

Emerging Security Threats: Factors and Implications for Nigeria's Socio-Economic Development 2015-2019

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Abstract

The backwardness in Nigeria's socio-economic development has been attributed to several factors such as corruption, bad governance, poor policy implementation, insurgency and, a host of others. However, in more recent times, a new set of emerging security threats such as kidnapping, banditry, herders/farmers conflicts and cybercrime (yahoo-yahoo) seems to complement earlier mentioned factors in the threatening of Nigeria's socio-economic development by posing threats to lives and property, crippling local businesses and scaring away foreign investors. States such as Zamfara, Taraba, Adamawa, Katsina, Borno, and e.t.c have so far, felt the consequential effects of these emerging security threats. Government's effort to bring the menaces to a standstill to avoid possible breakdowns seems to have yielded no positive result. The historical method of research and analysis was employed in the study. The findings revealed that Nigeria's socio-economic development have been affected by the emergence of kidnapping, banditry, and cybercrime, with unemployment as one of the major leading factors. The major thrust of this paper is to figure out the possible factors behind these emerging security threats which seem to be a sliding force in Nigeria's slow socio-economic development and to recommend possible solutions that can serve as a way forward for Nigeria. The paper recommends among others, the need for government to create more job opportunity, more social programs, and to re-enforce its security agencies.

Keywords: Emerging security threats, Factors and Implications, Nigeria, Socio-Economic Development, Way out.

Introduction

According to the African Union, security, peace, stability and good governance have been regarded as pre-requisites for the achievement of any meaningful socio-economic development of any nation. It has been argued that there is a strong link between security and development generally (Nwanegbo and Odigbo, 2013; Chandler, 2007 as cited in Ewetan and Urhie, 2014). Although peace and stability have been the core aim and objective of most nations in the world over the past decades, security challenges have continued to remain a major setback to achieving meaningful socio-economic development in most African countries particularly Nigeria. Insecurity does not only pose threats to the lives and properties of citizens, discourages local businesses, scares away foreign investment but portrays a bad image of the country (Ekene, 2015). Security challenges posed by these threats have become a global phenomenon that needs to be tackled as a matter of seriousness to create an enabling environment for socio-economic development. For over a decade, Nigeria has continued to witness a tremendous setback in its socio-economic development fuelled by the continuous resurgence of different kinds of security threats particularly armed banditry, kidnapping, cybercrime, Boko Haram insurgency among others (Akinbi, 2015; Epron, 2018). However, despite government efforts to bring to an end the bewildering situation by spending over 462 trillion on national security over the past five years, the security situation remains Nigeria's major challenge to socio-economic development (Olufemi, 2015).

Nigeria, the giant of Africa is still considered and regarded as a developing economy and still ranks low in all socio-economic indicators such as employment level, life expectancy, access to good water, crime and e.t.c (Ewetan and Urhie, 2014). The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) put Nigeria's unemployment rate at 23.1%, of which youth unemployment is 55.4% (NBS, 2019).

The World Health Organisation in recently released data on the life expectancy of World countries, Nigeria's life expectancy was put at 55.2 of which male's life expectancy is 54.7 and female 55.7 (WHO, 2018). According to a report in 2018 by the International Monetary Fund, Nigeria recorded an increase in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of about 376.284bn dollars (the country with the highest GDP in Africa) yet Nigeria's quality of life remains stagnant (IMF, 2018).

As Nigeria is re-strategizing on ways to control the menace, having suffered from the Boko Haram insurgency which has crippled its socio-economic development, new emerging security threats are fast paving their way to either complement or to gradually replace earlier threats to the country's socio-economic progress. Armed banditry, kidnapping, and cybercrime (Yahoo-Yahoo) among others have recently become rampant in Nigeria and posed a threat to Nigeria's socio-economic development.

It is against this background that the paper tends to investigate the threats and the possible factors behind the emergence of these security threats that have been gaining ground more recently in Nigeria. The paper also pointed out the implications of these emerging security threats for Nigeria socio-economic development and recommended solutions that could serve as a way forward. The paper is divided into six parts. The first part is the introduction followed by the second part that deals with banditry kidnapping and cybercrime (Yahoo-Yahoo) as emerging security threats. Factors behind the emerging security threats are in the third part, while implications for socio-economic development are on the fourth part. Recommendations titled: The way out for Nigerian is the fifth part and the conclusion is on the six-part.

Literature Review

There are lots of works done on this topic. This section deals with the review of such related works. Ekene (2015) in "Corruption! A threat to sustainable socio-economic development in Nigeria" viewed corruption as an "endemic disease" that has emerged over time an obstacle to sustainable socio-economic development in Nigeria. He was more concerned with the challenges corruption has posed to sustainable socio-economic development in Nigeria. However, the present study is not limited to looking at corruption "alone" as a threat to socio-economic development but went further to look at emerging security threats such as armed banditry, kidnapping among others as posing serious implications for Nigeria's socio-economic development.

Adesina (2017) in "Cybercrime and poverty in Nigeria" employs the human security approach to examine the menace of cybercrime in Nigeria. The author further tries to link cybercrime and poverty in the study, Adesina concluded that the increasing poverty level in Nigeria correlates with the increasing cybercrime in the country. However, the present study does not in any way dispute the fact that cybercrime and poverty are connected as suggested by Adesina but this paper looks at cybercrime in the country as an emerging security threat that could threaten socio-economic development. Although the two papers share the fact that poverty is a major factor behind cybercrime, the present paper sees poverty as a factor behind most security challenges.

Ewetan and Urhie (2014) in their study "Insecurity and Socio-Economic Development in Nigeria" seek to critically examine the issue of insecurity, as a major challenge of the Nigerian state, and its eminent implications for Nigeria's socio-economic development. However, the present paper is an extension of their work si and this paper extends beyond that to 2019..nce their work stopped at 2014 because the paper has identified these threats and factors behind its rise that has continued to slow down socio-economic development with current related literature.

Methodology

The historical method of research and analysis was employed in the study. The study data were collected through documentation of secondary sources. The study is also descriptive in style as it built on the findings of already existing works about emerging security threats in the country. Other secondary sources such as photographs, newspapers, videos, sound recordings were relied upon for contemporary development on the paper.

Result and Discussion

This section deals with findings and analyses of the emerging security threats: factors and implications for Nigeria's socio-economic development.

The findings are presented under three sub-headings: kidnapping, banditry, and cybercrime as emerging security threats, implications for Nigeria socio-economic development, and factors behind emerging security threats.

Emerging Security Threats: The Rising Wave of Kidnapping, Armed Banditry, and Cybercrime.

The National Communication Commission in its 2016 report stated that the inflow of Foreign Direct Investments to Nigeria has been relatively low. This is even with the introduction of the cashless policy and electronic banking for business transactions in the country by the past administration. This low value has been attributed to frequent cyberattacks that have succeeded in scaring away foreign investors from either continuing business in the country or moving to another safer place. This situation is more threatening than even the Boko Haram insurgency. The current rising wave of kidnapping, banditry, and cybercrime (yahoo) among others in Nigeria has affected among others, Nigeria's socio-economic development (Makinde, 2019). Apart from the scorching effect of Boko Haram insurgent on the people and economy of the North-East of Nigeria, communities in Katsina, Zamfara, Sokoto and Kaduna states have become targets of bandits, kidnappers, and other hoodlums. From Imo to Ebonyi and “landing” in Lagos, cybercrime seems to flourish.

Kidnapping as Nigeria's Emerging Security Threat

Kidnapping for ransom is taking a centre stage in the increasing wave of crime in the country. Kidnapping is gaining more grounds as when compared to a few decades back when it used to be experienced mostly in the South and West Nigeria. Kidnapping has now become a national epidemic (Campbell, 2018). Campbell further noted that “kidnapping has become a business, with whispers of involvement by politicians and the police as well as entrepreneurs in it, simply for the money” (Campbell, 2018 pp.7).

Kidnapping cases in Nigeria has become so rampant so much so that the country was ranked in the global index for worst countries to live in. It was further discovered that "kidnapping is a dreadful challenge that disrupts the tranquillity and harmonious consolation of the country and has spread to nukes and crannies of Nigeria as a result of poverty, unemployment, and e.t.c” (Abdulkabir, 2017 p.5). Studies have revealed that because of its spate of occurrence in the country, kidnapping is no longer a scary phenomenon because people have gotten used to its scary face (Ogbuchi, 2018). This is evident in Nigeria's record of 1,177 kidnap cases in just a period of 14 months from 2016 to 2017 (Eagle, 2017 as cited in Ogbuchi, 2018).

Armed Banditry as Nigeria's Emerging Security Threat

Armed banditry and cattle rustling has become rampant especially in more recent times in Nigeria's history. Okoli, (2016) further noted that there are more cases of cattle being stolen without harming anyone, even in broad daylight. Before the year 2010, armed banditry used to be overlooked and under-reported situations that were mostly handled by the locals. However, the year 2010 ushered in a set of criminal gangs who specialized in armed banditry and so a new style of banditry emerged which involved not only rustling the cattle but killing the owners and scaring people away from their communities (Rufa'i, 2016; Shitu, 2017). Furthermore, Anka, (2017) posits that the 2011 general election in Nigeria brought about the emergence of these security threats that have crippled social and economic life in some Zamfara communities including Dansadau, Zurmi, Shinkafi, Anka, Maradun and Tsafe forest. Accordingly, it was further discovered that no fewer than 36 communities along these villages have been destroyed and no fewer than 15,000 cattle were rustled (Kiruwa, 2017; Daniya, 2017; Tukur, 2017 as cited in Anka, 2017). In other words, socio-economic activities in these communities have been disrupted.

Cybercrime as Nigeria's Emerging Security Threat

Cybercrime is a crime committed with the help of computers and smartphones through a communication device or a transmission media called the cyberspace and global network called the “Internet”. The coming of the internet has brought unprecedented breakthrough in every sphere of human endeavour in the world today; providing a medium for distance learning, serving as a source of income, enabling business transactions and online business advertisement (Oluigbo, 2019; Muhammed, 2019). In fact, with the emergence of computers, the world has long been regarded as "a global village" because of how computers have shortened the distance, boost the economy and made communications easier even for a common man (Epron, 2018). However, the internet has side effects. One major effect of the internet is cybercrime, which has also become a threat to Nigeria's socio-economic development. According to Olusola, Samson, Semiu, and Yinka (2013), the most common type of cybercrime in Nigeria is Known as advanced fee fraud 419 (aka Yahoo-yahoo).

Other forms of cyber crimes include sending spam email (spamming), stealing personal information (identity theft), breaking into someone's computer to view or alter data (hacking) and tricking someone into revealing their personal information (phishing), making Internet services unavailable for users (Denial of service –DOS), credit card fraud (ATM), plagiarism and software piracy, pornography, stealing money bit-by-bit through tricks (salami attacks) and virus dissemination, etc (Olusola et al., 2013). Despite the effort by the Nigerian government to curtail the activities of these criminals by establishing the Nigeria Cyber

“... the problem of unemployment in Nigeria is one of the major syndromes that upturned youths to become atrocious actors. He pointed to the famous saying of the elder as known to us that ‘devil works in idle’s hand’ but Nigeria government underrate the negative impact of unemployed people.”

Suleiman, (2017) as cited in Abdulkabir, (2017 p.3).

Crime Working Group (NCWG) in 2004 in order to create a legal and institutional framework for the security of compiler systems and networks in the country and the protection of critical information infrastructure, and signing of the cybercrime bill, cybercrime seems to flourish in more recent time in Nigeria (Oluigbo, 2019).

Major Factors Behind Emerging Security Threats

Emerging security threats does not emerge without factors behind its emergence. There are lots of arguments as regards to these factors. However, the present study only pointed out a few major factors among numerous factors behind the emergence of these three security threats. The study discovered that all emerging security threats have similar motivating factors behind its emergence. It was discovered that unemployment, poor security system, poverty, and poor governance seems to be major factors behind the emergence of armed banditry, kidnapping, and cybercrime altogether.

High level of Unemployment

The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in 2019 put Nigeria's unemployment rate at 23.1%, of which youth unemployment is 55.4%. This figure has continued to increase yearly as Nigerian institutions keep graduating batches of youths with the prior impression of getting a better job and opportunities after graduating. No wonder, Suleiman (2018) opined that anxiety from Nigerian graduates that later turn to frustration, and then to aggression on the government is what has fueled the emergence of most of these security threats in the country. Kilishi et al (2014) as cited in Abdulkabir, (2017) believed that the rising wave of crime in Nigeria has been blamed on the increasing level of unemployment. However, the findings of the present study revealed that idle youths tend to engage in illegal activities in other to meet up with contemporary trends. The study further revealed that youths easily get entice with the riches, and as a result, they tend to do whatever it takes. The study concurs with the view of Adagba that Nigeria's high rate of unemployment, especially the increasing rate of youth's unemployment is what majorly prompts the jobless youths in the country to resort to violent crime (Adagba et al., 2012).

Poor Security System

Nigeria's poor security system has been a major concern over the past decades. The security system faces the problem of 'two sides of the same coin' problem. The first one is its inadequate supply of weaponry and equipment which has been a challenge in the fight against insurgency in the country.

In 2014 and 2019, Daily Trust reported that Nigerian security personnel had to run because of inadequate modern fighting equipment to face the fully equipped Boko Haram fighters. The irony is that it has remained a major challenge despite a huge amount of money budgeted for the purchase of modern equipment every year. So many security threats have taken advantage of the security challenge to carry out their illegal activities in the country. The second face of the coin portrays the negligence of some security personnel at the point of discharging their duties. Instead of maintaining peace and security, they become threats to peace and security. For instance, in April 2019 the nation reported that about 10 boys brigade were killed by security personnel who ran into the Easter procession. That particular would've caused a religious crisis if not for the immediate intervention of religious and traditional leaders in the state.

Poverty/Poor governance

Nwagbosa (2012) noted that the failure of successive administrations in Nigeria to address challenges of poverty bewildering the nation has made life worrisome and only the fittest survive. Adebayo, (2018 pp. 3) concur with the view of Nwagbosa, (2012) when he noted that “Nigeria has overtaken India as the country with the largest number of people living in extreme poverty, with an estimated 87 million Nigerians, or around half of the country's population, thought to be living on less than \$1.90 a day”. However, the present study has a similar view with Cantin, (2018) when he linked terrorism to poverty. Although not all forms of terrorism could be linked to poverty it has been noted that economic deprivation influences people to resort to illegal means of meeting their daily needs. In a study by Epron et al, (2014) it was discovered that because of the attractive benefits for carrying out any insurgent activity, most people especially the youths tend to join the insurgents in the Northeast of Nigeria.

Implications for Nigeria’s Socio-Economic Development

These security threats have implications for Nigeria’s socio-economic development. The table below shows the implications of these threats for Nigeria’s socio-economic progress. The table below shows the security threats and a few selected incidences and captures a few implications for Nigeria's socio-economic development.

S/N	EMERGING SECURITY THREATS AND SELECTED INCIDENCES	IMPLICATION FOR NIGERIA’S SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
1.	<p>CYBERCRIME AND INCIDENCES</p> <p>May 2018 Mallam Yahaya (a poor farmer) defrauded of ₦57,000 by fraudsters posing as bankers at an ATM Standpoint.</p> <p>April 2018 Ejalah Vincent A. Was scammed after sending his bank details to yahoo-yahoo boys through a phone call. ₦300,000 was instantly debited.</p> <p>January 2019 Angela Ngalburah transferred ₦100,000 to persons who claim to have gotten a job for her at an oil company which she later discovered was fake.</p> <p>January 2019 Shola Seni was defrauded of ₦200,000 by fraudsters who promised to fast-track his Canada Visa.</p> <p>June 2019 Mamman Auta received an appointment later through his mail. ₦150,000 was demanded to process other related job issues. Nothing was heard after the payment (extracted from The Nation, 2018, 3 May; Dailytrust, 6 April 2018; Vanguard, 2 Jan 2019; Sahara, 17 June 2019).</p>	<p>(i). A report by the National Communication Commission in 2019 indicated that there has been a low inflow of direct foreign investment into the country even with the introduction of cashless policy and e-banking for business transactions. This problem has been attributed to continued cyberattacks on foreign investors in the country which has since succeeded in scaring away foreign investors and discouraging others from coming to invest in Nigeria. This means that there will be continuous less inflow of funds which may directly affect social and economic development in the country.</p> <p>(ii). The activities of Nigeria's popular "yahoo boys" have created a bad image for the country as information coming from Nigeria is frequently regarded as a scam. This means that Mails from Nigeria's financial institutions may not get full attention, and may likely be considered a scam because of how people outside the country see Nigerians as criminals. Nigerians may soon be undergoing serious scrutiny when establishing a business in another country, more serious than what it is experiencing now if at all are not met with total denial (Ene et al, 2016).</p> <p>(iii). Youths today sees the internet as a forum for committing illegal activities. Cybercrime such as pornography, online prostitution, online gambling among others has devalued the norms of the society and morality at stake. Youths have become lazy and addicted to the use of the internet (Shehu, 2014). No wonder, President Muhammadu Buhari in 2018 when being interviewed, declared that “Nigerian youths are lazy”. What does this entail? If care is not taken, the addiction to the use of the internet by our youths and the obvious moral decadence that has made some kind of security threats to flourish will continue to affect Nigeria’s socio-economic development.</p>

2.	<p>KIDNAPPING AND INCIDENTENCES</p> <p>May 2015 Prof. James Adichie kidnapped and ₦50m demanded, an undisclosed amount paid (Ogbuehi, 2018).</p> <p>September 2015 Mr. Olu Falae (Former finance minister) Kidnapped and ₦100m demanded, undisclosed amount paid (Ogbuehi, 2018)</p> <p>March 2016 Sierra Leone's High commissioner to Nigeria kidnapped, and 40m dollars demanded, undisclosed amount paid (Ogbuehi, 2018).</p> <p>May 2019 Umar Musa (President Buhari's townsman) kidnapped (extracted from the nation online, 2 May 2019, pp1).</p>	<p>IMPLICATIONS FOR NIGERIA'S SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</p> <p>(i). Nigeria in its 2009 budget, spent a whopping sum of ₦195 billion for security, specifically for police formations, and commands around the country. In Lagos, about 3 billion Naira has been spent on security alone (Soyombo, 2009 as cited in Inyang and Abraham, 2013). Sir. Mike Okiro (Former IGP), disclosed that ₦15 billion have been paid as ransom between 2006 and 2009 (Kyrian, 2009 as cited in Inyang et al, 2013). If you add up the total figures, it will give you about 213 billion Naira! This huge amount is enough to relieve Nigeria of major socio-economic developmental issues. The implication being that if Nigeria continues to spend such amount annually, it will not have sufficient funds to embark on important socio-economic development</p> <p>(ii). Inyang and Abraham noted that the nation loses a lot of revenue because of the frequent attacks on expatriates working in the multinational oil companies. It does also scare labourers from coming to work which indirectly affects socio-economic development. For example, Dode (2007) as cited in Inyang et al (2013) noted that, in 2006, kidnappers abducted six foreign expatriates from Shell Oil Company premises and later on "...the company was forced to close down and this led to the loss of millions of standard cubic feet per day of gas production for the country" (Inyang et al, 2013 p. 5).</p>
3.	<p>BANDITRY AND INCIDENTENCES</p> <p>15 June, 2019 34 killed in Tungar Kafau and Gidan waya, Zamfara state (Altime, 2019).</p> <p>27 July 2018 42 killed in the villages of Mashema, Kwashabawa and Birane districts of Zurmi local government area of Zamfara state.</p> <p>May 2019 23 persons killed in Tunga and Kabaje villages, Kaura-Namoda Local Government Area by suspected bandits, Zamfara state.</p> <p>December 2018 17 people in an attack on Magami Village of Faru District in Maradun Local Government Area (LGA) of Zamfara State (plus tv, 2018).</p>	<p>IMPLICATIONS FOR NIGERIA'S SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</p> <p>(i). The undesired migration of Fulani and their cattle out of some affected areas in Zamfara to neighbouring countries of Niger has serious socio-economic implications for the country. Tukur (2017) as cited in Anka (2017) noted that it cost a whole lot of money coupled with stress/risk to import cows from neighbouring countries for consumption, aside from dairy and manure for farming activities.</p> <p>(ii). Socio-economic development has been brought to its knees by these acts of banditry especially in Zamfara and other neighbouring states. Mahmud (2019) noted that schools have been destroyed and so most students do not go to school. Parents are not able to send their children to far schools due to fear of being kidnapped or killed by the armed bandits. Mahmud further noted that socio-economic activities have been crippled as people are living in constant fear of the unknown.</p> <p>(iii). Cases of rape have continued to be on the increase and constitute another setback in the socio-economic development of the affected areas. Badaru (2017) argued that since 2014, there have been recorded cases of rape along the Dansadau forest by the armed bandits.</p> <p>(iii). Onuah and Akwagyram (2019), reported that mining activities have been suspended in Zamfara due to frequent attacks by armed bandits. The implication of the suspension is that revenue generated through mining in the state has been cut off, and this may likely affect economic activities in the country.</p>

Recommendations: The Way Forward For Nigeria

The study pointed out a few recommendations aimed at bringing the menace to a standstill. Recommendations have been made by scholars overtime on how these menaces could be addressed but most often these suggestions don't seem to work out due to lack of focus and negligence on the part of relevant authorities. However, the following are a few recommendations believed to have a lasting solution. Unemployment is a serious threat to Nigeria's development generally. Most of the crimes occur as a result of the high rate of unemployment.

To curtail the situation, the government should as a matter of urgency create job opportunities for the teeming unemployed youths loitering the streets of major cities in the country. Social programs like "n-power", "P-Yes" and a few others launched by the present administration is a welcome development because it has helped to some extent but a lot of these type of programs is needed to immediately absorb these youths immediately after graduation.

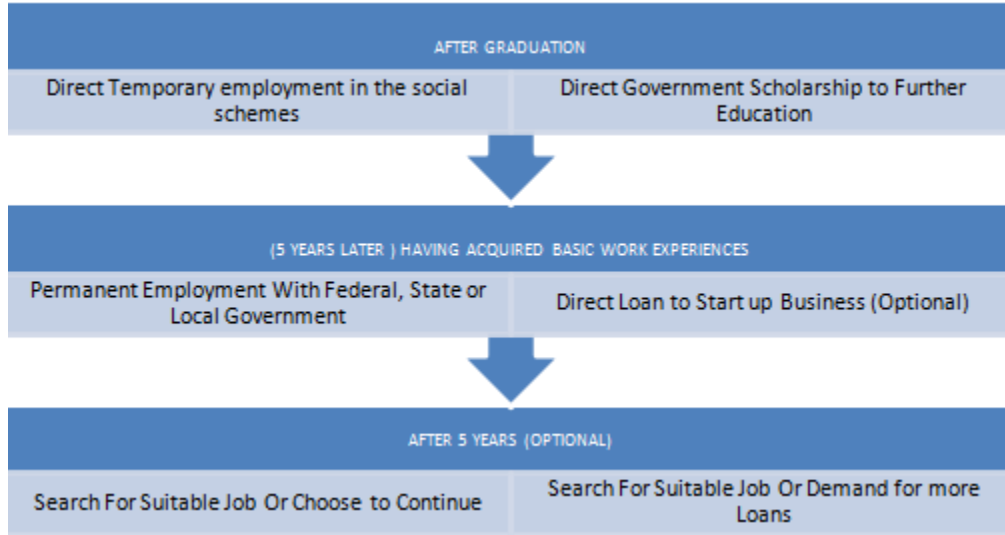


Fig 1.2 An illustration of the recommendation.

Source: Epron (2019).

The recommendation Chain in Fig. 1.2 above shows how Nigerian youths could be chained and engaged so that they don't remain idle and become “the devil’s workshop”. The chain indicated that after graduation, the government should either employ them temporarily or give them the scholarship to further their education. After five years they could be considered for a permanent job or be given loan to start up business. After five years, they can choose to continue with the given job or search for suitable ones while still working. Those under loans could still demand more loans or search for a suitable job while still running their businesses. The study discovered that by following this chain of engagement by the government, youth’s engagement in illegal activities could be reduced to the barest minimum in the country.

Another recommendation is the need for proper orientation of the Nigerian Security personnel on the need to maintain peace and order in collaboration with the local vigilante. Local vigilante understands their communities better than a newly posted police officer from another state. There has been a lot of scenarios where the police themselves get attacked because of poor communication with locals in the discharge of their duties. Security collaboration with local vigilante does not in any way affect their duty or commitment to the nation since both are meant to serve the purpose of security. Security personnel should also be mentally checked during recruitments to avoid causing havoc in society. However, the government should equip the security forces with both types of modern equipment and necessary incentives to enable them to carry out their duty without hindrances or discouragement.

Conclusion

Nigeria's Socio-economic development has been hampered by these emerging security threats – kidnapping, banditry and cybercrime among others. The study revealed that certain factors are behind the sudden upsurge of these security threats in the country which include among others poverty/poor governance, unemployment and poor security system. These factors have been noted to influence people directly and indirectly that always result in negative responses. The negative responses later turn to have implications for socio-economic development in the country. The menace if not urgently curtailed as a matter of priority, presents a great threat not only for the nation’s socio-economic development but also portends a great danger to the entire West African region.

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