Analysis of the Cyclic Cause and Consequent Relationship between Insecurity and Poverty among the Populace in Owerri Municipal, Owerri North and Owerri West, Imo State

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Abstract

Insecurity has meted a deadly blow to the serenity and livability indices in the study areas, and has wrecked much havoc. These subsumed: displacement of people from their residences, kidnappings for ransoms, wanton killings leading to loss of lives, and lots more. This study analyzed the cyclic cause and consequent relationship between insecurity and poverty among the populace in Owerri Municipal, Owerri North and Owerri West, Imo State. Primary and secondary data were adopted in this study. The primary data comprised the Geo-referenced map and the location points of the study areas while the secondary data included the empirical studies. The base map for the Geo-referenced map was obtained from the Ministry of Lands and Surveys while hand held GPS was leveraged for the collection of the location points of the study areas. Chi-square was used in the analysis. The result showed that $X^2 = 366.15$, DF = 4, P > 0.05, and $X^2crit = 9.488$. Hence, this study concluded that there is a cyclic cause and consequent relationship between insecurity and poverty among the populace in the study areas. This study therefore recommends that, creation of intelligent maps, GPS technology, community policing and conflict resolution should be integrated for the mitigation of insecurity in the study areas in order to emancipate the residents of the areas from pauperization.

Keywords: Insecurity, Poverty, Intelligent maps, Global Positioning System, and Study Areas.

1. Introduction

Insecurity is a condition of exposure to danger, indeed a pervasive unsafe condition of existence. The insecurity situation in Nigeria presently is unprecedented leading to scores of deaths of not only innocent civilians but including foreigners, security personnel, elected officials as well as government workers (Usman and Ogbole, 2023). Businesses are equally adversely affected by the heightened insecurity as a good number of them stay closed most of the time or offer skeletal services. Consumer and investor confidence have equally fallen resulting in a decrease in business expansion which would normally have bolstered economic growth (Oyinloye, 2020). The daunting proportion of the insecurity challenge has caused the country's political and economic managers and, indeed the entire nation, to bemoan both the loss of their loved ones and investments as well as the absence of safety in most parts of the country (Onifade, Imhonopi and Urim, 2013).

This insecurity may not be unconnected to the increasing ethnic hate, religious bigotry, political rivalry and a growing population of disgruntled citizens in the country who feel that they have been short-changed and given very limited or no access to the common patrimony (Austin-Egole, Iheriohanma, Iheanacho, Ezeji, Okafor, and Wokoma, 2022). The continued state of insecurity has not only become a menace to the very foundations of national integration in the country, but it has also equally meted a deadly blow to the socio-economic welfare of the people resulting in the pattern of fear, disquiet and anxiety.

Austin-Egole, et al., (2022) avers that the state of insecurity in Nigeria is as a result of the government's failure as manifested in her incapacity to deliver public goods to the citizens. This lack of basic necessities by the Nigerian people (poverty) has resulted in the emanation of fear of uncertainty, discontentment, frustration and hopelessness thus creating a growing army of frustrated people who are ready to take laws into their hands and resort to violence at the slightest provocation or opportunity (insecurity). Correspondingly, Achumba, Ighomereho and Akpor-Robaro, (2013), highlighted unemployment and poverty, terrorism, porous borders etc. as some proximate factors that have contributed to the state of insecurity in Nigeria.

However, Austin-Egole, et al., (2022) wrote with reference to poverty and stated that despite Nigeria's vast resources and being one of the largest producers of crude oil in Africa and the sixth oil producer in the world, the country is still ranked among the poorest countries in the world. World Bank (2021) reports that about 4 in every 10 Nigerians are living in poverty with millions more susceptible to falling below the poverty line. The National Bureau of Statistics (2019) in its official survey data stated that whereas 39.1 per cent of Nigerians live below the international poverty line of $1.90 per person per day (2011 PPP) in 2018/19, a further 31.9 per cent of Nigerians had consumption levels between $1.90 and $3.20 per person per day, making them vulnerable to falling into extreme poverty when shocks occur. Shock in this case could take the form of insecurity which is the antithesis of security.

This implies that the preponderance of poverty is a serious threat to national security, especially to the extent that it propagates and abets crime, rebellion and dissidence. Thus, poverty can be said to be both a cause and an effect of insecurity. Consequently, this study analyzed the cyclic cause and consequent relationship between Insecurity and Poverty among the populace in Owerri Municipal, Owerri North and Owerri West, Imo State.

This paper is comprised of five sections. Introduction was captured in the first section while the second section delved into literature review on insecurity and poverty. The third section highlighted the research methodology and study areas. More so, the results were discussed in the fourth section. The fifth section concluded the study and postulated some recommendations to the conundrums of insecurity in the study areas. The execution of these recommendations synergistically, will eventually facilitate the emancipation of the populace from poverty in the study areas.

2. Literature Review

Nigeria has been bedeviled with escalating insecurity that metamorphoses from ethno religious, farmer-herdsmen clashes into cattle rustling and later banditry, kidnapping of people for ransom and assassination (Oyinloye, 2020). This has reached an alarming state that the security agencies are becoming helpless, vulnerable and not being able to protect the lives and properties of the ever-growing population of Nigeria.

Consequent on the conundrums above, Usman and Ogbole (2023) specifically stated that Kaduna state in Nigeria has been a foremost flashpoint to different types of this insecurity that has led to huge humanitarian crisis, weakened social capital and breakdown of democratic norms and values. They further stated that the insecurity in Kaduna revolves around three different but interlinked threats. The first is the herder-farmer conflict that results in growing tensions over access to natural resources like land, water and its use among communities. The second threat is the activities

of armed gangs engaged in criminality, including kidnapping, for ransom, arms dealing, highway robbery and cattle rustling. The third threat is from violent extremism. This threat resurfaced in 2020 when a militant Islamist group; Ansaru carried out heinous activities of series of other attacks and ambush of travelers and security agencies (Olajumoke, 2021).

There are so many remote and immediate factors attributed to this insecurity in Kaduna state (Usman and Ugbole, 2023). These were summarized by Oyinloye, (2020) as special treatment by people in power, loss of traditional relationship and cohesion, poor natural resource (land and water) management and policy, bush burning, population increase, crop damage, ethno-religious factors, hate speech and stereotyping, climate change, lack of voice and political representation among others.

In contrast, poverty is multi-dimensional and as such no single indices can be used to capture all the aspects of poverty (Austin-Egole, et al., 2022). Onyeiwu, (2021) listed the multi-dimensional poverty measuring indices to include: income, security, people's access to health, education, living standard indicators such as sanitation, electricity, clean drinking water and housing.

According to Lain and Vlishwanath (2021), Nigeria is home to the largest number of poor people in Sub-Saharan Africa (which doubles as the world's poorest region) and the World Bank's Multidimensional Poverty Measure (MPM) that captures dimensions of education and infrastructure alongside monetary poverty shows that about 47.3% of Nigerians- nearly 98 million people live in multidimensional poverty. Precisely, Amao, Ayantoye and Fanifosi, (2017) and Onoja, Onadorogu, Chagwiza, and Taqwi (2022) are in agreement that Imo state is in a state of poverty. This is further confirmed by the 28.6% headcount poverty rate and poverty gap indices on states by the National Bureau of Statistics in 2019 (Austin-Egole, et al., 2022).

Conclusively, many studies such as: Amao, et al., (2017), Onoja, et al., (2022), Austin-Egole, et al., (2022), etc. have been done on Poverty and Insecurity in Southeastern Nigeria, especially Imo state. Austin-Egole, et al., (2022) used an empirical assessment, questionnaire and interviews to examine insecurity and pauperization of residents of Owerri in Imo state, Nigeria, Amao, et al., (2017) leveraged descriptive survey to analyze the poverty status and income distribution among farming households in Imo state while Onoja, et al., (2022) adopted descriptive survey to examine the status and determinants of farm household poverty in Southeast Nigeria.

However, these studies did not integrate any geospatial decision support system in their methodologies. This study therefore sets out to fill this gap in knowledge by the adoption of the Global Positioning Systems' Technology, geo-referenced map and empirical studies to analyze the cyclic cause and consequent relationship between insecurity and poverty among the populace in Owerri North, Owerri West and Owerri Municipal, Imo State.

3. Research Methodology

This study adopted an integration of primary and secondary data to analyze the cyclic cause and consequent relationship between insecurity and poverty among the populace in Owerri North, Owerri West and Owerri Municipal, Imo State.

Data were obtained from both primary and secondary sources. Hand-held GPS was leveraged for the collection of the location points of the study areas (Table 1) while the base map for the study areas was obtained from the Ministry of Lands and Surveys. The geo-referenced map was generated with the Arc GIS (10.9) software. Moreover, the secondary data

were obtained from empirical studies. Data analysis was executed with Chi-Square to analyze the cyclic cause and consequent relationship between insecurity and poverty among the populace in the study areas.

4. The Study Areas

The latitudinal and longitudinal locations of the study areas are depicted in Table 1 below. The study areas are bounded on their eastern and western borders by Aboh Mbaise, and Ohaji Egbema, respectively (Fig. 1 below). Similarly, Mbaitoli and Ikeduru are situated on their northern borders while they are bounded on the south by Ngor-Okpala.

The people in the study areas engage in various forms of economic activities such as trading, carpentry, brick laying, auto-repair and metal fabrication. Sizeable numbers are civil servants and other peasant farmers who practice agriculture on peasant basis. The study areas also have main markets, namely; Ekeonuwa, Relief, New, Amakohia market, International market Owerri, World bank market, Nwaorieubi, School Road market, Umuoba, Early Morning, Ekeukwu, Obuy, Nkwo, Irete, Afor Ama, Timber, etc. (which are both periodic and daily)

Investment opportunities encompassing chemical plants, brewery plants, hydro-electric plants, gas-fired power plants, grain mills, starch production, cashews, fruit and vegetable juice concentrate production, integrated multi-oil seed processing plants, ceramics, inland waterway transport, and palm produce, exist in the study areas.

Additionally, City Population, (2020) noted that the projected population for Owerri Municipal, Owerri North and Owerri West (the study areas) were: 172,600, 242,800 and 140,100 persons respectively for the year, 2016.

Table 1: Global Positioning System's Co-ordinates of the Study Areas

Location	Latitude	Longitude
Owerri Municipal	$5^0.46^1 82^{11}$ N	$7^0.01^1 76^{11}$E
Owerri North	$5^0.45^1 67^{11}$N	$7^0.11^1 44^{11}$E
Owerri West	$5^0.41^1 66^{11}$N	$6^0.98^1 53^{11}$E

Source: Researchers' field studies, (2024)

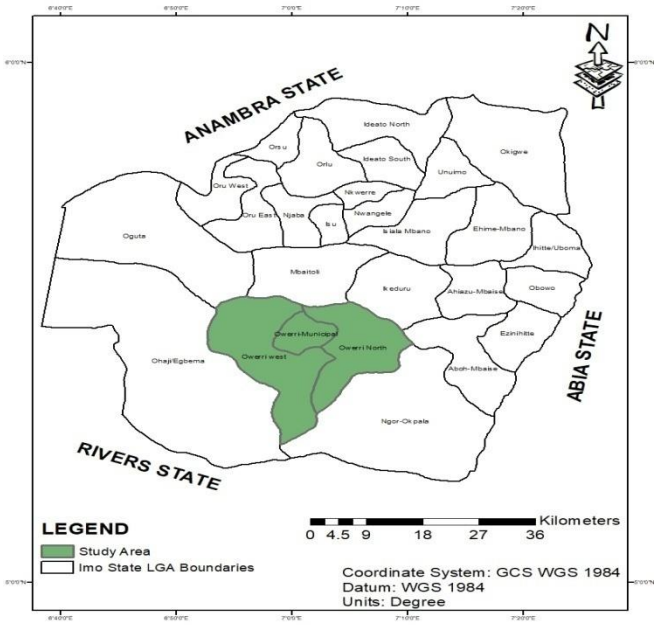


Fig. 1: Map of Imo State showing the Study Areas
Source: Researchers' field studies, (2024)

5. Results/Findings

This section unravels the empirical studies on insecurity and poverty in the study areas. Correspondingly, Tables 2, 3, 4 and 5 below, evinced the responses on whether the security challenge has negatively affected respondents' income earnings, opinions on the strength of the relationship between insecurity and pauperization of the residents in the study areas, respondents' responses on whether the attack on Police formations, especially Police stations has influenced the attitude of the Police in handling the crises in the study areas and respondents' responses to whether the local vigilante groups can attenuate the security challenge in the study areas while Table 6 below, depicted the Chi-Square test of insecurity and pauperization of residents in the study areas.

Table 2: Responses on Whether the Security Challenge has negatively Affected Respondents' Income Earnings in the Study Areas

Observation	Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Valid	Yes	351	92.1
	No	25	6.6
	Total	376	98.7
Missing	System	5	1.3
Total		381	100

Source: Austin-Egole, et al., (2022)

Table 2 unravels the responses on whether the security challenge has negatively affected respondents' income earnings in the study areas. From the table, there is a general consensus that the security challenges have negatively affected the income earnings of the residents of the areas of the study. Specifically, 92% of the respondents attested to this while 6.6% of them maintained a divergent view. This implies that the negative effect of insecurity on the income earnings of the respondents is ubiquitous in the study areas.

Insecurity has prompted the loss of man-hour in public and private establishments because of condensed working hours in consonance with the governmental and self-imposed curfew. This ignoble scenario will largely affect both the productivity of the public and private workers who make out their living on daily basis in the study areas.

Table 3: Respondents' Opinions on the Strength of the Relationship between Insecurity and Pauperization of the Residents in the Study Areas

Observation	Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Valid	Very Strong	163	42.8
	Strong	172	45.1
	Weak	22	5.8
	Very Weak	14	3.7
	Total	371	97.4
	Undecided	10	2.6
Total		381	100.0

Source: Austin-Egole, et al., (2022)

Table 3 shows the respondents' opinions on the strength of the relationship between insecurity and pauperization of the residents in the study areas. From the table, 45.1% of the respondents agreed that there is a strong relationship between insecurity and pauperization of the residents in the study areas while 5.8% of the respondents stated that the relationship was weak. This implies that majority of the populace conceded that a strong relationship existed between insecurity and pauperization of the residents in the study areas.

The preponderance of poverty among the residents is a serious threat to security, especially to the extent that it propagates and abets crime, rebellion and dissidence in the study areas.

Table 4: Respondents' responses on whether the Attack on Police Formations, especially Police Stations has influenced the Attitude of the Police in Handling the Crises in the Study Areas

Observation	Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Valid	Yes	312	81.9
	No	56	14.7
	Total	368	96.6
Missing	System	13	3.4
Total		381	100

Source: Austin-Egole, et al., (2022)

Table 4 shows that 81.9% of the respondents agreed that the attacks on the police formations have influenced the attitude of the police in handling the crises in the study areas while 14.7% were antithetical to this dominant opinion. This implies that most of the respondents agreed that the attacks on the police formations have influenced the attitude of the police in handling the crises in the study areas. The report of Amnesty International (2021) that in reprisal attacks, security forces comprising Military, Police and Department of State Services (DSS) have killed dozens of gunmen, as well as civilians, in areas were these attacks have been committed, attests to that. Austin-Egole, et al., (2022) added that schools were closed down as a result of the insecurity situation, leaving the youth at home and most vulnerable to these attacks.

The security operatives who exhibit unprofessional conduct and less concern for the welfare of the residents resort to unlawful detention, torture and most times killing of residents most of whom are the youths at every opportunity they get (for whatever reasons or cause) (Austin-Egole, et al., 2022). This killing of youths by both militants and security for whatever reasons depletes population and mostly human capital and further causes poverty.

Table 5: Respondents' Responses to Whether the Local Vigilante Groups can Attenuate the Security Challenge in the Study Areas

Observation	Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Valid	Yes	191	50.1
	No	167	43.8
	Total	358	94.0
Missing	System	23	6.0
Total		381	100.0

Source: Austin-Egole, et al., (2022)

From the table, 191 respondents were in agreement that involving the local vigilante groups can expedite the mitigation of the insecurity challenges faced by people in the study areas while 167 persons stated otherwise. This implies that 50.1% of the interviewees were in agreement that the adoption of the use of local vigilante groups can attenuate the security challenge in the areas.

This stance resonates with Omonijo, et al., (2017) who averred that the change in the mode of security from informal to formal system and its poor management by their leaders have played a key role in compounding the endemic nature of insecurity in the least developed countries to which Nigeria belongs. Diversion of funds meant for security and development for the wrong uses denigrates the essence of governance and precipitates cyclical poverty.

Table 6: Chi-Square Test of Insecurity and Pauperization of Residents in the Study Areas

Responses	Observed	Expected	Residual
Very Strong	163	76.2	86.8
Strong	172	76.2	95.8
Weak	22	76.2	-54.2
Very Weak	14	76.2	-62.2
Undecided	10	76.2	-66.2
Total	381		
X^2 = 366.15, DF = 4, P > 0.05, X^2crit = 9.488			

Source: Austin-Egole, et al., (2022)

Table 3 was used to test the alternative hypothesis (H1) which according to Austin-Egole, et al., (2022) stated that insecurity significantly causes poverty among the residents in the study areas. The result was clearly accentuated in Table 6, above. In the table, a Chi-square goodness of fit test was performed to determine whether insecurity causes pauperization of the residents in the study areas. The result shows that X^2 = 366.15, DF = 4, P > 0.05 and X^2crit = 9.488. This implies that insecurity causes pauperization of residents in the study areas, which is a rejection of the null hypothesis (Ho).

6. Discussion

Table 2 unravels the responses on whether the security challenge has negatively affected respondents' income earnings in the study areas. From the table, there is a general consensus that the security challenges negatively affected the income earnings of the residents of the areas of the study. Specifically, 92% of the respondents attested to this while 6.6% of them maintained a divergent view. This implies that the negative effect of insecurity on the income earnings of the respondents is ubiquitous in the study areas. Low income earnings due to insecurity will orchestrate a plethora of residents wallowing in abject poverty in the study areas.

Table 3 shows the respondents' opinions on the strength of the relationship between insecurity and pauperization of the residents in the study areas. From the table, majority of the respondents (87.9%) agreed that there is a strong relationship between insecurity and pauperization of the residents in the study areas while 9.5% of the respondents stated that the relationship was weak. This implies that poverty is a corollary of insecurity in the study areas. Areas of unprecedented cases of insecurity will be more susceptible to low livability indices than the ones with negligible cases in the study areas.

Table 4 shows that 81.9% of the respondents agreed that the attacks on the police formations have influenced the attitude of the police in handling the crises in the study areas while 14.7% of the respondents were antithetical to this dominant opinion. This implies that most of the respondents agreed that the attacks on the police formations have influenced the attitude of the police in handling the crises in the study areas. Attacks on the police formations will proselytize a scenario where the demeanor of the security personnel will be at a low ebb in the handling of insecurity in the study areas. This will further plunge the populace into penury in the areas under study.

Table 5 depicts that 191 respondents conceded that involving the local vigilante groups can expedite the mitigation of the insecurity challenges faced by the people in the study areas while 167 persons stated otherwise. This implies that 50.1% of the interviewees were in agreement that the adoption of the use of local vigilante groups can attenuate the security challenge in the study areas.

Integration of the local vigilante groups in the fight against insecurity is apt. This will constitute community policing which will ameliorate and possibly obliterate the hydra-headed monster of insecurity among the populace in the study areas. Correspondingly, a serene and calm environment devoid of the menace of insecurity will subliminally awaken business oriented ideas in the populace of the areas under study thereby boosting their business outlets which have become comatose due to insecurity.

Table 3 was used to test the alternative hypothesis (H1) which according to Austin-Egole, et al., (2022) postulated that insecurity significantly causes poverty among the residents in the study areas. The result was clearly accentuated in Table 6, above. In the table, a Chi-square goodness of fit test was performed to determine whether insecurity causes pauperization of the residents in the study areas. The result shows that $X^2 = 366.15$, DF = 4, P > 0.05 and $X^2crit = 9.488$. This implies that insecurity causes pauperization of residents in the study areas, which is a rejection of the null hypothesis (Ho).

This result therefore lends credence to the proposition there that there is a cyclic cause and consequent relationship between insecurity and poverty among the populace in the study areas. Subsequently, de-pauperization will become a walkover with the attenuation of the insecurity challenges in the areas.

7. Conclusion

Insecurity has remained a smoldering inferno whose embers has been continuously stocked and fanned by anthropogenic factors in the study areas. This study has analyzed the cyclic cause and consequent relationship between Insecurity and Poverty among the populace in the study areas. The result showed that $X^2 = 366.15$, DF = 4, P > 0.05, $X^2crit = 9.488$. Hence, it concluded that there is a cyclic cause and consequent relationship between insecurity and poverty among the residents in the study areas.

Recommendations

The study recommends the following pragmatic measures for the amelioration of insecurity among the populace in the study areas. They include:

Creation of Intelligent Maps: The map of Imo state showing the study areas was created in this study with the Arc GIS (10.9) software (Fig.1). This software should be leveraged at advanced levels to identify and map the clusters and hotspots of insecurity in the study areas. This will expedite geo-spatial decisions on the mechanisms for the attenuation of insecurity in the study areas.

Global Positioning System's Technology: The Global Positioning System (GPS) was adopted in this study to locate the latitudinal and longitudinal locations of the study areas (Table1).This technology should be leveraged by the security personnel as a spatial decision support system for the GPS real-time tracking and navigation of the locations of insecurity in the study areas. This will facilitate strategic security patrols and surveillance by the security personnel in the study areas in order to extenuate the menace of insecurity.

Community Policing: Table 5 accentuated that 50.1% of the interviewees conceded that reverting to the use of local vigilante groups will mitigate the security challenge in the study areas. This therefore buttresses the exigency for security personnel at the community levels in the study areas. To this end, community leaders should ensure the provision of community policing through the adoption of local vigilante groups in the study areas.

Conflict Resolution: Table 4 unraveled that 81.9% of the respondents agreed that the attacks on the police have influenced the attitude of the police in handling the crises in the study areas. Hence, it is pertinent that the government should pull the boots by their straps. This can be attained by setting up committees of conflict resolutions' pundits to bring their competencies to bear in dealing with the parties involved in the conflicts. This will give the green light to the parties involved in the conflicts to reach agreements on how to sheath their swords and reach a détente in the study areas.

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