Implications of Using the Military and Para-military Forces for Securitizing Nigerian Insecurities: The Case of Niger Delta Crisis

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Abstract

Nigerian democratic political system is inherent with military features whereby every side of it is militarized in one way or the other. This is not a surprise considering the number of years the country spent under military regime. Even most of its states were created by military rulers. The military features of the country are also found active in its security approach whereby Nigerian military forces are mostly use for both internal and external security. The excessive use and unmerited priorities given to military sector requires a strict assessment in order to reveal the weaknesses of the most preferable security tool using by the government. This paper assesses the Nigerian military actions (JTF) in Niger Delta crisis in order to find out how deteriorated the crisis has become as a result of different military operations carried out by Nigerian armed forces and its implications on overall Nigerian security sectors. This paper reveals the inability of Nigerian military security approach to sufficiently securitize the multidimensional nature of threats inherent in the country. This paper uses the secondary method of data collection and qualitative in method of analysis. The needed information is obtained through examination of different secondary materials such as journal articles, books, magazine, internet sources, and personal observation.

Keywords: Securitization, Multidimensionality, Military Operations, Militarization and Copenhagen School.

Introduction

The effect of long-term military rule over every nook and cranny of the present Nigerian politics cannot be put aside. Military ruled for approximately twenty eight (28) years since the country gained independence in 1960. And it might be incomplete to talk about militarism without mentioning the influence of colonialism in the country. As put forward by Dipo Kolawole (2005) that asymmetric relationship exists between the colonial administration and intervention of Military forces in governance of African states. Jemibewon (1998) also explains that Nigerian military can now record enormous influence over Nigerian politics. Professor Dent (1978) perceives the quantity of military soldiers and their influence in Nigeria to be double of the quantity of teachers affecting all aspect of the polity. Goerge O etal., (2012, p.7) concluded on the footprints of long-term military rule over all Nigerian managerial spheres by stating that Former president of the country Chief Olusegun Obasanjo was a retired military head of state and Army general, a retired army officer was the senate president (David Mark), the Sultan of Sokoto who is also the head of the Supreme Muslim Council is a retired army officer, a retired Army officer was also the Olubadan of Ibadan. In addition, military retired officers compose the boards of directors in most of the blue-chip companies in the country. Even the present president of the country was a retired Army general who ruled the country under military regime, President Muhammadu Buhari.

Militarism as a concept simply means the replacement of civil authority in governance with the military elements whereby state's affairs are managed in military fashion. Obi C. (2007, p.379) defines militarism in Nigeria to go beyond the idea of military rule and it has to do with political legacy that is characterized with cultural impunity, engaging in the use of force instead of persuasion. These facts explained the involvement of high ranking retired military officers in Nigerian political legacy; people who had occupied prominent positions under military rule are making use of their prior political experience as better chances of obtaining significant positions under civilian rule. The reflection of military traits in Nigeria democratic system is the basic reason behind the military understanding of security in the country.

Security approach is military oriented, the synonym of security is the use of military and paramilitary forces and every emanating issue is considered from national security perspective. The general implications of long-term military rule over Nigerian politics are beyond the scope of this paper because it aims to ascertain the use of Nigerian military forces to curtail insecurities and its implications over security sectors in the country. Military security historically constituted the Nigerian national security. The political structure of the country under military regime made it possible for military forces to secure the country to some extent but since the end of military rule in 1999 and the installment of democratic government, there have been complex nature of challenges (threats) facing the stability of the country ranging from ethno-religious violence (Societal insecurity), armed robbery, terrorist bomb blasts, high rate of poverty, kidnappings, political assassinations, trans-border crimes, religious-based militias in the North (Boko Haram) and resource based militias in the Niger-Delta area (Niger Delta militants). In order to develop a better security approach towards these insecurities, Nigerian government has engaged in reformations of military security sector such as the forceful retirement of some military politicians, bilateral military training agreements with the military forces of other countries and allocation of a substantial amount of revenue to the military institution and Nigerian police force (Adeakin I.E 2013, p.7).

Nigerian civilian governments still hope to secure the country using the same military approach adopted during military regime without considering the complexity and multidimensionality of challenges prevailing in the country. The use of military security has worsened the situation of security in Nigeria. In another word, the present security situation has proven the fact that even if military sector experiences the best reform and necessary development, it will never be capable to provide minimum required-security. The use of military and para-military forces has affected other security sectors such as societal, economic and environmental sectors in the country. According to Afeno S.O (2014, p.2) Nigerian armed forces have always been deployed to assist the police in their internal security operations with the belief that the intervention of soldiers would adequately guarantee internal security in the country. The data from Nigeria Watch database explains that this intervention has always exacerbated the situation. This study reveals that between the years 2006 to 2014, there are 59% fatalities caused by military forces during their interventions. Additionally, the more the security forces intervene, the higher the death-rate of the people. Also, the source shows that there is high rate of killings done by military forces in the southern part of the country, which also resulted to more fatalities in the northern part as well.

The use of military and paramilitary forces at the aftermath of 1999 in Nigeria has questioned the potency of democracy by resulting to limited freedom of expression and grievances of different ethnic groups agitating for greater rights and equality. It has led to rapid-growth of ethnic and religious militias both in strength and in numbers fighting over natural resources exploited in their region. Military operations in Niger Delta areas have led to the rise of ethnic militias such as Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) and Niger Delta Peoples Volunteer Force (NDPVF) (Adeakin I.E 2013, p.6-7). The condition of security is getting worse daily and government has refused to see security from a broader picture bigger than militarized security approach. The interconnectedness of security sectors as put forward by Buzan explains that the excessive use of a single security sector might affect other sectors if care is not properly taken. The fact that the Nigerian government has mainly focused on the use of military and paramilitary forces to secure the country has not only deteriorated the security situation of the country but also affected other security sectors considering the implications of Nigerian military forces in Niger Delta. This paper aims to examine the different havocs caused by using the military security approach and its implications on other security sectors in the country such as economic, human, societal and environmental by using Nigerian military actions in Niger Delta as a case study.

Theoretical Framework: Copenhagen School of Security Studies

The traditional security approach has to do with realist construct of security whereby state is both the referent object of security and securitizing actor (state-centric security). This approach focuses on security relations among states and states' military capability against external aggressions or threats (Bajpai, 2000). Its features include anarchistic balance of power, absolute sovereignty of the nation-state, geo-politics, deterrence and a military build-up between states (Owen, 2004). This means that security in traditional sense focuses on interstate military conflict/war. This approach gained dominance during the cold war whereby security was basically a matter of military security of one state against other states' military power (Booth, 2005, 2). Realism is the main theory of this approach, which identifies military power as the primary and main instrument of maintaining sovereignty and states' national security.

This theory argues that it is sole duty of state alone to provide security for its citizens by protecting them against internal and external military threats. As put forward by Sheehan, (2005, p.44) *"war and military violence constitute rational tools of foreign and security policy."*

The critics of realism and traditional security approach gained prominence at the aftermath of the cold war from different theories such as feminists, critical theorists, and postmodernists. The broader construction of security under the scope of Copenhagen School of Security Studies (Buzan et al. 1990; Waever et al. 1993) and its sectoral security analysis are main reasons why this theoretical understanding of security is found most relevant for this paper. The popular developed concept of securitization by the Copenhagen School has been its main success in lexicon of international relations thought. Securitization has been used to analyze state foreign policy behaviour (Smith 2005; Abrahamsen 2005), it has been used to construct transnational crime (Emmers 2003), construction of HIV/AIDS as security threats (Elbe 2006), construction different dimensions of war on terror (Buzan 2006), to minority rights (Roe 2004) and securitization of migration (Matt McDonald W 2008, p.4-5).

The Copenhagen School (CS) is prominently known for providing alternative methods of analyzing security during the 1970s and 1980s, which is completely out of the narrow-base security approach of traditional military. The analysis of CS approach to security can be classified into three parts: (1) the development of sectoral approach to security such as military, economic, political, environmental and societal sectors (2) the development of regional focus to study of security, which examines the interconnections of security dynamics of regions, and (3) the development of a social constructivist theory of security through their formulation of securitization studies. This is basically known as securitization which was firstly presented in a 1989 Working Paper titled *"Security the Speech Act: Analyzing the Politics of a Word"* by Ole Waever. Waever and other members of the Copenhagen: Centre for Peace and Conflict Research later developed this constructivist approach to security resulting to the publication of many books such as societal security in Europe, Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda (1993) and Security: A New Framework of Analysis (1998), which expanded the he conceptual understanding of securitization and its practical application (Charrett C 2009, p.9-10). For the sake of this paper, the sectoral security studies and theory of securitization under CS approach will be examined.

Securitization Theory

Securitization as a term was firstly introduced by Waever in 1989 in a working paper that was later developed in 'Securitization and Desecuritization' (1995). Securitization theory came into existence through the Copenhagen school, which originally consisted of Buzan, Waever and de Wilde (1998). The school that gained prominence and special recognition as a result of its contributions to the widening and broadening of security issues beyond the scope of conventional traditional military security to include non-military issues and non state actors to the security debates. Securitization simply means the act of labeling something as a security issue and as a result security is a 'speech act' (Waever 1995, p.55). According to Buzan, et al., (1998, p.26), there are three elements of a successful securitization, which includes; *"existential threats; emergency action; and effects on inter-unit relations by breaking rules."* Buzan, et al., (1998, p.27), explain that a successful securitization is a process of framing an issue in a way that emergency measures are considered necessary in order to securitize the identified threat. Securitization then means the linguistic presentation of a particular issue as an existential threat (Tasew Tafese 2017, p.565).

According to Buzan B; Waever O & Wilde J (1998, p.35-36) securitization theory requires the need to make a distinction between these types of units that are involved in security analysis: Referent Objects: this could be anything that is considered to be under existential threats with a legitimate claim to survive. Securitizing actors: these are actors that are in position to declare the existential threat facing the referent object and the making of securitizing moves. Functional actors: these are actors that are able to influence the dynamics of securitization without being the referent object and securitizing actor. They argue that states have been both referent objects and securitizing actors in traditional conventional military security sector. For each security sector, the nature of threats, securitizing actors and referent objects are different in the multidimensional security approach.

Sectoral Analysis

In Barry Buzan book titled, *"People, States & Fear: The National Security Problem in International Relations (1983)"* he discussed the limitations of realist approach to security studies to be state-centric and the pre-eminence of military power as the only tool of foreign and national policy of state.

Buzan argues that people can be affected from different areas that are non-military in nature such as political, economic, societal, and environmental sectors. He also argues for the significance of individual, state and international system as level of analysis in all facets of security sectors. He defines the five sectors of security in the following ways:

Military Sector: this has to do with two level of interplay between the armed offensive capacity and defensive capabilities of states as well as how they perceive the intentions of each other.

Political Sector: this has to do with the organizational stability of states, the system of governance of states and states' ideologies that justify their authority and legitimacy.

Economic Sector: this is concerned with the level of access that a state has to its resources, finance and market that are considered to be needed in sustaining a level of acceptable welfare and power for the state.

Societal Sector: this has to do with states' ability to sustain their traditional patterns of language, religion, national identity, culture, and customs

Environmental Sector: this is concerned with the ability to maintain the local and the planetary biosphere, which are considered to essentially provide support system that all other human enterprises depend (Saleh A 2010, p.231).

Buzan explains the significance of interconnectedness of these sectors by confirming that these sectors cannot work in isolation from each other, though they might possess distinctive patterns, they remain inseparable parts of the whole security system. The segregation of security into sectors is not for differentiation but to simplify the complexity in facilitating analysis (Buzan 1998, p.8). Securitization is about identifying an existential threat and ascertaining the suitable way of dealing with it. He defines existential threats to each sector differently such as in the military sector; state is the referent object, in political sector; issues about sovereignty or ideology are defined as existential threats, in societal sector; collective identity is the referent object and the extent at which it can function independently of the state interference such as religions, in environmental sector; the preservation of existing level of civilization or the risk of losing an achieved level of civilization is considered to be referent object. The threat is a concern of whether there is a sustainable level of ecosystem that is needed to preserve the achieved level of civilization (Buzan 1997, p.17).

One of the main arguments justifying the adoption of traditional military security approach by any state is when the state becomes both the referent object and securitizing actor in the securitization of issues as explained by the Copenhagen School of Security Studies. The military approach of Nigerian government towards the Niger Delta Crisis constitutes a reflection of traditional security approach. The Nigerian government has refused to consider various environmental and economic issues facing the Niger Delta as a threat to Nigerian national security but the government considered the aggressive reactions (militancy) from various ethnic groups in the region as a threat to the survival of Nigerian state and the deployment of Nigerian military forces has become the favorite security approach. The significance of security interconnectedness as explained by Buzan is also a reflection of how the use of Nigerian military forces has affected other security sectors in the country. This will be detailed in the subsequent parts of this paper.

Military Intelligence and Nigerian National Security

Historically, many sources reveal that Nigerian intelligence activities after colonial experience were shaped with the formation of Nigeria Security Organization (NSO) under Decree No. 16 of 1976. This organization was assigned with both duties of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) of United States and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Jimi Peters directly criticized this body not to lack intelligence experts only but also specified goals and objectives. A Directorate of Intelligence was formed in 1984 in Chief of Staff' office , which had four directors and during the period, Defence intelligence Agency (DIA) was also formed in the office of the Minister of Defence. This scenario indicated lack of uniformity, which could hinder the effectiveness of their performance. This led to the formation of the National Intelligence Agency (NIA) and the State Security Service (SSS) under Decree No. 19, 1986. This also led to the abolition of NSO. The details of this decree indicated the decentralized nature of Intelligence Agency. The duties of detecting and preventing internal crimes was assigned to the State Security Service (Oghi F.E & Unumen J.O 2014, p.9-10).

The main fact to be noted is that constitutionally, Nigerian state (government) is mainly responsible for providing peace, law, security and order for Nigerian citizens. It was defined in the constitution that organs in charge of security structures of the country includes law enforcement, defense military forces and the security with different

functions that can be classified under five groups; Police, Defense Intelligence Service (DIS); Military forces (Army, Navy and Air Force), National Intelligence Agency (NIA), Security and Intelligence Services (State Security Service (SSS) and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC). Additional paramilitary forces include Nigerian Customs Services (NCS), the Nigerian Immigration Service (NIS), Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Non State Actors (NGOs), Community Vigilantes, Neighbourhood Watch Groups (NWO), Private Security Outfits and Premise Guards. The Nigerian state (government) is also responsible of assigning certain functions to these organizations base on their areas of specializations (Phenson U.A etal., 2014, p.15). This simply explains the strength of Nigerian state as the only securitizing actor towards different nature of threats (challenges) prevailing in the country with the use of these military and paramilitary agencies.

The term national security is basically derived from traditional security approach, which sees state as both referent object and securitizing actor of security. National security indicates security 'for and by' nation-state. State becomes the main security provider and the only tool of states' security is state's military force. Anifowose (1999, p.85) considers state as the most inclusive organization with established different formal institutions regulating relationships among citizens. The discussion of national security will be nothing without making a proper reference to state. As Barry Buzan (2003) also states that, one of the main functions of state is security. Security in this domain is defined as a situation of providing national and international conditions suitable for the protection of state and its citizens against any external and internal threats. It has to do with the military strength of a nation-state to overcome internal and external aggression. In the traditional sense, national security has to do with the survival of the state against military threats from other states (Onimisi T 2014, p.81). But in the modern sense, national security now encompasses different dimensions such as Economic security, Food security, Health security, Environmental security, Personal security, Community security, Political security (Tadjbakhsh 2008) cited by Adebakin, M. A. & Raimi, L (2012, p.9-10). UNDP, (1994, p.229) describes national security to include the ability of state to protect its citizen from threat of disease, hunger, unemployment, crime, social conflict, political repression, and environmental hazards. In this sense, Nigerian government under Section 14(b) of the Constitution (1999) states that, the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government. The traditional conception of national security, which perceives the state as a sovereign entity that must have military strength within international systems in order to ensure balance of power has been made irrelevant through different critics. Okpaga (2007) explains that the conventional idea about national security focusing on military coercive forces has encountered academic wash-down from much school of thoughts that argue for the limited power of military to cope with different emanating threats. This has weakened the militaristic conception of national security, which has led to Both (1991) conception of 'alternative security thinking'. This explains the multidimensional way of dealing with different threats facing the state's national security. The present reality now reflects the declination of external protectionism as main idea of national security and threats to domestic security have gained the attention of national security. This has expanded the scope of national security to include different plans, actions and institutions set up by states for its protection as well as its citizen from both internal and external attacks. It is defined as a way of protecting state's core values for enhancing the well-being of lives and properties of people. Mandel (1994) argues that national security has to do with the nation-state efforts towards the pursuit of psychological and physical safety of its citizen in order to prevent them from different nature of threats.

The expanding nature of national security recognizes the role of Nigerian state as the main security provider toward different prevailing threats (challenges) in the country. This has made some authors criticizing the incompetence and corrupt-practices of Nigerian government to be sources of insecurities in the country. Nfor and Maimusa (2007) argue that the present challenges facing Nigeria are essentially internal but not external and they came as a result of Nigerian greedy political elites in constant struggle and competition for power and scarce resources. The worsened nature of security in Nigeria has led to the question of whether it is as a result of Nigerian government incapable of managing the security or whether the security approach of the government is too centralized to cater for the multidimensional nature of threats inherent in the country. This paper would argue that even if Nigerian government is efficient enough to reform the military and paramilitary forces in the best way, it may not be capable to provide minimum security required for the country. The militarization approach of Nigerian national security cannot secure the multidimensional nature of threats in country. The vision of national security is expanded to cater for political, economic, environmental, food, cyber, social and societal challenges but the use of military and paramilitary forces as the only effective tool to combat with these threats would always prove to be futile efforts.

The meeting point between the traditional national security and its modern expanded version is that state is the only actor providing security. The diverse security threats available in Nigeria require the widening of security management to include non-state actors, individuals, and international social justice and civil rights movements. According to Phenson U.A (2014, p.7) security management in a state like Nigeria is bigger than what only Nigerian state can effectively take care of, it must incorporate individuals, non-state actors such as Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Community Based Organizations (CBOs), International Human Rights, and Civil Liberties Movements. But government remains the principal security provider with the use of military, Para-military, other enforcement agencies for the enforcement of law and order for ensuring the security of Nigerian citizens both home and abroad. As a matter of fact, this has increased the intensity of challenges facing the country such as insurgency, terrorism, economic and industrial sabotages espionage, high rate of unemployment, kidnapping, political assassinations, environmental degradation, inflation, corruption, unequal distribution of natural resources and high rate of poverty. The use of military and paramilitary forces as a response to emanating threats from these stated challenges has not in any way helped the situation but rather worsened it. In order to support this argument, a critical look at the role of military forces in Niger Delta conflict will be done and how military forces have exacerbated the insecurities of other security sectors in this part of the country.

Niger Delta Crisis and Nigerian Military Forces

Politically, Niger Delta consists of nine states out of thirty six states available in the country. This region occupies a surface area equivalent to 112,110 sq.kms, which constitutes around 12% of Nigeria's territory. The main areas with high rate of crude oil are Bayelsa, Rivers, Delta and Akwa Ibom (Joab-Peterside etal., 2012, p.6). In 1956, oil was discovered in this region and it became the mainstay of the national economy in 1970s (Bagaji A.Y etal., 2011, p.34). Traditionally, farming, fishing and other agricultural works were basic means of survival for inhabitants of the region. The discovery of oil resulted to severe environmental damage, which should normally draw the attention of Nigerian government. According to UNDP (2006, p.76) "oil spills has deteriorated the environment leading to destruction of farmland, contamination of water resources and the dispersion of toxic materials." In addition, Lubeck, Watts & Lipschutz (2007 p.9) explain that one of the biggest gas flarers in World is Nigeria and activities of flaring will result to destruction of farmland, affect wildlife and human being through air pollution, noise and acid rain. The negative effect of oil exploration on the environment constitutes the basic grievances of Niger Delta's population toward Nigerian government, which eventually led to the rise of militancy (Bagaji A.Y etal., 2011, p.37).

Another contributing factor to this conflict is the method of allocating revenue. Base on UNDP report (2006 p.16), there has been declination in the percentage of allocating oil revenue to the oil producing states such as "50 percent declined in 1970 to 20 percent between 1975 and 1979, and down to only 3 percent between 1992 and 1999." And during civilian government, between the period of 1999 and 2011, the percentage was 13 percent. This politics of revenue allocation increases the rate of anger of Niger Delta's people agitating that Nigerian economy is surviving base on the natural resources available on their territory but they are receiving less from the benefits of these resources. They could not make a living from agriculture anymore due to the implication of oil exploration on their environment. To make situation worse, the physical and social infrastructures are highly poor and underdeveloped. Base on the report of IDEA (2001, p.254), this region is described with the features of "insufficient access to health care, lack of drinkable water and electric power. High rate unemployment of youth despite the availability of oil industries in this region also exacerbated the living conditions of people. Oil industries are described to be more of capital intensive and less of labor intensive (Bagaji A.Y etal., 2011, p.37-38).

The prevailing insecurity challenges in the region include; Environmental damages, emergence of ethnic militias fighting against the operations of federal military forces that were deployed to the region to suppress rising protests, the prevalence of kidnapping, taking of hostages, crude oil thefts, destruction of pipeline, oil bunkering as a result of high rate of unemployed youth, Intra and inter oil communities conflicts over the ownership of oil blocks; such as the Andoni/Ogoni conflict, Okrika/Ogoni conflicts, Ogoni/Ndoki conflicts, Nembe/Kalabari conflicts and Ijaw/Itsekiri conflict (Eminue 2004, p.3). The militants believe that Nigerian government has refused to put their people into consideration because they are minorities. They accused the government to be composed of major ethnic groups who use the political power to derive oil wealth. Base on the Oputa report, it was cited that two actors were directly blamed for the situation of Niger Delta, which are the Nigerian government that seems not to care about minority rights of the people and neglects its duty of facilitating socio-

economic development of the region. And the second actor is the oil multinational companies engaged in oil exploitation in this region (Ojakorotu V 2009, p.8). Secondly, the reluctance of oil companies to admit responsibility and neglect the payment of compensations for causing environmental damages as well as refusing to employ people from these communities (Phenson U.A etal., 2014, p.14).

The preferable measure taken by Nigerian government to respond to this crisis has been the deployment of military forces as a violent response to quell people's protest. The first success of these forces was the massacre of leaders of the first ethnic militia group known as MOSOP in Ogoni land, which led to the rise of another violent group known as Ijaw (the region's largest ethnic group) demanding for the same rights from federal government and this scenario has continued in this pattern. The presence of military forces and their operations have increased the violent reactions of militants and their numbers in this region. The present most active militant is known as the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) formed in 2005. This militant group launched its attack in 2006 with the capture of four international oil workers. It has engaged in different atrocities that have hindered oil production by 760,000 barrels per day, which is equivalent to 30 percent of overall production according to estimation done in 2008 (Akinola A.O 2011, p.70).

Implications of Nigerian Military Operations in Niger Delta Crisis

In order to analyze the role of Nigerian military forces in this conflict, there is a need to briefly examine different ways at which the Nigerian government has responded it. Before 1990, only insincerity and fake promises were responses of Federal government toward the development of Niger Delta and since this period, there were records of different adopted approaches. Firstly, industrial policies were formulated to ensure that oil companies engage in corporate social responsibilities such as; pollution control, helping Education Trust Fund (ETF) financially, creating a room for negotiation between oil companies and host communities and practice of quota system in staffing. Secondly, there was developmental commission at which different bodies were set to engage in developing the region such as Niger Delta Development Authority (NDDA), Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), Niger Delta development Board (NDDB) and Oil Minerals Producing Area Development Commission (OMPADEC). Another approach that can be considered as the third one has been the use of military forces. This is the main focus of this paper whereby a further attempt shall be made to analyze its implications in the region. This has to do with the use of Joint Military Task Force (JTF) to suppress militants' actions such as destruction of public (oil) facilities and taking of hostages. The final approach is amnesty whereby the Federal government granted amnesty to militant groups in order to surrender their ammunitions in 2009. And there were establishment of rehabilitation and empowerment programs to ensure that surrendered militants are employed in oil firms or be self employed (Idowu O.F 2012, p.105).

There were minimum level of success and achievements recorded from these adopted methods. For example, the industrial policy ensured the five major oil companies; Agip, Chevron-Texaco, Exxon-Mobil , Shell and Total to invest in corporate social responsibilities by providing schools, construction of jetties, water supply and many other developmental projects. Developmental approach also had some achievements for instance in 2006, the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) started around 122 projects and commissioned 67 and 55 were almost completed. However, these approaches faced with different challenges that unable them to curtail many problems of the region. The long lasting and still prevailing approach is the use of military force in securing the region. In order to suppress the violent crisis, the Nigerian government militarized Niger Delta with the creation of a Joint Task Force (JTF) in August 2003 and as a result of this, Operation Restore Hope was launched in the same year. The JTF was formed with the composition of the Nigerian Army, Nigerian Navy, Nigerian Air Force, Nigeria Police and State Security Service aiming at achieving a long-term peace settlement in the region. The primary tasks assigned to JTF were to arrest militant groups, to ensure a secure environment for social and economic activities of citizens and oil industries as well as restoring law and order in the society (JTF 2009).

It should be noted however that JTF is basically composed of Nigerian Army. Although, there are different adopted approaches to curtail this crisis but the use of military forces have been found effective since its inception. In 1993, the first military task force was established aimed for internal security operation with the deployment of Internal Security Task Force (ISTF) to Ogoni land in the Niger Delta to forcefully suppress people's remonstrations against Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) over environmental injustice (Odomovo A.S 2014, p.39). There were different records of human rights violations and extra-judicial executions committed by operations of the ISTF. And the prominent one is the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other members of the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) in 1995 (Forest 2012, p.25).

This execution was widely condemned by human rights organizations as well as many members of the international community (Boele et al, 2001, p.80-81).

In addition, 'Operation Salvage' and 'Operation Hakuri I, II and III' were established in Bayelsa and Rivers states in 1997 (Francis et al. 2011, p.32). And Operation HAKURI II was the first major JMTF military operation established in 1999 aimed to counter operations of Niger Delta militants in Odi community. This operation resulted to a massive destruction of lives and property after two days of unstopped bombardment of Odi community. After operation Hakuri II, 'Operation Pulo Shield' was also established in 2004 assigned with responsibilities of countering insurgency, illegal oil bunkering, piracy, kidnapping and taking of hostages. This operation was meant to cover nine states of the Niger Delta region (Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Imo, Ondo and Rivers states). Following this operation, Operation Andoni and Operation Restore Hope were also created in different parts of the region using military tactics to secure the region (Itiri N.U 2015, p.53). This shows that historically, military forces have been the most effective tool adopted toward resolving this crisis and their available successful records are those showing different human rights abuses, vandalization of infrastructures and how militants have become more aggressive and adamant in their operations. Available sources made it known that, with the adoption of different military tactics and deployment of many military operations to the region, it has only deteriorated situation of things without any successful positive record.

The deployment of JTFs operations aimed at protecting civilians from violent attacks and with their presence, people had high hope of enjoying refuge from human rights abuses. But reverse was the case when internal security operations of JTFs engaged in constant bombing of militants in civilian areas, this has led to the death of many civilians and destruction of their properties, environment and sources of livelihood. The brutal experience of JTF military operations started in their first operation in 1999 known as 'Operation HAKURI II as it was explained before. The use of aircraft, grenade launchers, mortar bombs and other disastrous weapons resulted to death of around 2,483 people, which were mainly women and children (Courson 2006, p.3). In addition, the brutal killing that took place in Odi and Zaki by Nigerian army was considered as violation of human rights but the victims of these military attacks were not insurgents. JTFs continued their operations in 2009 in spite of both international and national condemnation against their operations in the past. Under 'Operation Restore Hope' by JTFs, they attacked and destroyed seven communities suspected of accommodating insurgents. This led to the aggressive attack of MEND against JTFs in Gbaramatu kingdom, which had a devastating effect on the civilians inhabiting in this community. According to Francis et al. (2011, p.200) the military between MEND and Nigerian armed forces in this community resulted to the death of over 500 civilians and displacement of around five thousand (5000) people.

Operation Restore Hope was a well organized that involved a coordinated land, water and aerial bombardment carrying out by a combine force of the Army, Air Force and Navy. It recorded many devastating effects on both the people and their lands. According to Chiluwa, (2011), the use of excessive force by Nigerian army under this operation later increased the level of violence in the Niger Delta by triggering different attacks and counter-attacks, which eventually led to many human rights casualties. The violation of human rights continued even up to 2014. In April 2013 approximately 185 civilians died during the operations carried out by Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) in Baga village and Borno state. This operation that covered almost the whole village received condemnation by international community including the United Nations' secretary General then, Ban Ki-moon, who said he was "shocked and saddened" by the arbitrary killing of civilians in Baga (UN News, 2013) cited by (Odomovo A.S 2014, p.53). In addition, sources revealed that insurgents' attacks on security forces were retaliated on civilians. The military operations of JTFs in Niger Delta affected all other security sectors in the region and in Nigeria as a whole.

Societal Security: many community' identities were suspected and attacked by JTFs forces under their different operations as explained already. For example, Ogoni people were attacked and their leaders were arrested and executed. Odi and Zaki communities were accused of harboring insurgents and attacked leading to the destruction of the communities. A militia of Tiv ethnic group in Zaki-Biam, a community in Benue was held responsible for the abduction and murder of 19 soldiers in 2001. These soldiers were deployed to the area to restore law and order as a result of the clashes between the Tiv and Jukun ethnic groups. These soldiers directly engaged in military attacks against the community, which led to the death of many civilians s in Gbeji village. Further killings took place as soldiers invaded villages of Vasae, Anyiin Iorja, Ugba, Sankera and Zaki-Biam (Itiri N.U 2015, p.54). Many ethnic groups were identified and attacked without discrimination between insurgents and civilians.

Environment Security: Every military operation is a threat to the environment. The natural environment in the region got worse not only because of oil exploration by oil companies but also as a result of military attacks during their different operations. 'Operation Restore Hope' by JTFs for example used a coordinated land, water and aerial bombardment, bombing and many other military types of ammunition that eventually contributed to destruction of environment. Environmental degradation is one of the basic causes of this crisis and when the military operation had worsened the environment then it is questionable if peace or security would ever take place in this region and in Nigeria as a whole.

Economic Security: Military operations in the region resulted to vandalization of many infrastructural facilities as it has been mentioned before. The destruction of pipeline and many oil facilities directly affect Nigerian economy considering the fact that crude oil is the back bone behind its economy. In addition, the deployment of soldiers for different missions necessitates the need for high level of finance to purchase ammunitions, their welfare and payment of their salaries. This leads to the allocation of huge budget from the state pocket to finance these military operations. This crisis started as a result of poor economic condition and high rate of unemployed youth in the region. The security response of both government and oil companies also requires huge amount of money. In February 2016, Niger Delta Avengers (NDA) attacked oil facilities owned by international oil companies (IOCs). In the same period, the Nigeria National Petroleum Company (NNPC) owned by Nigerian state reportedly, spent N4.023 billion to repair 293 pipeline breaks (Ukeje C 2016, p.1). Military operations have increased the rate of insurgent attacks that are causing different havocs to Nigerian economic. In addition, throughout these various attacks of Nigerian armed forces under JTFs different operations, Shell Oil Company is said to have provided tens of millions of dollars to the JTF, the amount money that could go a long way in helping the Nigerian Economy. In addition, Shell and Chevron are paying individual armed militants in the Warri area on average amounting to $300 monthly for security purpose (Amunwa B 2012, p.8).

Military Security: The security approach to militarized Niger Delta is not only of disastrous effect to the region but also to Nigerian soldiers. This mission is more of civil-military relations, which is different from direct military attacks against enemies. The insurgents are living among civilian and in most cases, they have killed many civilians with the aim of fighting militants. In addition, countless of soldiers lost their lives and thousand of them were wounded during these attacks. It is a heavy burden assigning the whole responsibility of securing this region to Nigerian army alone. Although, JTF is composed of both Navy, Police and Air Force but it is mainly full of Nigerian army.

Human security: JTFs launched many attacks against many communities without segregating civilians from insurgents. The various human rights abuses committed by JTF forces have been previously explained. Operation Hakuri II resulted to the massive destruction of lives and property following the two days of continuous bombardment of Odi community as explained by Human Rights Watch in 1999 (Itiri N.U 2015, p.53). The heavy military attacks launched in 2009 by JTF to Gbaramatu Kingdom was described by Human rights groups that "between fifty and several thousand civilians have been killed in the operation so far" (Dode R.O 2012, p.415). Every attack launched by Nigerian military forces to curtail the excesses of insurgents has a huge record of human rights violations leading to countless of displaced population. In another word, counter-attacks of government are direct opposite of human security in Niger Delta.

Discussion and Conclusion

Many articles have been written explaining different devastating effects of Niger Delta crisis in Nigeria. This paper focuses not basically on the effect of this crisis but on the military approach of Nigerian government as most preferable tool of providing security and stability in the region. Nigerian security approach is military oriented as it was discussed in the introductory part of this paper.

This could be traced back to the influence of long-term military regime in the country, which has led a footprint at every phase of Nigerian politics. The use of soldiers for policing the society has only worsened the state of security in the country. Niger Delta crisis is a perfect example of epitomizing the inability of Nigerian army to single-handedly provide the expected security. As noted by Dode R.O (2012, p.416) stating that if military option is the suitable tool of resolving crisis in Nigeria, the heavy rate of military operation in Gbaramatu Kingdom with the use of full conventional military weapons comprise of 3,000 troops, two warships, 14 boats and at least four helicopter gunships, carried out on land, air and sea are more than enough to suppress the militants.

As matter of fact, the stronger the military attacks, the more effective and aggressive the militants become. In another word, military operations had made the militants go harder and tougher on governmental oil facilities and officials.

However, not only that the use of soldiers increased the rate of insurgents in the region but it has also affected other security sectors as it has been explained in the body of this paper. Barry Buzan explained the concept of security interconnectedness, which means that, the excessive use of one security sector could lead to insecurities of others if care is not properly taken. The military approach used in Niger Delta region is the same used against Boko Haram with the same effects on human rights. Nigerian government needs to take cognizance of the fact that military forces cannot secure emanating threats from environmental insecurities or economic insecurities or societal insecurities. In fact, the synonym of security in Nigeria is the use of soldiers. The government cannot continue to use the same approach expecting to get different results. It is a proven fact that multidimensional security strategy is the only way out to Nigerian insecurities. Security approach has to cover economic, societal, environmental, human and military needs of the people.

In addition, the conceptualization of security in Nigeria is more of traditional security approach whereby Nigerian state perceives every challenge as national security issue (referent object) and Nigerian government is the main security provider (securitizing actor). The widener approach to security (Copenhagen School) recognizes different actors as both referent objects and securitizing actors. This is main idea behind multidimensionality of security whereby securitizing the country is not only a business of government. Nigerian citizens and non-state actors must be involved in securitizing every security sector in the country. Economic security sector requires the expertise of private companies and prominent business personnel with free functioning market and limited state's involvement in order to function effectively. Societal security sectors require the expertise of local traditional leaders of each ethnic and religious group to reach a compromise on a peaceful ideology. Environment sector requires every citizen to be enlightened on proper interactions with environment. Although every sector requires proper and functioning governmental policy but only government cannot sufficiently provide security for the people. The multidimensionality of security explains the need for expanding security approach in order to cater for all security sectors and actors involved.

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