STRATEGICALLY FORESTALLING INSECURITY IN NIGERIA USING INFORMATION RESOURCES AND INFORMATION CENTRES

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Abstract
The paper examines how information resources and information centres including the use of library, e-library, telecommunication facilities and the internet can act as an indispensable tool of action in strategically forestalling insecurity in Nigeria. The major effects of insecurity (terrorism, insurgency, militancy) and the employable tactics to overcome it in Nigeria are discussed. The writers advocate the expedient use of information resources and information centres as tools for quelling the spate of insecurity pervading the Nigerian State. The significance of law in ensuring the protection of information infrastructure, and in particular, the relevance of the newly enacted Cybercrime (Prohibition, Prevention, Etc) Act, 2015 is also examined. The writers conclude that using information resources and information centres to forestall insecurity not only have a microcosmic value to the entrenchment of peaceful co-existence, but have a fundamental role in ensuring a holistic national development.

Keywords: Insecurity, Information Resources, Information Centres, Library, Nigeria.

Introduction
Prevailing trends in Nigeria such as insecurity being witnessed in all aspects of human existences such as life, properties, jobs, travelling, and food has necessitated that enormous information buttressing the difference between good and evil be readily made available to all Nigerians irrespective of the area (Urban or Rural) where they are located. Insecurity according to the Oxford Advanced Dictionary is an act of being insecure, which is an indication of not being confident about yourself or your relationships with others. It is an idea of not being safe or protected.

Insecurity of lives and property in Nigeria has transverse the natural, ethnic, or man-made boundary of states or local government. It has become a national phenomenon ranging from the remote village of Idogbo in Edo state, Ahoda in River state, Portiskumin in Yobe state to Kabuga in Kano state. The spread of violence, terrorism, kidnapping, lynching, religious intolerance, bombings etc. has continually been on the increase in Nigeria. In the words of Enders and Sandler (2012) “terrorism is the premeditated use or threat to use social objectives to intimidate a large audience beyond that of the victims”. Omoriegie (2014) stated that all dictionaries agree that terrorism is all about fear, uncertainty and violence to coerce a government or community to agree on something that the terrorist wants. Landes (1978) viewed terrorists as irrational actors. Rationality is based on predictability rather than the desirability of terrorists' tactics or goals. The Nigerian
state is presently encased in a struggle of supremacy against insecurity in the form of terrorism, insurgency and militancy. This trend has almost collapsed the economy of the state.

Superior argument and submissions from the writers has posited that it is altruistic that terrorism is not new, but today’s terrorist threat is different from that of the past decade as technologies has enabled terrorists to plan and operate worldwide with utmost precision and coordination as never before. Specifically with the advancement in telecommunications they can co-ordinate their actions among dispersed states and settlements while remaining in the shadows. This arbitrary use of telecommunications is expository to the fact that terrorist’s and insurgent leaders are not ignorant to the use of information and its related facilities.

The crux of this paper is the strategic and the direct use of information, information resources, information centres including libraries, e-library and telecommunication facilities (radios, televisions, mobile phones) as tools of action to quell insurgency, militancy and terrorism in the Nigerian State.

In an attempt at buttressing the above, George W. Bush (2001) a former President of the United States of America, was quoted saying in a paper he delivered titled “Strategic intent”:

> We must take the battle to the enemy, disrupt his plans and confront the worst threats before he emerge, in the world we have entered. the only path to safety is the path of actions. And this nation will act

It is a progressive attempt for the writers of this paper to assert that information is the life wire of any living creature, existing organization and well established society and government. Information is the antidote to ignorance and unbalanced taught and ideas and it is the primary ACTION needed in this era of globalization and industrialization to unbalance the claimed victory of terrorists.

Information as an unblemished tool has over the years been mis-used by agents of destabilization for personal self aggrandizement (recognitions, wealth accumulation), ethnic-communal interest and promotion of religious believes. Leaders of terrorists’ cells and masterminds of militancy and insurgencies recent observations have revealed are highly intelligent, exposed and most times educated. According to Bush (2002) in a paper titled "Goals and Objectives": the masterminds of the September 11, 2011 bomb attacks in the United States of America, came predominantly from the ranks of the educated and middle class and served in an organization led by a millionaire murderer, their mode of operation is same universally, they tactically manipulate the thinking and ideology of their followers, and members to have anti-senile view of others and the government. Often hoarding information or preventing their use of information handling facilities such as libraries, telecommunication facilities, cyber cafe, and even...
attending any form of educational activities, let alone themselves and children through the enactment of extant rules laws and policies such as Sharia law. This makes them irrational, committing crimes that tinges the mindset of sane men. In line with this assertion Abraham (2008) stated that ‘I found that in a sample of twenty-eight well-known terrorist campaigns, the terrorist organizations accomplished their stated policy goals zero percent of the time by attacking civilians’.

**Major Effects of Insecurity (Terrorism, Insurgency and Militancy)**
The direct costs of insecurity include:
1. Immediate losses associated with a terrorist attack encompass the value of damaged structures, lives lost, injuries sustained, lost wages, destroyed goods, and cleanup.
2. Reduced commerce. Indirect or secondary costs of terrorism include attack-related subsequent expenses such as higher insurance premiums, enhanced security costs, counter terrorism expenses, and loss of future commerce.
3. Increased compensation paid to those at high-risk locations may also constitute an indirect cost of insecurity.

**Employable Tactics of Overcoming Insecurity**
The leadership of Nigerian state should seek to diminish the underlying godfathers’ posture of cell leaders and terrorists’ leaders who constitute self into demi-gods acting as destabilizing agents. by exploiting some recommendations of this paper such as:-

a. Providing equal opportunities for participation in governance  
b. Reducing the spate of corruption and personal self aggrandizement  
c. Provision of social amenities such as:  
   i. Information centres (libraries, museums, archives and cafes)  
   ii. Hospitals  
   iii. Good roads  
   iv. Electricity  
   v. Water.  
   vi. Employments, etc.

This paper is biased towards buttressing the expedient use of item C (i) listed above by the government of Nigeria as a tool for quelling the spate of insecurity pervading every sphere of its national life. Adequate access and use of Information resources and centres in this regard cannot be overemphasised. Information rules the world and any uninformed individual or society is deformed.

**Justifying Information Resources and Information Centres as Means of Sustaining Peaceful Co-existence and National Development in Nigeria**
This paper asserts that effective control of information generation, processing and dissemination vis-a-vis the praxis through which they are processed, stored,
disseminated and used such as libraries and information centres, provides an effective avenue for fighting terrorism, militancy and insurgency. Libraries and information centres are institutions that harness information adequately for effective human use. Supporting the above, Fabunmi (2004) opined that “The Library is the engine room and the powerhouse where information is collected, processed, stored and retrieved for usage”. Interestingly, libraries from ages have been indispensable agents of information gathering, organization, storing retrieval and dispensation. This makes it (the library) an irresistible social amenity which any government in the world can use to create an effective balance system especially in this era when libraries now apply and use information and communication technologies (ICTs) such as internet, computer technologies, close circuit televisions, mobile telecommunication facilities etc in performing its functions and rendering its services.

Libraries whether known or operate under contemporary titles such "e-library" “Information systems” or “learning resources centre” have become an integral part of most communities and activities (Adepoju: 2004). In view of the above assertion, the writers propose the strategic establishment of adequately equipped modern day information centres in rural communities, hamlets, farm settlements to overturn the good will that terrorists, militants, insurgents enjoy from their host communities.

These communities, the writers have observed have members who are relatively ignorant of happenings around them (especially government policies and initiatives, including the importance of education and formal training) as they are subjected to primary sources of information through self appointed leaders of groups such as Boko Haram terrorists, Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND), Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), Odua People’s Congress (OPC) just to mention a few. Buttressing the call for the use of libraries in checkmating illiteracy and ignorance, Obaseki in (2007) suggested strategies for promoting literacy to include provision and maintenance of well equipped libraries in schools and introduction of the use of libraries and computer technologies as teaching subjects in schools. Furthermore, Curtis (2010) posited that lack of adequate education opportunities in Pakistan has contributed to the development of extremist ideologies that have fuelled terrorism and sectarian tensions as well as stifled economic growth.

**Legal Imperatives for the Use of Information Resources and Information Centres as Tools to Forestall Insecurity in Nigeria**

The significance of law in ensuring the strategic use of information, information resources and information centres including the library as tools for forestalling insecurity, and in particular, the role which the newly enacted Cybercrimes (Prohibition, Prevention, Etc) Act, 2015 can play in its utilization cannot be overemphasized.
One of the lofty objectives of the Act as encapsulated in Section 1 thereof is to "ensure the protection of critical national information infrastructure". Section 58 thereof defines "critical infrastructure" to mean: Systems and assets which are so vital to the country that the destruction of such systems and asset would have an impact on the security, national economic security, national public health and safety of the country.

The writers suggest that the proposed use of information, information resources, information centres, libraries, e-libraries, telecommunication facilities including the internet to forestall insecurity in Nigeria be designated as "critical national information infrastructures" as may be published in the Federal Gazette pursuant to a Designation Order by the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on the recommendation of the National Security Adviser in line with the provisions of Part II (Sections 3 and 4) of the Act, in order to engender the protection of computer systems and networks, electronic communication, data and computer programs and promote the overall security and welfare of the Nigerian State.

Conclusion
Strategically forestalling insecurity in Nigeria by the use of information resources and information centres has been the basis of our discussion. The writers posit that using information resources and information centres not only have a microcosmic value to the entrenchment of peaceful co-existence, but have a fundamental role in ensuring a holistic national development. This is reflected in various ramifications as follows:

1. Information centres such as the libraries provides soft landing for those who initially view self with inferior complexities. It is a safe haven for the oppressed, providing opportunity for the coming together of both the oppressed and the oppressor (poor, deprived, rich, and the elite to come together).

2. It provides access to relevant, current, cheap, information resources in various format

3. It co-ordinates the use of information resources, through adequate censorship, weeding of current and re-current information resources using established state or legal information policies.

4. It encourages atmosphere for total independence and freedom of thinking and rationalization, which negates the practice of reliance on information provided by group leaders, ethnic leaders, community sponsored personalities.

5. It provides means of employment and engagement. This means employing President Obasanjo’s Carrot and Stick theory or approach, while noting that an idle mind is the Devils’ workshop of playground

6. It acts as a developmental edifice and a centre for re-education and re-alignment of ideologies. With the overwhelming outcry of lack of
infrastructure or rather infrastructural decay by the Nigerian citizenry, establishing libraries and information centres in rural communities will not only bring development and sense of belonging to the host communities, but will further act as a catalyst to the furtherance of the host community re-education and renewal of their philosophy

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JOURNAL OF STRATEGIC AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

ISSN: 2536-6742

Volume 1, Number 1, April, 2016

PUBLISHED BY
Centre for Strategic and Development Studies,
Ambrose Alli University,
P.M.B. 14, Ekpoma, Edo State,
Nigeria.