



Re-thinking State Security in Nigeria: Exploring the Development-Security Nexus

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Abstract

While state security remains the primary security doctrine, developmental lacuna underpins numerous security threats confronting the Nigerian state. Many threats to national or state security emanate from within and a product of neglect of development, and have degenerated into numerous cases of human insecurity. The paper focuses on examining human security versus states security analysis, emphasising the import of human security for development; the debate of the traditional military security and non-military threats to human welfare and wellbeing; and the analysis of the Boko Haram insurgencies from human security perspective. Data collection is secondary and method of data analysis is mainly interpretivist and analytical approach. The findings show that deprivation, poverty, unemployment, repression is a major source of threat to human welfare and wellbeing. The potency of addressing the development lacuna will have enormous impact in addressing security threats that emanates from challenges of poverty, deprivation, conflicts, and insurgencies.

Keywords:

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1. Introduction

The debate to expand the frontiers of the concept of security dominates contemporary security studies. The urgency to capture the pervasive threats to human well-being makes this expedient. Different security threats have generated various responses from state security, common security, comprehensive security, collective security to human security. Human security offers alternative thinking to traditional national security and moves beyond security of state territorial borders to fight non-military threats, which include poverty, diseases, trafficking in persons, narcotics and arms, environmental disaster among others. The concept of human security involves a

major departure from orthodox international relations security analysis that views the state as the exclusive referent object. The challenges to traditional security have been accompanied by analysis intended to deepen and broaden the agenda of security studies by moving either down to the level of individual or human security or up to the level of international or global security (Ullman 1983; Rothschild 1995; Krause and Williams 1996).

Increasing threat to human survival and wellbeing contributed to the changing thinking in development and security. The Independent Commission on International Development, North-South Report chaired by Willy Brandt (1980) have a critical focus on the need 'to

ensure human survival'. The Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security, Common Security (1982) chaired by Olof Palme proffered alternative thinking on peace and security. The post-cold war era new security thinking gained prominence in academic and policy circle. The 1991 Stockholm initiative on Global Security and Governance embraced "Common Responsibility" to combat threats from failure in development and democracy, environmental degradation, population explosion and migration. While, the 1995 Report of the Commission on Global Governance – 'Our Global Neighbourhood', placed security on a global agenda. Global security necessitates the expansion from traditional state territorial borders to include security of people and the planet.

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) took as the principal theme of its 1994 Human Development Report the transition from nuclear security to human security. Human security is defined as safety from 'chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression', and 'protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions.' Human security advanced by middle power countries as core political agenda in international politics, designed to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable populations nationally and regionally (Suhkre 1999, Glasius 2008).

Human security, embraced in academic and policy circles, offers opportunity for new analysis and insight. Scholars and policy makers acknowledged the importance of redefining security with human focus. However, divergence of opinions surrounds the conceptualization and issues to be addressed (Bajpai 2000, Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007, Paris 2001, Owen 2004a, 2004b, King and Murray 2001, Alkire 2003).

Alternative conception of security and expansion beyond military threats to state territorial borders to non-military threats will respond to security challenges of communities, states, and people. Traditional state security conception limits threats to national borders or territorial security. While, threats emanates

from within the states along ethno-religious cum resources insurgencies, numerous criminalities that are direct and indirect fall out of developmental gaps, political leadership failure, weak governance, unemployment, marginalization, human right abuses and environmental degradation are rife. Traditional security debate left out the crucial debates on security within state borders afflicting the Nigerian nation-state. Thus, the rationales for a research focus on rethinking security and development. The research focus examines the human security and states security analysis and the import of human security for development; the debate of the traditional military to state security and non-military threats to human welfare and wellbeing; the analysis of the Boko Haram insurgencies from human security perspective. The paper turns to the analysis of human security versus state security analysis emphasizing the importance of human security for development.

2. Human Security vs. State Security

Traditionally, threats from other states have priority in security analysis. Military capability of a state to defend its territorial integrity and sovereignty is the main security value. State security embeds the belief that territorial safety translates to individual security. However, contemporary realities challenge traditional state security notion and military threats as the only security threat. The state security argument is more relevant to bipolar security debate. The post-cold war security threats call attention to other insecurities to human survival, especially in the absence of military threats to state border. Human suffering exacerbated from within the state and across borders. These include poverty, hunger, diseases, wars and civil conflicts, strife, human, arms and drug trafficking, human rights abuses and violations, oppression, repression, economic collapse and environmental degradation among others. Newman (2001, 240) observes the traditional conceptions of state security are important but inadequate to guarantee human welfare. Protection of state territorial borders from

external aggression is not sufficient guarantee of citizens' security from internal threats or danger. The dangerous assumption that territorial security will necessarily amount to individual or human security is rapidly dissipating. Human security attempts to redress the lop-sidedness of attention in security prioritization and expands the security analysis from military to non-military threats. The state-centric security analysis, entrenched on the principle of social contract, is uncritical of state neglect of the terms of social contract to the people (Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007, 18). Some states are the very actors that threaten their own people through repression, genocide, or massacre (Lee 2004).

Human security necessitates a new conceptual and epistemological emphasis different from those of orthodox security (Thomas 1999). Human security approach reverses the equation of state sovereignty serving the interest of the sovereign, rather, it redefines sovereignty in terms of responsibility to serve and support the people from which they derive their sovereignty (Newman 2004, 358; Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007, 238). It includes security from economic deprivation, an acceptable quality of life and a guarantee of fundamental human rights. Its values include "basic needs, sustained economic development, human rights and fundamental freedoms, rule of law, good governance, sustainable development and social equity" (Axworthy 1997, 184). Human security adopts a broad and expanded approach of all threats to human survival, life and dignity as well as their expediency and policy importance.

Anna (2000) elucidates the link between human security, sustainable human development and national security. Human security "encompasses human rights, good governance, access to education and healthcare and ensuring that each individual has opportunities and choices to fulfil his or her potential". National and human security build on meeting basic needs and achieving economic growth that will translate to improved human welfare, ensure safety of

people, reduce conflict tendencies and provide sustainable development. Thus,

Human security refers to the quality of life of the people of a society or polity. Succinctly, anything, which degrades quality of life – demographic pressures, diminished access to stock of resources, and so on – is a security threat. Conversely, anything which can upgrade quality of life – economic growth, improved access to resources, social and political empowerment, and so on – is an enhancement of human security (Thakur 1997:53-54).

Human security is a groundbreaking departure from state-based security analysis. Epistemologically, it emphasizes ethical principles as the fundamental aim of security, and a new methodological approach to achieve development and security (Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007, 20). In ethical terms, human security reorients attention and responsibility to achieve security through redistribution, equity and justice. It is a fundamental human right to provide security in a way that ensure redistribution of wealth and resources to those who lack access to it. Consequently, human insecurity impact negatively on peace and stability within and between states (Newman 2001, 240-241). This perspective is essential "so that people will consider security issues as not only an abstract concept but also a basic demand, a human right, and a personal responsibility that is necessary in order to lead a better life" (Lee 2004:39). The pursuit of national security at the expense of or at the detriment of human security is severely morally depraved (Lee 2004, 40). Fundamental ethical principles include "respect for life and the recognition of human dignity as organising principles for social action. Without an ethical code no security is possible" (Neff 1999, 20). Thus, human security renegotiated the state sovereignty approach of traditional security studies. In essence, state sovereignty extends beyond the capacity of the state to secure live and livelihood of people within it and the territorial borders to guarantee the freedom of

its own citizens from oppression, violence, threats to their lives and livelihood (Newman 2010, 77-94). Human security expands the scope of security from 'threat, use and control of military force' to include non-military threats to human lives and shift attention to the individual, as the *raison d'être* of security. Human security is essential for human welfare and wellbeing, and critical to addressing the development gaps engendering insecurity. The paper argues for the expansion from traditional military security to state borders from external aggression downward to human security and non-military threats.

3. From Traditional Military Threats to Non-Military Threats: The Debates

Scholars have stressed that multidimensional nature of security is not a new discovery to security analysis. They fault the conception of security as "threat, use, and control of military force." Alternative security thinking offers diverse referent objects and different means of achieving security, making security studies more empirical and germane to policy objectives and imperatives (Baldwin 1997, 23; Colin 2007, 2; Krause and Williams 1996; 1997).

Booth's (1991, 2007) Critical Security Studies (CSS) approach rooted in critical social theory and post-Marxist tradition, conceives security in terms of emancipation against power and order (Booth 1991). A radical transformation of social relations aimed at conditioning security theory to human realities and redress inequalities that impede human welfare based on ethical principles of redistributive justice (Booth 2007, 17-8). Thus, security becomes responsive to injustices, oppression, class, gender, race categorization. CSS built on the social construction of threats and objects of security, exposes the limitation of traditional security discourse (Mutimer 2007). Thus, CSS re-interrogate the ontology and epistemology of realism and reject the universalizing knowledge claims and value-free 'truth' (Newman 2010, 84). Analytical appraisal of relationship between critical theory and emancipatory ideas leads to a main

issue in social theory, the agent-structure debate. CSS emphasizes the individual as the new referent object, and non-military threats afflicting people in southern states than military threats from their neighbours. It is imperative to emphasize the security needs of the people and countries over hegemonic security discourse (Jones 1995, 299-319).

Walker reviews the dominant realist security thinking, yet prefers global or world security to security analysis that considers human welfare as central to state security¹. The state remains the most viable political actor and enjoys monopoly as the only legitimate authority. Thus, other referent object is subsumed within the state coercive power at the micro and macro levels. Walker is rigidly obsessed with the idea of a political community in a world that individual actors are gaining more prominence and influence in international affairs. More critically, Walker's view betrays the insecurity emanating from within states, and less relevant to security challenges of developing countries (Walker 1990, 3-27).

Walt evaluates the expansion of threats to non-military threats as critical security concerns. Yet, redirecting attention to non-military threats may hamper the intellectual coherence, and incapable of providing solutions to any of the major security challenges. "The fact that other hazards exist does not eliminate the danger of war. Any attempt to understand the evolution of human society, let alone the prospect of peace, must take account of the role of military force" (Walt 1991, 211-239).

Kolodziej (1992, 421-438), faults Walt's "The Renaissance of Security Studies" despite its insightful analysis. Walt's limited conception of security is inadequate to deal with numerous security problems based purely on neorealist approach. This has limited theoretical utility for policy outcome. While the essay acknowledges threats to state territorial borders, it rules out completely the security challenges posed by state to groups and individuals. Kolodziej rejects the intellectual coherence argument of state-centric scholars. In addition, Krause (1996, 319-354) argues that

the implication of preserving intellectual coherence of security studies, and the exclusion of non-military threats to survival that constitute severe security threats to states in developing countries render traditional security analysis less relevant and limited to narrow security threats. Krause observes that the major challenges to the Third World states are fundamental institutional and political weaknesses. Hence, threats emerge not only from other states, but from within the state, or from groups that cut across state boundaries. Military development is exogenous to these nations' development and the ruler/ruled relationship is not based on or informed by negotiation (Krause 1996). The divergence in the security experience of western and Third world states can be attributed to two factors/variables: (a) the history of state formation and the pattern of elite recruitment; and (b) regime establishment and maintenance (Ayooob 1984, 41-51). The realist security assumptions are more relevant to experience of developed north than south where political institutions are weak, lack cohesion and confine mainly to regime security to the detriment of the interests of the larger segment of society.

Attempt to broaden the neorealist conception of security to include a wider range of potential threats, ranging from economic and environmental issues to human rights and migration accompanied the aim to widen the security agenda either by moving down to individual or humans or up to the international or global. Traditional state centric analysis is recalibrated using different terms such as "common, cooperative, collective, and comprehensive" to foster multilateral security cooperation and lessen emphasis on the arms race. Realist thinking that restricts the state as the only security referent object and international system as anarchical has a limited conception of security analysis in relations to people and the sovereign (Krause and Williams 1996, 229-254; 1997).

Beyond the realist state-centric military focus, Ullman (1983, 129-153), expands threats to national security in terms of fall in

the standard of living of a people that "threatens significantly to narrow the range of policy choices available to the government and non-state actors ranging from external aggression to internal rebellion with varying degrees of difficulties to combat". Thus, Rothschild (1995) extends security from nation-state to the security of groups and individuals. It is extended downward from nations to individuals and from security of nations to international system, or of a supranational physical environment; upwards from the nations to the biosphere. The concept of security is extended horizontally from military to political, economic, social, environmental, or human security. Rothschild points out that the pluralistic understanding of security as an object of individuals and groups as well as states characterised the period from the mid-17th century to the French Revolution. Rothschild's contribution emphasizes that security was from inception dominated by individual security. The dominant realist security thinking as statecraft and strategy developed in the 1950s in the context of a bipolar world order (Jones 1995).

Scholars with expanded conception have not restricted security analysis to war or threat of militarism. According to Baldwin (2002) citing Quincy Wright's *Study of War* (1942), war primarily is a problem to be solved, a disease to be cured, rather than an instrument of statecraft. Quoting Fox, Baldwin portrays war as the malfunction of the international system. Baldwin quoting Brodie, describes security as "a derivative value, being meaningful only in so far as it promotes and maintains other values which have been or are being realized and are thought worth securing, though in proportion to the magnitude of the threat it may displace all others in primacy". This definition encompasses other security value beyond state military threat and its pre-eminence is determined by the worth of threat surmounted. In Walter Lippmann's words, "a nation is secure to the extent to which it is not in danger of having to sacrifice core values, if it wishes to avoid war, and is able, if challenged, to maintain them by victory in such

a war” (Wolfer 1952, 484). Security in an objective sense, “measures the absence of threats to acquired values”, and in a subjective sense, “the absence of fear that such values will be attacked” (Wolfer 1952, 485). Security in both objective and subjective senses transcends preservation of state territoriality but include other core values considered sacrosanct. Thus, traditional state-centric military focus is insufficient approach to addressing the threats to security within state borders. Hence, the imperative to expand the scope of security threats beyond state territorial borders to non-military threats to human wellbeing. Developmental lacuna from decades of neglect of opportunities, imprudence, and impunity continue to haunt and hobble the nation from attaining a lofty height among comity of nations within its sub-region and the globe.

4. Analysis of the Boko Haram Insurgencies: Human Security Perspective

Boko Haram (BH) is a salafist jihadist movement, which literally means western education is forbidden. The movement preaches anti-statist ideology. Historically, BH insurgency is not the first of its kind as scholars have interrogated the menace of violent religious uprising in the north (Falola 1998; Adesoji 2010; 2011; Agbiboa 2013; Chotia 2012, Loimer 2012). In 2009, the clash between the state security forces and the BH on the use of helmet triggered the rebellion for days in Maiduguri. The state security forces crackdown on the group left several hundreds dead including the group leader, Mohammed Yusuf in police custody. In 2010, under a new leadership, BH grew more lethal, unleashing sporadic attacks across the northeast region using guerrilla warfare tactics. BH’s ultimate goal is to transform the western state system to an Islamic state in northern Nigeria (Asfura-Heim, Mcquaid 2015:19).

The Nigerian military operations to quell the insurgency radicalized the movement, exploiting Nigerian porous border and networking with regional jihadist to unleash terror on the state, its security agencies and the

people as a means of scoring political point in expressing group grievances and aggression (Agbiboa 2013, 3-9, Loimeier 2012, 150–152; Weeraratne 2015; Muhammed 2014). BH insurgents attack indiscriminately not sparing religious places including churches and mosques, residential locations, markets, municipal buildings and international institutions including attack on UN building, killing of expatriates among others.

In April 2014, Boko haram kidnapped 276 girls from Government Girls Science School at Chibok. This ugly development not only makes schools unsafe for pupils but also undermines the security of lives and property in the entire region in particular and Nigeria as a whole. The repeated incursion into school at Dapchi in 2018 and the increasing number of victims in Boko haram captivity have remained a fundamental challenge to safety of lives. Insurgency results in rising number of internally displaced persons, thousands of people killed and many others remained in Boko haram captivity.

Property worth \$6.9 billion has been lost since the uprising aggravating poverty in the region. Borno state alone count for two-third of this loss. The northeast experiences severe humanitarian and post displacement crises with all its attendant social consequences. The insurgents have destroyed 5000 classrooms, 800 municipal buildings including local government secretariat, prisons, buildings of traditional rulers, including 713 energy distribution lines and 1600 water sources (Choji 2022).

Mass poverty ravaging the country and the apparent insensitivity of the political elites to the suffering of the large segment of the population provide a fertile ground for mass mobilisation in support of the group (Adesoji 2010, 97; 2011, 106; Loimeier 2012). Furthermore, the political elite recruitment of young helpless youth as political thugs is contributory factors to the spread of violence (Mustapha 2012:3). Consequently, BH violence poses a threat to national stability and viability, and create legitimacy crisis for the government (Asfura-Heim, Mcquaid 2015:20;

Mustapha 2012). Fundamental institutional weakness, lack of societal consensus on core values that shape political life and the legitimacy of the state as the foundation of political order are combined sources of threat to national and human security within and outside state borders (Krause 1996:319-354). Typically, in African states, power is use for patrimony, tyranny where the ruler is above the state and the law. In this context, state power can be used to unleash violence on citizens threatening their human security (Ikelegbe 2010:119-127). Institutional weakness to combat venality and larceny complicates government strides to stamp out BH insurgencies in record time (Ayodeji 2018:365). Mustapha (2012:3) surmises that elite wastage and diversion of public funds; mass impoverishment, youth recruitments as political thugs are three main drivers in the spread of violence. Thus, he recommends the

appropriate response to BH include security, development, and respect for human rights (Mustapha 2012:3).

The Nigerian economy has enjoyed a rising GDP growth since independence. In 2018, the GDP was US \$397.27 billion (World Development Indicator (WDI) 2019). The growth in GDP has not yielded positive impact on the lives of people. Data shows that the northeast region is the most deprived part of the country. The Oxford Poverty Human Development Initiative (OPHDI) depicts northern Nigeria account for highest incidence of deprivation by Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI). MPI is highest in Yobe with 0.635 followed by Zamfara with 0.605 (OPHDI 2017 in NHDR 2018:21).

The intensity of poverty by region is highest in northern Nigeria. Northeast is 44 percent one point below the northwest with 45 (NHDR 2018:23).

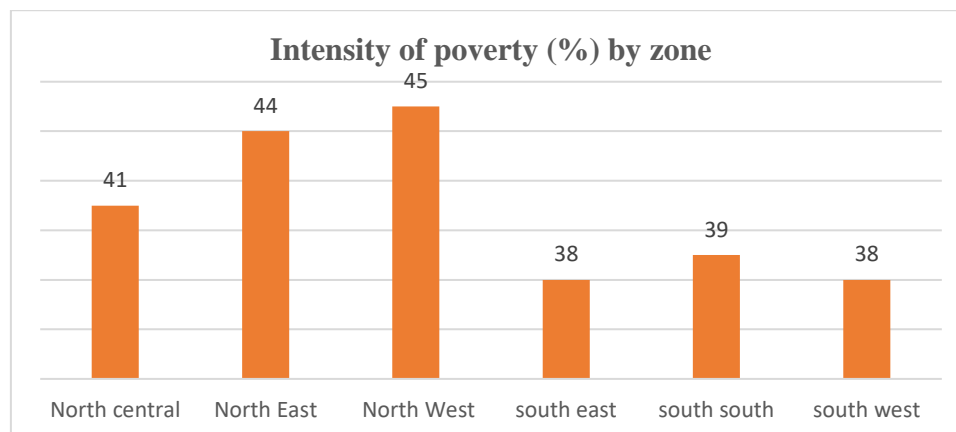


Figure 1. Intensity of Poverty by Regions

Source: National Human Development Report (2018:23)

The country's 0.532 Human Development Index (HDI) for 2017, was rated low and below the average for sub-Sahara Africa of 0.537, making the country ahead of just 31 out of 189 countries in HDI. In over one-half decades (2005 to 2017), Nigeria HDI increased from 0.465 to 0.532. This does not correlate with huge oil income. Life expectancy is over 53 years below regional average of 59.9 years and below the average for

sub-Sahara of 60.7 years (UNDP HDI 2018; WDI 2019).

The northeast record lowest level of human development compared to other regions. The Northeast states HDI scores below the national average of 0.521. Taraba with the highest HDI 0.4286 and Bauchi has the lowest with 0.3238. In addition, 46.3 percent of people in the northeast have life expectancy between 31 and 40 stressing the deficiency of

health facilities and related services (NHDR 2018:24-25).

Unemployment trends are rising and youth, especially rural population are disproportionately disadvantaged. Unemployment is highest among those with highest level of educational attainment (post-secondary education). This leads to sense of frustration and poverty especially among the educated (NHDR 2018:26). An average of 76.78 percent of respondents in the northeast states agreed that youth unemployment contributed to the BH insurgency while 20.8

percent disagreed. In Yobe state, 100 percent of the respondents agreed that youth unemployment is a major factor accounting for the insurgency (NHDR 2018:28). The "general perception suggests that widespread youth unemployment cannot be meaningfully delinked from the insurgency in the northeast" (NHDR 2018:28). "Lack of education and employment among the youth in the northeast is the cause of violence. Those engaged in BH violence are mostly jobless and without skills or trade and hence no sources of livelihood" (NHDR 2018 -31)

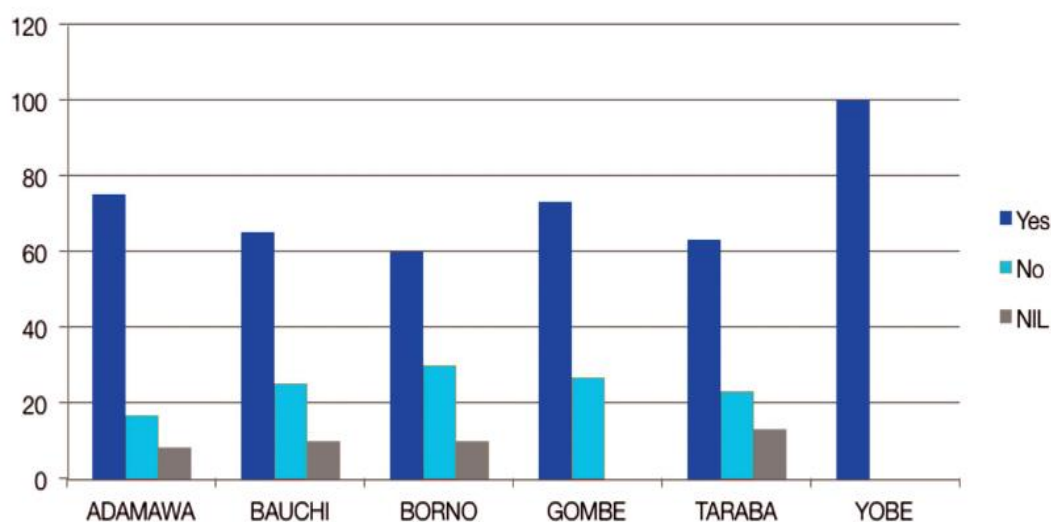


Figure 2. Perception of Relationship between Youth Unemployment and Insurgency (%)
Source: NHDR 2018:28

BH insurgency created army of internally displaced persons with attendance threats to their human wellbeing and welfare. "Human security has been a major casualty in terms of massive internal displacements, disruption of livelihood, violations of human rights, heightened criminality, loss of lives and humanitarian crises" (Okumu and Ikelegbe 2010:2). NHDR reports increase in number of IDPs, house and commercial areas that were destroyed and resulting in psychological trauma for many (NHDR 2018:37). Borno state record the highest casualties and highest

number of IDPs around 1.5 million (NHDR 2018:38).

5. Conclusion

It is imperative that Nigerian state move beyond traditional military concerns to address insecurity emanating from lack of development, social justice and human rights. Non-military threats to human wellbeing and welfare deserve state attention and prioritization in budgetary allocations and policy focus. The increasing absence of government in terms of relevance for human wellbeing and welfare is exacerbating

insecurity of lives and livelihood within the Nigerian state.

The powers of the state must be directed to protect and hold sacrosanct the wellbeing and welfare of the citizens as fundamental objectives and directive principles of state policy. Thus, government needs to expand and deepen its approach to national security in terms of human security in such critical ways that stem the tide of insecurity engulfing the people within its territorial borders. Corruption has degraded one time respected military institution that was pride of the African nation. Today, Nigeria military is unable to combat internal security threats in conjunction with the already overwhelmed police force.

Human security can be maximum or minimum according to Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Most important is the non-military dimension that responds to basic human needs and demands (minimum) to more transcendental level of human needs to fulfil human wants for participation, inclusion, and sense of belonging. Development is a necessary condition for human security. Even though development is not sufficient to guarantee human security, nonetheless, human security can bridge the development gaps and resolve numerous internal security threats bedevilling the Nigerian state much more than the traditional state-centric realist security approach.

The study recommends prioritization of human-centred non-military focus in policymaking and budgetary allocation to address numerous threats emanating from poverty, unemployment, lack of social services in health, education, infrastructure, and participation in meeting basic human needs and human wants.

The national policy objectives are not achievable in face of insecurity. Government must ensure and guarantee access to means of livelihood, create enabling environment to meet basic needs as well as other transcendental needs of the populace.

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