Theory

Shaw and McKay (1942) were among the first to propose the social disorganisation hypothesis. According to the theory's central assumption (Worrad, 2000), crime arises when social control systems are undermined and rendered ineffective. According to the hypothesis, disorganised societies are typified by social instability, decreased economic stability, and racial and ethnic diversity. The decisions a person will make about their conduct are mostly influenced by their physical and social settings. A area with weak social structures in particular is more likely to have high crime rates.

Social disorganisation is the breakdown of a person's typical and routine manner of living. According to Igbo (2007), this is often a moment of perplexity, disorientation, and disappointment. When the social link that binds a people and their society together weakens or is shattered by new ideas and practises, this is the topic of Achebe's Things Fall Apart (1958). Theorists of social disorganisation contend that crime and other deviant conduct always rise whenever and wherever there is social disorganisation.

For the purposes of this research, Lee's "Push-Pull" theory of migration (1966) and Castle and Miller's (2009) neo-classical migration theory were taken into account. According to Lee, the push and pull forces are two primary elements that cause migrations. Push factors are aspects that make one's current location undesirable, while pull factors are those that make one want to move to a different location. Some of the push factors include: a lack of jobs, limited opportunities, primitive living conditions, desertification, famine or drought, political fear or persecution, slavery or forced labour, loss of wealth, natural disasters, death threats, lack of political or religious freedom, pollution, poor housing, landlord/tenant problems, bullying, discrimination, low chances of getting married, condemned housing, and war. The pull factors include: job opportunities, befriending others, and peace and harmony.

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Similar to this, Castle and Miller's (2009) Neo-classical migratory Theory makes the same assumption about a push-pull paradigm to explain migratory variables. Neo-classical theories assign the reason for migration to the push forces. This refers to the immigrant's reason for leaving their own nation. The appeal to certain destination nations is referred to as the pull factors. The common consensus is that pull forces are related to labour needs, land availability, improved economic prospects, and political freedom, whereas push factors are influenced by population growth, poor living standards, a lack of economic opportunities, and political repression. The neo-classical theory made the broad assumption that regional differences in the supply and demand for labour would lead to migration flows, and that these flows would gradually equalise conditions and wages between developing and underdeveloped nations, eventually bringing about economic equilibrium. They also argue that migrants from transitional nations, which are experiencing economic and social development, are often persons of intermediate social standing rather than the lowest residents of emerging countries.

According to Zanabazar *et al.*, (2021), there are several pull and push variables that affect migration. The elements that draw migrants to a place or nation are referred to as pull factors. For instance, economic considerations like work possibilities, better housing, and improved standards of life are variables that influence migration. Social and political considerations such as improved healthcare facilities, religious tolerance, and freedom from retaliation are also pull factors. Economic issues including unemployment, poor living standards, and a lack of food and shelter are additional push factors that have an impact on migration throughout the globe (Khalid and Urbanski, 2021). Lack of access to healthcare and intolerance of other religions are two societal variables that affect migration. Aspects of conflict and terrorism, unjust legal systems, and a lack of political tolerance are other political push factors that affect migration (Urbanski, 2022).

Table 1: Tabular presentation of Push-Pull factors

Area	Push Factors	Pull Factors
Economic	Inequality Unemployment lower pay inadequate fundamental health high rates of pregnancy inadequate basic education	opportunities for better pay better living conditions a person's growth work possibilities exemplary welfare norms demands for labour
Social	Discrimination inadequate health care societal unrest inadequate systems of education population expansion	the reunion of families ethnonational home freedom from prejudice Better Medicare benefits from the welfare state
Political	Disputes Corruption poor leadership misuse of human rights bad leadership Terrorism	Security and safety Political liberty Democracy Political steadfastness civil rights of people

Source: Zanabazar et al. (2021).

Applying the social disorganisation theory to this research, it is important to emphasise that aberrant acts are allowed in any society that lacks agenda setting with relation to recognised social norms and conduct, particularly in public service. Deviant behaviours have a tendency to gain acceptance when they persist for a long period. For instance, the terrible socioeconomic circumstances of the nation further encourage the different cross-border crimes committed by syndicates. People from many walks of life may be readily persuaded to commit crimes and engage in a variety of deviant behaviours, such as aiding and abetting criminal activity at the border, because to this disease.

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The social disorganisation hypothesis is helpful because it examines the need for social structure to be strengthened in order to reduce the problems posed by cross-border crime. It is also pertinent because it urges the Nigerian government to critically assess the social structure of Nigerian borderlines, guarantee the sustainability of local means of subsistence, and address the most pressing infrastructural needs of the populace to prevent them from being forced to engage in cross-border crime. It is important to remember that living a life of crime because of dire socioeconomic circumstances does not excuse illegal behaviour; as a result, the theory lacks the intellectual capacity to explain why individuals move from one nation to another. To further explain cross-border migration and the security issues it has raised for Nigeria, the researcher used the Push and Pull Theory as well as the Neo-classical Migration Theory.

It is important to note that when applying the Push and Pull Theory and the Neo-Classical Theory, these two theories are based on the same presumptions. These assumptions centre on the push factors—the things that make people dislike their immediate environment—and the pull factors—the things that make people want to live in other nations or societies. Conditions that compel people to leave their homes are included in the push factors driving migration. Economic, social, and political reasons might be categorised as the "push" factors driving migration. The absence of job is one of the economic causes motivating migration. According to Ibrahim et al. (2019), there aren't enough employment in developing nations and there are too many people living there (Hatch, 2016). Migration is also fueled by a lack of adequate living conditions. Migrants choose to go abroad in quest of chances to better their life and the lives of their families. Migration to industrialised nations gives migrants the chance to increase their salaries and make it easier for them to participate in the market (Llull, 2017).

The numerous elements that draw individuals to a certain region are included in the pull factors for migration, which are the opposite of push factors. Economic, social, and political migration pull factors may be classified similarly to push forces. According to Zoelle (2011), economic considerations that attract migrants include things like the expectation of improved living conditions, better housing, better career opportunities, and more money for food and other necessities. For instance, the UK does well on most categories when compared to many developing nations, making it a popular choice among migrants looking for a higher level of living.

Similar to how different social and political forces influence migration to other areas or nations. The attraction of migrants is influenced by social variables like religious tolerance and greater educational possibilities in certain nations. Better health care and more religious tolerance are two social elements that draw immigrants to industrialised nations like the US and other European nations. The ability to vote, freedom from discrimination, enhanced legal protection, and safety are a few more political pull factors that affect migration.

Method

Research Design

Research design, as noted by Babbie (2007), is concerned with two main factors, namely defining exactly what you want to learn and choosing the most effective method to accomplish it. The why and how of the research investigations are thus the main concerns of research design. Given the above, the ex post facto research design was employed for this study. In literal translation, ex post facto means "from the past fact". As the name implies, this is a type of investigation that aims to verify whether there is a relationship between a phenomenon that occurred after a certain fact and the fact itself. Its object of study is a variable that cannot be changed, from observation of data to make a comparison with another variable. In this way, this type of research aims to analyze

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the cause and effect relationships between a given event and its possible consequences. In other words, the goal boils down to seeking answers to cause and effect relationships and thus understanding a little better what has already happened.

Population of the Study

The population of this study comprises of the entire population of Nigeria. Going by the information from the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics (2022) the estimated population of the country stood at 216.7 million. Between 1965 and 2022, the number of people living in Nigeria increased at an average rate of over two percent.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The researcher employed the purposive sampling method in this investigation. Purposive sampling has the advantage of enabling the researcher to concentrate on certain characteristics of a population in order to more fully address his research concerns. This is to enable the researcher to have the option to choose individuals with an interest in and expertise of the research's focal areas. To come by the sample of the study, the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table for the determination of sample was employed. This put the sample of the study at 384.

Method of Data Collection

In executing this study, the researcher gathered information from a range of sources, including written works, online journal articles, seminar papers, and corporate data outlets, such as the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics (NBS), Statista Infographics Bulletin, and SBM Intelligence, among others. In addition to the aforementioned, Key Informant Interviews (KII) with men and officials of the Nigerian Customs Service (NCS), the Nigerian Immigration Service (NIS), the academia, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Abuja), and international relations experts were also carried out to get their perspectives on trans-border migration.

Data Presentation and Analysis

This section of the study provides the findings from in-depth interviews the researcher performed with personnel and officials from the Nigerian Immigration Service (NIS) and the Nigerian Customs Service (NCS) in their respective offices in Oron and Mbo Local Government Areas of Akwa Ibom state as well as Idiroko border post, Ogun state; Jibiya border post, Katsina state; Kamba border post, Kebbi state; and Ikom border post, Cross River State, including the academia, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Abuja), and international relations experts.

Researcher: What are the main drivers of border porosity that contribute to an increase in smuggling activities between Nigeria and it's neighbouring countries in the West Africa region?

The main drivers of border porosity that contribute to an increase in smuggling activities between Nigeria and its neighboring countries in the West Africa region are enormous. First, economic differences between Nigeria and its neighboring countries can create incentives for smuggling. Disparities in prices, tariffs, or taxes on goods can lead to a higher demand for cheaper products that can be smuggled across borders. Again, the existence of well-established informal trade networks across borders encourages smuggling activities. These networks often operate outside the formal legal framework and take advantage of weak enforcement or corruption, making it easier to transport and distribute smuggled goods (KII with Security agents).

There is a major issue of corruption within law enforcement agencies at border checkpoints can facilitate smuggling. Smugglers may pay bribes to border officials to turn a blind eye to their activities or provide them with advance information about

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inspections or patrols. Closely related to that is another issue which I can refer to as weak border control infrastructure. Inadequate border infrastructure, such as lack of surveillance systems, limited personnel, or outdated equipment, can make it easier for smugglers to cross borders undetected. Porous borders lacking proper monitoring and control contribute to smuggling activities (KII with Security agents).

Furthermore, cultural or ethnic affiliations across borders can facilitate smuggling activities. Shared languages, traditions, and familial ties can be exploited to establish smuggling networks and enable the movement of goods across porous borders. Then, it important to state here that when a region is experiencing political instability or armed conflict, it may likely witness an increase in smuggling activities. This is because disrupted governance structures, weakened law enforcement, and compromised security can create an environment conducive to unauthorized cross-border trade (KII with Security agents).

Again, the demand for specific goods, such as narcotics, weapons, or products subject to high tariffs or bans, can drive smuggling across borders. The profitability of meeting this demand motivates smugglers to exploit porous borders. From a professional point of view, understanding these drivers of border porosity in relation to smuggling activities between Nigeria and its neighboring countries is crucial for developing effective counter-smuggling strategies. By addressing these underlying factors, policymakers can work towards minimizing border porosity, improving trade regulations, strengthening law enforcement capacities, and fostering regional cooperation to tackle smuggling challenges (KII with Security agents).

Researcher: How does the variation in border security measures between Nigeria and her neighbouring countries affect the level of smuggling across porous borders?

Variations in border security measures between Nigeria and its neighboring countries can have a significant impact on the level of smuggling across porous borders. For instance, differences in the enforcement of border security measures can create opportunities for smugglers. If one country has stricter controls and surveillance while another country has weaker or inconsistent enforcement, it creates a "weakest link" scenario where smugglers may exploit the vulnerabilities of the weaker borders to facilitate their illegal activities (KII with Security agents).

Inconsistencies in the prevalence of corruption and bribery among border officials can affect the effectiveness of border security measures. If there is a significant disparity in the levels of corruption between neighboring countries, smugglers may choose to exploit the more corrupt border checkpoints to bypass security measures (KII with Security agents).

If neighboring countries have differing levels of resources and capacity to invest in border security, it can lead to variations in the effectiveness of border control measures. Insufficient staffing, outdated equipment, or inadequate training may hinder the ability of some countries to effectively monitor and control their borders, allowing for increased smuggling activities (KII with Security agents).

The level of information sharing and cooperation between neighboring countries can impact the effectiveness of border security measures. When countries collaborate and exchange intelligence, it strengthens the collective ability to detect and prevent smuggling across borders. Conversely, a lack of cooperation and communication can create gaps that smugglers can exploit (KII with Security agents).

The lack of harmonization in border security policies and standards among neighboring countries can contribute to porous borders and increased smuggling. Differences in documentation requirements, inspection procedures, or customs regulations can create

loopholes that make it easier for smugglers to cross the borders undetected (KII with Security agents).

The presence or absence of cross-border initiatives and agreements aimed at enhancing border security can influence smuggling levels. Collaborative efforts, joint patrols, and information exchange platforms can strengthen border control measures, while a lack of such initiatives may lead to inconsistencies and vulnerabilities. It is my opinion that by addressing these variations and working towards a more standardized and coordinated approach to border security among neighboring countries, the level of smuggling across porous borders can be mitigated. This requires fostering regional cooperation, sharing best practices, improving resources and capacity, and strengthening enforcement mechanisms to ensure the effectiveness of border control measures (KII with Security agents).

Researcher: What are the economic, social and security implications of the high level of smuggling between Nigeria and its neighbouring countries in the West Africa region?

From an economic standpoint, smuggling leads to loss of revenue for the Nigerian government as taxes and duties are not paid on smuggled goods. This affects the country's economic growth and development. It also brings about unfair competition. This is because; smuggled goods are often sold at lower prices than locally produced goods, leading to unfair competition and loss of market share for local producers. In addition to that, smuggling can lead to the collapse of local industries as they are unable to compete with cheap imported goods (KII with Expert in International Relations).

Socially, smuggled goods may not meet safety standards and can pose health risks to consumers; meanwhile, the collapse of local industries due to smuggling can lead to job losses and increased poverty. Furthermore, smuggling is often linked to organized crime, which can lead to increased violence and insecurity in the region (KII with Expert in International Relations).

In the area of security, porous borders make it easy for arms to be smuggled into Nigeria, contributing to the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the country. Smuggling activities can also be used to finance terrorist activities, posing a threat to national security. Smuggling can also be used for human trafficking, particularly of women and children, leading to exploitation and abuse (KII with Expert in International Relations).

Researcher: How effective are existing regional and bilateral agreements and strategies in addressing border porosity and reducing smuggling activities between Nigeria and her neighbouring countries in West Africa?

It is difficult to determine the effectiveness of existing regional and bilateral agreements and strategies in addressing border porosity and reducing smuggling activities between Nigeria and her neighboring countries in West Africa. There have been efforts by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to address smuggling through the implementation of the ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme (ETLS) and the ECOWAS Common External Tariff (CET). However, these efforts have been hindered by corruption, weak institutions, and lack of political will (KII with Expert in International Relations).

Bilateral agreements between Nigeria and her neighboring countries have also been established to address smuggling. For example, Nigeria has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Benin Republic to tackle smuggling along their shared border. However, the effectiveness of these agreements is questionable as smuggling activities continue to thrive (KII with Expert in International Relations).

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It goes without saying that individuals utilise open borders as a means of smuggling goods into nations that are prohibited by the government. In addition, they see it as a license to trade on any and all goods made in the nation, destroying the efforts of entrepreneurs. Therefore, the operations of smugglers at the porous borders constitute a serious danger to the nation whether it be to human or economic security.

The responses to the research questions has shown that it is a given that individuals utilise open borders as a means of smuggling goods into nations that are prohibited by the government. In addition, they see it as a license to trade on any and all goods made in the nation, destroying the efforts of entrepreneurs. When Onyekwelu (2014) emphasises the distribution and mobility of small and light weapons across both nations' borders, he provides evidence in support of this conclusion. His study revealed how simple it is to conceal these little weapons from law enforcement and smuggle them without being noticed. For instance, it is estimated that 100 million of the 640 million small guns in circulation worldwide are discovered in Africa, with roughly 30 million of them in sub-Saharan Africa and 8 million in only West Africa. More than 10,000 Nigerians have died as a result of the widespread usage of SALW in armed robberies and inter-ethnic conflicts, or an average of 1,000 victims each year since 1999. This demonstrated the harm that the border's porousness is doing to the ties between the two nations.

The research of Blum (2014), who discovered that the physical proximity of both nations facilitates trans-border crimes, also provided evidence in favour of this conclusion. It was observed that the Berlin Conference's division of African nations along linguistic lines split the two nations. It was emphasised that the border region's cultural homogeneity is essential for the remarkable cross-border dynamics. The Shabe Yoruba were split up when the boundary was established in 1889; the bulk entered French Dahomey, while parts of the eastern Shabe communities joined British Nigeria. Resentment stemmed from this split, which drove many Yoruba into a country with their old adversaries, the Dahomean Fon. The existing boundaries, a vestige of colonialism, divided a uniform sociocultural group. According to the author, international organised crime had not become widespread until recently. This development has taken place at the same time that the ECOWAS region has expanded its commitment to promoting open trade and travel in order to promote stability and economic prosperity. With the backing of this research about the ECOWAS protocol's detrimental impact on freedom of movement, it would be clear that the protocol has to be revised in order to lessen the different crimes committed across borders.

Conclusion

This goal of this paper was to investigate the impact of cross-border migration on the level of insecurity in Nigeria. The social disorganisation theory and the push-pull theory were the analytical frameworks used to describe this investigation. While the Push-Pull Theory of Migration identifies two main elements responsible for migrations, which he named the push and pull forces, the Social Disorganisation Theory asserts that crime emerges when the systems of social control are weaker and less effective.

Recommendations

In view of the findings of this study, the following have been recommended:

i. There is need for appropriate measures to be put in place by the government to ensure that our borders are well-protected. For this to be successful, the government needs to increase the funding for security agencies at the border towns, especially as it affects the welfare of men and officers working in these areas. In addition, proper insurance should be arranged for them as their job involves life risking ventures. This is to take care of their families in the event of them losing their lives in the frontline.

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ii. Besides guarding our borders, one of the reasons for people to venture into these sorts of activities is for survival. The government should ensure that they do their part of the bargain by providing a safe and secure environment for business to thrive, provide basic social amenities and infrastructures as well as ensure that the people have access to financial resources to engage in one form of enterprise or the other. This will give the economy a face-lift while reducing crime and the activities of syndicates at the borders.

iii. The government should seek for better means of inducing its citizen to stay in their country and engage in their trade of choice. The quest for greener pastures has led a lot to their untimely death, while some have been deceived into prostitution, drug peddling as well as forced labour. This is beside the level of brain drain that has robbed the country of vital human resources.

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