



EFFECT OF TRANS-BORDER CRIMES AND ITS CHALLENGES ON NIGERIA'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

In recent time transborder crime has remarkably increased in Nigeria, as a result of porous border and the inability of the security Agencies and border Police to rein illegal smuggling activities. This paper, therefore, assessed border crimes and challenges on Nigeria's economic development. The paper relied on primary and secondary sources of data; and adopted strain/anomie theory as the theoretical framework. The theory contends that crime is bred through strain imposed by a society that promises without fulfilling as people would respond to strain/anomie differently. While some people would bear lack of opportunity and continue to think for better days (retualists), others would respond to lack of opportunity by indulging in criminal behaviours or may attempt to achieve monetary success through illegitimate channels. The data collected were analyzed using simple percentages. The study revealed that poor border management is the cause of border crimes in Nigeria. The work recommended for training and re-training of security officers by the various security agencies; and constant awareness and / or enlightenment of the citizens on the effect of transborder crime through smuggling on economic development in Nigeria.

Key words: Borders Security, Criminal activities, Economic Development, Transnational Crimes.

Abstrait

Ces derniers temps, la criminalité transfrontalière a considérablement augmenté au Nigeria, en raison de la porosité des frontières et de l'incapacité des agences de sécurité et de la police des frontières à freiner les activités de contrebande illégales. Ce document a donc évalué les crimes

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aux frontières et les défis du développement économique du Nigéria. Le document s'appuyait sur des sources de données primaires et secondaires; et adopté la théorie de la contrainte/anomie comme cadre théorique. La théorie soutient que le crime est engendré par la tension imposée par une société qui promet sans tenir car les gens réagiraient différemment à la tension/anomie. Alors que certaines personnes supporteraient le manque d'opportunités et continueraient à penser à des jours meilleurs (réalistes), d'autres réagiraient au manque d'opportunités en se livrant à des comportements criminels ou pourraient tenter d'obtenir un succès monétaire par des canaux illégitimes. Les données recueillies ont été analysées à l'aide de pourcentages simples. L'étude a révélé que la mauvaise gestion des frontières est la cause des crimes aux frontières au Nigeria. Les travaux préconisés pour la formation et le recyclage des agents de sécurité par les différentes agences de sécurité ; et la sensibilisation et/ou l'information constante des citoyens sur l'effet de la criminalité transfrontalière à travers la contrebande sur le développement économique au Nigeria.

Mots clés : Sécurité des frontières, Activités criminelles, Développement économique, Crimes transnationaux.

Introduction

Border security has become a severe issue in the world today as the rate of criminal activities has also increased in scale especially after the Cold War and in the wake of globalisation. It has become easy for transitional crimes to be conducted such as the moving of money, people and goods across the world because of advancement in telecommunications, transportation and technology in general (Afolayan, 1999). The world has turned into a 'global village' with its peculiarities as well as problems. Globalization has allowed criminals to move across the borders unhindered and even continue with illegal business with impunity. This is not without consequences on socio-economic development and security of lives and property (Adepoju, 2005).

There's increase concern about cross border crimes and its implications for the international community. A variety of explanations have been put forward for its increase. In this era of globalization, the activities of cross border crime have increased, as criminals have identified the opportunities to gain greater rewards from criminal activity outside their traditional boundaries. These cross-border crimes are mostly symptomatic rather than causes of instability as experienced in Nigeria. The higher levels of disposable income in Western Europe and North America create a marketing opportunity for the illicit trade for the rest of the world. This is not limited to the trade in drugs but extends to almost all criminal currency; prostitution, pornography, protection and counterfeiting (Van, 2002, Julins, 2002).

The nature of cross-border crimes has changed rapidly in recent years through the use of technology, networks, the loosening of travel restrictions, and through criminal diversification. Crime networks are complex and to break them is a massive task for police forces worldwide. This is perhaps due to the fact that the heads of these organisations have powerful connections, and their wealth enables them to bribe officials. Transnational crimes are crimes that have actually effect across national borders and crimes which are intra-State but which offend the fundamental values of the international community (Boister, 2003). In recent times, the word, transnational crime is used in the law enforcement agencies and academic communities to



describe crimes that are not only international (that is, crimes that cross borders between countries), but crimes that by their nature involve cross-border transference as an essential part of the criminal activity. Transnational crimes also include crimes that take place in one country, but their consequences significantly affect another country and transit countries may also be involved. Examples of transnational crimes, therefore, include human trafficking, smuggling/trafficking of goods (such as arms trafficking and drug trafficking and illegal animal and plant products and other goods prohibited on environmental grounds (e.g. banned ozone-depleting substances), sex slavery, terrorism offences, torture and apartheid.

The 2004 -General's Report on ways to combat subregional and cross border crimes in Nigeria identified major cross-border problems including the continued weakening of the security sector, proliferation of roadblocks, youth unemployment, environmental degradation, social exclusion, Explosive Remnants of War(ERW), mass refugee movements and forced displacement. Inequitable and illicit exploitation of natural resources, weak national institutions and civil society structures and violations of human rights, including the rights of women, were also identified as other serious problems afflicting the sub-region (de Andrés, 2008, Boister, 2003, Mueller, 2001). Cross border crimes in Nigeria have been in existence since the 1970s. Initially, they were manifested in the form of individuals or groups of traders and businessmen and women smuggling goods across the borders. These activities eventually assumed alarming proportions when human trafficking, for the purposes of domestic slavery and illegal sexual activities. As criminal activities developed, other illegal activities such as the peddling of narcotics and car-jacking among other things, by transnational syndicates (de Andrés, 2008) have been added.

Nigeria borders has been battling with transnational crimes security ranging from drug trafficking, money laundering, illegal arms trafficking, smuggling of all kinds,(contraband, stolen cars, firearms) theft, advance fee fraud known as 419, to kidnapping and many more. These activities constitute a threat to global and national security as they affect the socioeconomic development and are tarnishing the image of the country. Nigerians are being embarrassing daily base on financial scams and other related trans-border crimes.

The manifestation of conflict and insecurity in Nigeria's borders is the problem of boundary adjustment and porous nature of Nigeria borders especially Idiroko border in Ogun state. The-border has many entry and exit points. It is important to note that African borders have been designed by the Europeans that used individual lines based on longitude and latitude to map out Africa. African boundaries do not represent the complete, full-fledged territorial barriers or take into cognisance of the ethnic divisions. For example in Nigeria, its physical area joins between the four neighbouring states, whose inhabitants were linked by socio-economic, political and cultural ties. It was not surprising therefore that the boundary issues with Cameroun and Nigeria have been the colonial inheritance (Imobighe, 2003).

The pragmatic increase in armed violence across the Nigerian state is no doubt the function of the availability of small arms and light weapons playing an undeniable role in perpetuating violence from criminal related activities to full-blown war. Nigeria is located in West Africa and has boundaries with the Republic of Niger to the North, Chad to the Northeast, Cameroon to the East and Southeast, Benin to the West, and the Gulf of Guinea to the south, all totaling 4910km of boarder outstretch (Stohl and Tuttle, 2009; Nte, 2011; Okeke, Oji and



Richards, 2014). These border areas are notoriously porous and remain haven for criminal smugglers.

The country's nascent democracy is today being tested by rampant crime, which has enhanced an unprecedented influx of arms and ammunition into the country, and the ongoing campaign of terror. In the southern part of the country, civil unrest threatens safety and stability. In the east, gangs who kidnap expatriates for ransom lie in wait on the roads, in bars, and cities. In the north, the Islamic terrorist group called Boko Haram is growing both in number and brutality, as well as bandits, who are posing brazen challenges to the government with the issuance of ultimatum of "leave or die" to Christians living in northern Nigeria. The inability of the government to show enough will to protect the people and rein the criminals is exerting adverse effect on socio-economic development of the country (Agaptus, 2013). The ongoing armed attacks in some parts of the country, and some persons possessing AK 47, automatic and assault rifles, illegally and automatic rifles could have only found their ways into the country through the borders. Also, smuggled goods such as rice and vehicles whose importations have since been banned through the land border still flood the country through the numerous unapproved land border routes. Therefore, this study is an attempt to examine the effect of trans-border crimes on Nigeria's economic development

Statement of the Problem

Nigeria borders have many entry and exit points, even as the people are extremely volatile, thereby making it difficult to police the border. The community dwellers within the border point see smuggling as an enterprising businessmen and women, and are finding it difficult to refrain from illegal trades, which constitute serious economic sabotage to the country. The boundary between Benin and Nigerian is not clearly defined, making it difficult to distinguish between Nigerian border and Benin. Beside, some houses are half way into Nigeria and half way into Benin. Some people who smuggle contra-band items into the country through the border even believe that they are trading, since they had engaged in smuggling for decades without thinking of the havoc it does to the nation's economy. Through the borders, substandard goods, fake drugs and unhealthy food items like chicken and turkey have found their ways into Nigeria.

Corruption and bad governance is considered as the most powerful promoter of transnational organized crime. This is because organized crime groups are involved in corrupting certain government officials such as the security forces, as well as the judiciary. The evil and inept attitudes of border officials resulting in the numerous checkpoints of bamboo suspended by oil drums also contribute negatively to the border crimes. The insufficient workforce or personnel in Nigeria border has also constitute negative impact on the safety of Nigeria borders. There is also the inability of government to provide essential social amenities in the rural areas as well as the border communities.

The anti-smuggling campaign at the Idiroko Command has been in its intensity and they have been recording seizures of Tokunbo vehicles, frozen products, rice, and used clothes among other unwholesome imported goods. But despite the effort of cross-border security agencies like the Nigerian police, Customs service, and Immigration Services. Nigeria border have been described as porous allowing all sorts of cross-border or transborder criminal activities.



Nigeria continues to face serious security challenges due to cross-border or trans-border criminal activities. Thousands of people, both civilians and combatants, are being killed or injured every year in the country. Even when death or injury is avoided, small arms proliferation and misuse can dramatically impact a community, country or region's landscape. The threat and use of small arms can undermine development, prevent the delivery of humanitarian and economic aid, and contribute to refugee and internally displaced persons (IDP) populations (Stohl & Tuttle, 2009). The borderless nature of Nigeria communities has further posed security threat into the life of Nigerian citizens. The specific objectives of this study include:

- i) To examine the leading causes of Border crimes in Nigeria.
- ii). To assess the effects of border crimes on Nigeria economic development.
- iii). To identify the efforts in handling trans-border crimes and the challenges on Nigeria.
- iv). To provide possible way forwards to address border crimes and its challenges on Nigeria economic development.

Conceptual Clarification Concept of Border Security

Border security is a factor of border management. International borders are a security issue for all governments. States are recognised under international law by their capability to maintain their boundaries, secure their territories, and protect their citizens (Asiwaju, 1992). The ability to secure national borders is one of the criteria used to classify states as strong, weak and failed. A state has a primary responsibility of protecting its citizens from both internal and external threats to their livelihoods (Anyanwu, 2005). It must be pointed out that the strategic location of a country determines opportunities for illegal activities that exists or can take place in its border areas. Some countries are more threatened by insecurities or mismanagement of other countries borders than their own. Border Security means different things: border control, border management, border monitoring, and border protection. Usually, border security has been used to mean border control, which seeks to facilitate or limit the movements of people, animals, plants, and goods into and out of a country. Border control is divided into two main categories: securing borderlines (activities along the boundary) and controlling ports (harbours, border posts and airports) of entry.

Transnational Crimes

The US department of Justice (2008) posits that, —international organized crime refers to those self-perpetuating associations of individuals who operate internationally for the purpose of obtaining power, influence, monetary and/or commercial gains, wholly or in part by illegal means, while protecting their activities through a pattern of corruption and/or violence. The United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime cited in Shelley, et al, (2003, p. 16) seeks to provide a unified definition that is likely to serve as the benchmark for identifying transnational criminal organizations when it posits that:

Organized criminal group¹ shall mean a structured group of three or more persons, existing for a period of time and acting in concert with the aim of committing one or more serious crimes or offences established in accordance with this Convention, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit.
—Serious crime² shall mean conduct constituting an offence punishable by a



maximum deprivation of liberty of at least four years or a more serious penalty. —Structured group shall mean a group that is not randomly formed for the immediate commission of an offence and that does not need to have formally defined roles for its members, continuity of its membership or a developed structure.... An offence is transnational in nature if: (a) It is committed in more than one state; (b) It is committed in one state but a substantial part of its preparation, planning, direction or control takes place in another state; (c) It is committed in one state but involves an organized criminal group that engages in criminal activities in more than one state; or (d) It is committed in one state but has substantial effects in another state.

Transnational organized crime is a complex security threat that demands a multilayered approach and response. Organized crime groups rarely have strong ties to the state outside of the use of corruption to protect themselves and examples range from Nigerian fraud rings to Albanian people smugglers to Indonesian pirate groups (Picarelli, 2010). There have been various series of argument among scholars as to the similarities and differences that exist between international crime and transnational crimes. Both concepts have been seen to mean the same but as argued by Albanese (2012), —unlike traditional crimes that occur within single country, transnational crimes are distinguished by their multinational nature and cross border impact.

The crimes are often committed to disorganize standing protocols and not often profit gain based. Transnational crime and terrorism explains that, countries are not always capable to fully protect their borders. The problems of insufficient financial resources, inadequate training, low pay and corruption, mean that effective border security is a reality only in very few regions of the world. Even the affluent states of Australia and Japan, whose island status isolates them from some problems of cross-border crime and terrorism, are not immune from them. The work further expresses how lengthy borders are difficult to guard thereby exposing the borders. And to this effect for example, Chinese nationals are smuggled into the United States through unregulated territory of Indian reserves on the US–Canada border, and Latin Americans enter the United States through a national park on the southern US border that has a limited border guard presence. The same crossing points can be used by both transnational criminals and terrorists.

According to Ezeanyika (2012), various crimes are perpetrated across the borders in Nigeria. To him, such crime includes child trafficking, drugs and fraud. His work further traced the emergence of border crime in Nigeria to 1970s, contemporaneous with the oil boom of that decade, the delinking of the dollar from gold, high inflation, and the rapid spread of debt in the developing world. However, various antecedents could no doubt be traced back for decades earlier, such as in the ancient traditions of long-distance commerce that were characteristic of the region; or indeed in the activities of European criminal gangs who pioneered intercontinental crime from bases in West Africa in colonial times (Ezeanyika & Ubah, 2012).

In the 1970s, the Nigeria's booming economy was a magnet for immigrants from other parts of the region, most notably Ghanaians. The downturn in the caused many such migrants to move on in search of new opportunities. In 1983, Nigeria officially expelled millions of Ghanaian migrants in a bid to rid itself of officially unwanted guests. Most returned to Ghana, but a fair proportion of them promptly migrated to elsewhere, where they could find economic



opportunities. This work indicates that the general corruption of the civilian government of 1979-1983; the introduction of a structural adjustment program in 1986, resulted in greater poverty and unemployment, and a consequent increase in emigration; the rapid and ill prepared liberalization of the financial sector, including the establishment of poorly regulated finance houses and banks, providing new opportunities for money laundering and fraud; and illegal foreign exchange transactions.

Picarelli (2010) further expressed that, criminal groups adopted a networked form of organization that is less hierarchical and better positioned to operate across political borders. To him, the trade in illicit drugs is most frequently cited as the largest sector of the illicit political economy. His work further noted that, UN's 2006 survey of the global drug trade indicated 200 million users of illicit drugs on an annual basis. These drugs include cannabis and synthetic drugs (Picarelli, 2010). The trade is been lined between production region (Nigeria, Colombia, South Africa) to the US, Mexico, Canada and finally a brisk trade in cannabis resin (hashish) originates in Pakistan and Lebanon and supplied to the Middle East and South Asia.

Abia and Ekong (2013), established a framework for the different types of crimes being perpetuated across the borders. These they noted include smuggling, drug trafficking, counterfeiting, automobile theft, human trafficking, arms trafficking, money laundering, advanced free fraud, cross border robbery and recently, financial and hype-tech cyber-crime. The international arena is not been neglected in this discuss of trans-border crime. The international community created the INTERPOL (International Criminal Police Organization) to combat border crimes as there is no world police (Abia, 2013). Interpol is equally necessary in that the arrest of cross border criminals in their country of refuge is usually followed with a request for either deportation or extradition through a collaborative mechanism handled by the Bureau for Deportation and Extradition (BDE). In 2006, in Nigeria, some Nigerian drug dealers were deported from Thailand to serve their prison terms in the country. Similarly, in 2011, James Ibori, a two term Governor of Delta State of Nigeria was also extradited to Britain where he was charged with money laundering.

Onyekwelu et al, (2014), lays emphasis on the distribution and movement of SALW (Small and Light Weapons) across both countries' borders. Out of the 640 million small arms circulating globally, it is estimated that 100 million are found in Africa about 30 million in sub-Saharan Africa and 8 million in West Africa, alone. The proliferation and use of SALW in ethno-religious clashes and armed robbery have killed more than 10,000 Nigerians, an average of 1000 people per year since 1999 (Onyekwelu et al, 2014). This showed the negative effect the porosity of the border is inflicting on the relationship that exists between both countries.

The task of defining or describing —trans-border crime— would not be an easy one, because many elements have been recognised as constituting it. However, "trans-border crime" represents many illegal and notorious activities carried out by individuals and groups across national and international borders, either for financial or economic benefits, as well as socio-political cum religious considerations. It is a set of criminal acts whose perpetrators and repercussions go beyond territorial boundaries. These would include human trafficking, money laundering, drug trafficking, arms smuggling or trafficking of weapons, cross-border terrorism, illegal oil bunkering, illicit trafficking in diamonds, corruption, business fraud, to mention but these notable few (Asiwaju, 1992, Ering, 2011,). Money laundering is the practice of engaging



in financial transactions to conceal the identity, source, or destination of illegally gained money. It could also be defined as the process of taking any action with property of any form which is either wholly or in part the proceeds of a crime that will disguise the fact that the property is the proceeds of a crime or obscure the beneficial ownership of said property (Ering, 2011, Boister, 2003).

In the past, the term money laundering was applied only to financial transactions related to organised crime. Today, its definition has been expanded by government and international regulators such as the —US Office of the Controller of the Currency (USOCC) to mean—any financial transaction which generates an asset or a value as the result of an illegal act. This definition suggests that actions such as —tax evasion or —false accounting will constitute money laundering. In some countries, the concept is broader than the involvement of money. It includes —any economic good and other transactions. Money laundering is ipso facto illegal, the acts generating the money almost are themselves criminal in some way (for if not, the money would not need to be laundered) (Addo, 2006, Park, 2006, Ering, 2011). Historically, money laundering evolved in 1931 when many methods were devised to disguise the origins of money generated by the sale of illegal alcohol. During this period Al Capone's was convicted for tax evasion. For instance, when Meyer Lansky (alias Mob's accountant (1902 – 1983), transferred funds from Florida —Carpet Joints to accounts overseas, to hide proceeds from his gambling empire, he was prosecuted for it.

Drug trafficking can also refer to the possession of an illegal drug in a predetermined quantity that constitutes the drug that is going to be sold. However, drug trafficking involves selling drugs and drug paraphernalia, whether it is a local exchange between a user and a dealer or a major international operation. Drug trafficking is described as the commercial exchange of drugs and drug paraphernalia which may include any equipment used to manufacture illegal drugs or use of them (Ering, 2011, Park, 2006).

Economic Development

The term 'development' is used in many disciplines and serves in practice to define a recognized field of research. It is a dynamic concept. It has different meanings for different people. In fact, there is no agreement on the meaning of development among planners and thinkers either. Some people say it means increase in income, while others lay emphasis on employment, quality of life, happiness, and so on. Still, others stress on meeting the basic needs of people. The only thing on which everyone agrees, is that development is necessary, and everyone wants it, although in his own image and perhaps in his own way. Academicians, politicians and economists all give different interpretations, but all of them agree that development improves the standard of living of people.

According to Drewnowski (1966, pp.26 -30), "development is a process of qualitative change and quantitative growth of the social and economic reality which we can call either society or economy. Because of the close inter-relation of economic and social elements, no 'purely' social or 'purely' economic development is possible. Consequently, it is better not to speak of social development separately. It is a single process which is best called simply development". In the above definition, Drewnowski identified socio-economic development as change in the quality of life and quantitative growth of various values. Quality of life can be improved by enhancing the conditions of health, nutrition, education, transport and



communication and so on. Economically, the development is taken to mean the rise in per capita income or gross national products (GNP) or general economic growth. In broader terms, development is viewed as improvement of the economy from a stagnant, preindustrial state, characterized by low incomes with a predominance of the primary sector and the physical proximity of production and consumption to a dynamic diversified and integrated industrial economy (Rao, 1984).

Generally, development is identified with the level of per capita real income. The United Nations Experts identify development with the level of per capita income. Thus, an under developed country is one in which the per capita real income is low when compared with the per capita real income of Western countries like the U.S.A., Canada, Australia, and Western Europe (U.N.O, 1995). Development will also be understood in the way it was conceived by *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization* (UNESCO) conference of 1974. It stands for the development of human beings and not for the development of countries, the production of things, their distribution within the social systems or the transformation of social structure. These may be means towards the end, but they should not be confused with the end, which is that of developing the entire human beings (U.N.O, 1974). Development is therefore, a multidimensional process. There are many interpretations of it. In geographical literature, during the late 1970s and 1980's, there came up certain works which attempted to define development as the works of Brookfield (1975), Robert (1978) Mabogunje (1980), Chisholm (1982), Harriss (1982). Each peasant has its own very different view of development and each provides a particular perspective from which further research can take its course.

The Causes of Borders Crimes in Nigeria

The study discovered that part of the challenges of border security is that Nigeria lacks border protection and little or no importance is accorded to our national borders. This finding is evident in the vulnerabilities of the threat posed by our national boundaries such as transborder activities and the prevalent terrorist attack that befall the country resulting in the unrestrained influx of migrants through the routes. According to Omolara; (2013), the challenges of border crimes in Nigeria can be seen as below:

Porosity of Borders

The porous borders encourage cross-border crimes and instability in the region. It also promotes the increasing number of illegal trade such as smuggling of contrabands goods, adulterated drugs, stolen cars including cars that have exceeded the permissible age limit prescribed for use in Nigeria and other commodities like shoes, poultry products and many more. The porous borders could also be explained in the use of the dried tree, oil drums as well as rims of tyre to demarcate the national boundaries; this makes the border to be disorganised, poorly managed and secured. This trend promotes the unrestrained influx of illegal migrants and cross-border activities. However, some indefinable corridors or regions served as a route to these unlawful migrants, thereby posing a serious threat to the country and the national borders. For instance, it has been discovered that Nigeria has 1497 irregular and 84 regular routes as migration in and out of the country is done through the illegal ways (Nigerian Immigration Service, 2013).



Corruption and Bad Governance

The corrupt practices of the security operatives at the borders pose a severe challenge to the border security. The evil and inept attitudes of border officials have resulted in numerous checkpoints of bamboo suspended by oil drums. Some of these checkpoints are not only illegal but also contributed negatively to the border security. It is important to note that these checkpoints are not meant to check passport but to extort money from people. Hence, the criminals easily infiltrate the borders as smugglers bribe their way into the country. It also explains why we have many criminals involving in trans- border activities and terrorists in the state as criminals move in arms and ammunition. Thousands of innocent Nigerians have been killed and many more die in the hands of Islamic sects with the influx of weapons into the country.

Inadequate Manpower and Logistic Support

Another problem related to border security in Nigeria is the insufficient workforce or personnel which has a negative impact on the safety of our national borders. It makes it difficult for the security operatives to adequately man the national boundaries and effectively patrol them. The inadequate human resources do not allow for adequate patrolling of these illegal routes, thus making it possible for criminals to use them as entry points into the country. Also, the criminals sometimes outsmarted the security operatives at the borders due to inadequate personnel and logistics problems.

Poorly patterned Borders

Nigeria borders are an artificial creation from colonialism which continues to pose a severe threat to the country. The demarcation of the boundaries was done by the colonial masters without considerations to the culture of the people as can be seen in the cultural ties of marriages, celebration of religious festivities, language and many more. It should be noted; therefore, that boundary delimitation did not affect the cultural, ethnic and homogeneity of the border communities. It is difficult for instance to differentiate a Nigerian from Nigerien because linguistic and cultural similarities exist on both sides of the border. It is therefore difficult to put in place immigration laws when individuals change their identity when they feel like it.

Lack of provision of Basic Amenities

This is another factor militating against good border security. When the people at the rural areas and the border communities are living in abject poverty and lack of necessary infrastructure, they resort to assisting cross-border activities, albeit illegally, and or involving directly in clandestine activities, such as armed banditry, smuggling and many more, to earn money (Omolara, 2013).

Political Instability and Economic Crisis in Neighbouring Countries

Nigeria is the most populous as well as the richest in West Africa. In terms of economic, population preponderant, military capability, it is argued that Nigeria dwarfs all the neighbouring countries. This explains the more reason why the crisis in neighbouring countries such as political instability, famine and diseases split over to Nigeria as her proximate neighbours depend solely on Nigeria. This was also evident in Babangida's speech (former



President of Nigeria), when he said that none could benefit in the economic collapse of any country in the sub-region. This means that Nigeria national security is the security of its immediate neighbours as this is demonstrated in both scope and intensity of cross-border smuggling activities. When Ghana was suffering from the economic downturn, many citizens of Ghana fled to Nigeria to make ends meet.

In terms of security, the factors enumerated above tend to pose a severe challenge to Nigeria. It is spreading internal insecurity challenges as seen in destruction of lives and property. As the 21st century is characterised by globalisation, there is the need for integration and cooperation; if not we will lose out in the new global order. As globalisation emerges, so are the challenges becoming more complex and requires a new approach. It is against this background that we cannot be dormant to the pursuit of security at our national borders in Nigeria, or else the environment will continue to be hostile and insecure for the people therein.

The effect of Trans-border Crimes on Nigeria's Economic Development

Criminal activities damage financial sector institutions that are critical to economic growth, reduces productivity in the economy's real sector by diverting resources and encouraging crime. It encourages corruption, which slows economic growth and can distort the economies of external trade, internal trade, and capital flows, and hence economic development. Money laundering causes monies appropriated for specific development projects to be diverted to individual bank accounts. This is the situation involving many members of the political class in Nigeria who are privileged to occupy governmental positions. They have consistently siphoned the country's money to foreign banks to the detriment of the Nigerian public. These monies would have been used for the provision social and economic services to the citizens.

A case of political involvement in organised crime in Nigeria can be seen in the case of late Maurice Ibekwe, a member of Nigeria's Federal House of Representatives, who was arrested for financial fraud, forgery and conspiracy. As at the time he was arrested, he was the chairman of the House Sub-Committee on Police Affairs. However, only in a small number of cases can it be shown beyond reasonable doubt that senior political figures like Ibekwe, have been directly implicated in organised criminal activities (Ebo, 2003; Aning, 2009).

Similarly, the social consequences of allowing politicians and organized criminals to launder money can be very disastrous and damaging to the country. It can erode a nation's economy by changing the demand for cash, making interest and exchange rates more volatile and causing high inflation in country (Ering, 2011, Ate and Akinterinwa, 1992). Nigeria's development is jeopardised because available evidence shows that the state is used as a transit for drug smuggling, particularly for the West African route. This paints a bad picture of Nigeria's image and could deter investors from investing in the economy. The dimensions of heroin smuggling through Nigeria are best illustrated by seizures, which in 2007 amounted to more than five tons of heroin and have been on the increase in succeeding years (Ering, 2011, Passas, 2002, Julins, 2002).

The growing use of West Africa as high cocaine stockpiling location is further confirmed by recent seizures made by European and Latin American countries of cocaine shipments bound to Africa. The number of maritime seizure made by European Navies off the West African coast between 2005 and 2006, is a clear indication of the increasing number of drug trafficking in the region (Ering, 2011). A report in This Day Newspaper of November 29, 2010,



shows that in the last three months of 2010, officials of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) have impounded hard drugs valued at N5 billion. Within the same period, 130 kilograms of heroin shipped into the country from Iran were seized at the Tin Can Island Port, Apapa, Lagos. The substance was valued at \$10 million. All of these are indications of the increasing profile of the West African route for Drug Trafficking. Also, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC 2010) reported a rapid rise in the consumption of hard drugs in the country. Moreover, according to its statistics, the increase in drug use in Nigeria is directly linked to the high level of corruption in the country (Ering, 2011, Julins, 2002, Passas, 2002).

The Colombian cartels are said to be setting up shops in Nigeria, thus corrupting law enforcement authorities and buying protection against prosecution. This act apart from worsening the rate of corruption in West African States, fragile states such as Guinea-Bissau are becoming increasingly vulnerable and are in danger of spiraling down into ungoverned macro-states. Others in the region, including Cape Verde, Guinea, Togo, Benin, Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal and Mauritania, as it could encourage instability and insecurity. This pattern of corruption and crime is repeating in many parts of the world (Luna 2008; UNODC 2010). Transnational criminals are not only expanding into multiple criminal activities, which transcends trafficking in drugs, and humans, but are also pioneering new and more sophisticated types of illegal operations.

Cyber-crime and, financial crimes are becoming more prevalent throughout the world as criminals have become more computer-savvy and continue to coordinate many sophisticated illicit operations including through modern and innovative channels such as ecurrency or digital funds and mobile payments technologies (Ering, 2011). In many instances, the police aid and abet drug traffickers, and cyber-criminals as well as gangs and criminal insurgencies. In Nigeria, the dimension of these illegal activities has increased. The emergence of militancy in the Niger Delta and the spade of kidnappings have created severe problems of insecurity. This is however done in connivance with security agencies. This situation is scaring to foreign and local investors and impinges seriously on the socioeconomic development of society (Ering, 2011).

Apart from drugs, the circumvention of the formal economy via trafficking of contraband goods has also haunted local industries. At a pre-yearly general meeting with the media in Lagos in July 2004, Nigerian industrialists under the aegis of the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) declared that the country lost \$6.3billion (about N800 billion) to unwholesome trade practices of smuggling and product counterfeiting in 2003, Alan Rusbridger (22004). Nigeria's border communities play a central role in the smuggling activities. While virtually all the routes they are located predate present-day artificial boundaries created by colonialism, the desperation to de-link from a distrusted and disliked system which the Nigerian economy came to symbolize turned such border communities as Jibia in Katsina State, Kiisi in Oyo State, Idiroko in Ogun State, Bakassi in Cross River State, Badagry in Lagos State and Bama in Borno State, into informal centers for substitute exchange relations (Garuba, 2006). Thus, we conclude that many trans-border crimes in Nigeria impede Nigeria's economic development.



Theoretical Framework

For the purpose of this study, strain/anomie theory is adopted as the theoretical framework to investigate effect of Trans-border Crimes on Nigeria's Economic Development. Robert K. Merton (1938) developed the first major strain theory in criminology. He argued that when a country set goals, which it defined as successes, and also set means towards achieving the goals or successes, but block some people from either having the means to achieve the goals, or those who the means from achieving the goals, many people are bound to innovate, howbeit criminally. Merton identified five adaptations which the citizens may adopt. These include reformist, Innovationist, Retualist, Retreatist, and Rebellion. Both failure to achieve means, as well as failure to achieve goals result in strain. Lower-class individuals (the poor), are however, more prone to strain. They are often prevented from achieving this goal through legitimate means. Their parents may have failed to provide them with the skills and attitudes necessary for school success, they may live in communities with inferior schools, and their parents often lack the money to send them to college or set them up in business. As a consequence, lower-class individuals more often experience strain, with this strain being a function of the disjunction between their goals and the legitimate means for achieving them.

Merton states that there are several ways to cope with this strain. This may include innovation, which involve crime. Individuals may attempt to achieve monetary success through illegitimate channels, such as theft, drug selling, smugly and prostitution. They may strike others in their frustration. They may engage in drug use to alleviate their frustration (retreatist). And they may reject the goal of monetary success and focus on the achievement of other goals, certain of which involve crime. Merton noted that most strained individuals live with their strain rather than cope through crime (retualism).

Strain theory was postulated by Emile Durkheim but has been advanced by Merton (1938), and Agnew (1992) to show that social structures within the society may encourage citizen to commit crime. Merton, (1938) posited that crime is not just a function of deprivation, but the result of a disjuncture or lack of connection between ends (goals) and the means of attain those ends (Lynch, 2008). According to Merton, there are culturally assigned goals and aspirations (material and non-material things that all individuals should expect out of life). Then there are acceptable means of achieving the goals and aspirations (like obeying laws, seeking education and working hard). According to Merton, it is important that the culturally desired goals be achieved through legitimate means by all social classes. Often, much emphasis is placed on achieving these goals but the legitimate means are not equally attainable for some citizens. This lack of access to legitimate means leads individuals to seek the goals by whatever means necessary. According to Merton, crime is bred through this process as some people would respond to the strain/anomie between aspiration and the lack of opportunity by indulging in criminal behavior.

Specifically, Agnew proposed three types of strain: strain as the actual or anticipated failure to achieve positively valued goals, which includes the classic conception of strain (i.e., the inability to achieve monetary goals); strain as the actual or anticipated removal of positively valued stimuli (e.g, the violent death of a close friend, and parents); and strain as the actual or anticipated presentation of negative stimuli (e.g., child abuse). In whatever form, strain generates negative effective, such as anger and frustration, which create pressure for corrective action, including crime.



Method and Procedure

For the purpose of this study is to study border agency in Abuja was clustered according to the existing four (4) agencies. From each of four agencies within Abuja, 73 staff were selected. On the whole, two hundred and ninety two (292) border agencies staff within Abuja were selected as respondents. The principal instrument for data collection used for this study was questionnaire. The responses (292) were analysed with the use of frequency table and simple percentage.

Data Presentation and Analysis Demographic Data

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Agencies

Agencies	No. of Responded	Percentage %
NCS	69	24%
NIS	71	24 %
NDLEA	82	28 %
DSS	70	24 %
Total	292	100%

Source: Field Work, 2021

The above shows the distribution of the respondents based on the collected data. It expressed that the majority of the respondents were National Drugs Law Enforcement Agency officers as they totaled up to 82 constituted 28%; follow by 71(24%) who were from the Nigerian Immigration Service, 71 respondents making up 24% were from the Department of State Security Services, while 69 respondents represent 24% were from the Nigerian Custom service. From the above, it is revealed our selection of respondent had similar distribution among the four security agencies, except for the NDLEA that had 4 respondents above the 24 drawn from each from the other three Agencies.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Education Status

Education	Frequency	Percentage %
First Degree and Above	82	28 %
NCE/Dipolma	71	24 %
Secondary Education	69	24%
Primary Education	70	24 %
Total	292	100%

Source: Field Work, 2021

In the above table, it is indicated that 28%% of the respondents have first degree or its equivalent and above, 24%% have NCE/Diploma, 24% have secondary education while 24% have primary education. This grouping became necessary to ensure that experienced and knowledgeable respondents were used for the study.

Presentation of Responses of the Respondents on Key Issues of the Study

This section contains respondents' perception on key issues under study. This is presentation in the table below:

Table 3: The major cause (s) of border crimes in Nigeria



Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Porosity of Nigeria borders	24	8%
Corruption	56	19%
Poverty	39	13%
Lack of Manpower and logistic support	31	11%
All of the above	142	49%
Total	292	100%

Source: Field Work, 2021

On the issue of the major causes of border crimes in Nigeria, it is clear that all the option earned some scores. This implies that the causes of crimes vary according to differences factors. Eight percent (8%) of the respondents cited porosity of Nigeria borders, 19% of the respondents went for corruption factor while 13% of the respondents went for economic (poverty) factor. Others 11% of the respondents went for lack of manpower and logistic support and 49% which is the highest responses went for all of the above factors. The observation apparently shows that the border crimes in Nigeria is a function of variety of factors such as Porosity of Nigeria borders, Corruption and bad governance, economic issues such as unemployment and poverty and lack of manpower and logistic support. Therefore, the above finding was in line with the work of Asiwaju, (1992) and Ering (2011) which ascertained corruption as one of the major causes of border crimes in Nigeria.

Table 4: Border crimes and its effect on economic development in Nigeria

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	174	60%
No	72	24%
Undecided	46	16%
Total	292	100%

Source: Field Work, 2021

Table 4 shows that 60% of the respondents agreed that border crimes have effect on economic development in Nigeria, 24% disagreed, while 16% are undecided. From the table above, it is revealed that border crimes have effect on economic development in Nigeria.

The respondents apparently stated that the criminal activities damage the financial sector institutions that are critical to economic growth, reduces productivity in the economy's real sector by diverting resources and encouraging crime and corruption which slows economic growth and can distort the economies external trade, internal trade, and capital flows or economic development. Few of them also stated that border crimes do not only lead to material and immaterial costs for those who have become victimised, but also forces Nigeria government to spend billions on the prevention of crime and the detection, prosecution and punishment of criminals. Finally, the respondents contend that the involvement of financial crimes such as fraud and Money laundering can causes monies appropriated for specific



development projects to be diverted to individual bank accounts and this can hinder economic development in Nigeria.

Table 5: Curbing border crimes may enhance economic development in Nigeria

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	167	57%
No	37	13%
Not sure	64	22%
Do not know	22	8%
Total	292	100%

Source: Field Work, 2012

Table 5 revealed that 167(57%) of the respondents said that curbing border crimes can enhance economic development in Nigeria, while 37(13%) of the respondents were not sure whether curbing border crimes can enhance economic development in Nigeria. This content that fighting border crimes can enhance economic development in Nigeria.

The result of the above table concurred with the third proposition of this study which stated that combating border crime may enhance economic development in Nigeria.

Table 6: Effort has been put in place by Nigeria government to curbing border crimes in Nigeria

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Inter-security cooperation	46	16%
Adequate law enforcement	34	12%
Creation of employment	74	24%
Sensitization and Enlightenment of security personnel and the citizens	40	14%
All of the above	98	34%
Total	292	100%

Source: Field Work, 2021

The table above indicates that several measures have been introduced by Nigeria government to reduce the trans-border crimes. The policies ranged from inter-security cooperation to sensitization and enlightenment of citizens. Majority of the respondents (34%) had knowledge of all policies, 74 (24%) of the respondents were aware of creation of employment as a means of curbing trans-border crime. The responses of others ranged from 16%, for inter-security cooperation, 14% for sensitization and enlightenment, and 12% for adequate law enforcement.

Discussion of Findings

The results from the findings are here discussed in line with the objectives of the study stated in the previous pages of this paper.



The first objective of the study was to find out the leading causes of border crimes in Nigeria. Available evidence from the data collected from the respondents and secondary sources have shown that the leading causes of border crimes in Nigeria, ranges from porous border, corruption, poverty, lack of manpower and logistic support and ignorance. This was corroborated with the work of Asiwaju, (1992) and Ering (2011). The analysis apparently shows that crimes in Nigeria border is a function of variety of factors such as porous border, corruption, poverty, ignorance, lack of manpower and logistic support. It shows that a community that is rich but poorly managed can easily get drifted to crimes of unimaginable consequences and smugglings is certainly a manifestation of corruption and bad governance. It has shown in the analysis that the existed of smuggling in Nigeria is a repercussion of poverty, ignorance, polity of mismanagement and corruption. Youth who have no sources of livelihood hitherto promised by the government have resorted to either taking to smuggling across the porous borders and / or cooperate with smugglers and criminals operating in their areas for a fee. This is in line with the strain theory adopted by this work.

The second objective of the study was set out to assess the effect of border crimes on Nigeria economic development. Available data generated from the questionnaire and secondary source shows that Nigeria has become the new hub for all forms of trans-border crimes ranging from women and child trafficking, internet fraud (419), to smuggling among others. Findings also revealed that lives are being lost on regular bases, especially in communities surrounding the border area when there is any gun battle between the security agencies and the criminals. Findings show that, the increases in substandard of health products have adverse effect on the citizens. Drugs for instance that are not meant for consumption or have expired are been smuggled into the country and distributed to unsusceptible buyers. These drugs are dangerous to human health and when not properly in its normal condition, it leads to loss of lives or causes advanced health complications in the body system.

The third and four objectives of the study was set out to identify the efforts in handling trans-border crimes and the challenges in Nigeria's and to provide possible ways forward to address border crimes and its challenges on Nigeria national security. The data generated from the respondents and the secondary sources have shown that the cooperation between Nigeria security and Benin security in the Idiroko border has helped in curbing crimes. For instance, some criminals who escape from Nigeria has no place to hide in Benin due to the inter-security installation of surveillance equipment. It was discovered in the findings that the establishment of Joint Border Posts (JBPs)/Border Liaison Offices (BLOs) has increase cross-border communication and sharing of crucial intelligence information. It also helped in building trust and dialogue between Nigeria and Benin security agencies and increases the spontaneous information exchange about the movement of goods, suspects and vehicles across Idiroko border.

In table 6, 9% of respondents ascertained that adequate law enforcement can be seen as one of the efforts put in place by Nigeria government to curb border crimes. The anticorruption crusade employed by APC let government has left no one untouched, who's ever caught involving in crime or accepting bribe from the smugglers never go unpunished. The study also discovered that the adequate law enforcement served as deterrence to both the security personnel and the citizens. For instance, the public surveillance systems introduced in Nigeria which include a network of cameras and components for monitoring, recording, and



transmitting video images has helped in achieving the–ultimate goal of apprehending both property and personal criminals (Garuba, 2010). Many respondents in this study agreed that the engagement of youth in skill acquisition programs has helped in reducing crime in Nigeria. It was also discovered in the finding that most perpetrator of the crimes in border communities are idle youth who have nothing doing and so sees smuggling as a business which aid them to earn their living.

Conclusion/ Recommendations

In the light of the forgoing, it was noted that trans-border crime is one issue that can lead to turbulence in the international community if not tackled. The increased activities of smugglers across the border area coupled with arms trafficking are a challenge to security in Nigeria. The current insurgence in North East Nigeria and other regional crisis will be curtailed if the flow of arms is reduced. Since it's easy to carry about, every citizen is capable of possessing the weapon illegally and this translates to national insecurity. The current government approach to curbing border crime by reconstructing the entry and exit border post is a good development but the issue will be the maintenance of the facilities in place. The issue of corruption which has eaten deep into the blood stream of security agents, for instance, has become a major problem confronting reduction of border crimes. If there is no sensitization of the security force and improved welfare, border crime may continue to soar and further breakdown the security system of the state. In the course of the research, numerous solutions have been pointed out which will help improve the various security challenges across Nigeria.

- i). Findings shows that, lack of enough manpower has been one of the factor affecting the security agencies from combating crimes. Enough manpower is therefore required to enable the security agencies carry out their duties effectively.
- ii). Government should employ specialist for training and re-training of personnel and citizens across border communities.
- iii). Nigeria government should introduce modern technologies in fighting crimes across border communities.
- iv). The welfare of the security agencies should be adequately take care of to avoid compromise at the border line duty

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