

## The Nigerian Crises Situations: A Discourse on Repositioning the Economy

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**ABSTRACT:** This paper examines the Nigerian crises situations: a discourse on repositioning of the economy. The methodology adopted is a review of relevant literature. It was discovered that all sections of have been affected such as economy, educational system, health system, judiciary, politics, infrastructural development etc. the causes of the Nigerian crisis situations were seen to be high level of unemployment, Boko Haram insurgency, killings by herdsmen, militancy in the Niger Delta, religious crisis and corruption to mention a few. The paper concluded that these factors negate the repositioning of the economy and are responsible for Nigeria crises situations. Therefore, it is recommended that the fight against insurgency be step up, religious and community leader should preach peace at worship places, fight against corruption should be all-around and the ruling class should consider the poor masses and not enrich themselves only, generate employment as to reposition the Nigeria economy.

**KEYWORDS:** *Fallen Houses, Nigerian Crises Situation, Unemployment, Boko Haram, Killing by Herdsmen, Religious Crisis, Niger Delta Militancy and Corruption.*

### I. INTRODUCTION

Nigeria as a nation is blessed with abundance of material and human resources. There is no part of the country left out, oil and gas in the Niger Delta region and other mineral resources in other parts of the country including the north. In the past, agriculture was the mainstay of the country but was abandoned in the wake of the oil boom in 1980's. Such a blessed nation has experience a myriad of crises situations that have posed enormous challenges to her as a nation and have threaten her very existence. Seeger *et al.* (1998) state that crises have four defining features that are specific, unexpected, and non-routine events that create high levels of uncertainty and threat or perceived threat to an organisation or nation's high priority goals. Crisis springs up surprises when it occurs and it is inherently unpredictable. In the view of Venette (2003), crises erupted to bring a process of transformation and the old system cannot be sustained any longer. A nation without crises is expected to have economic prosperity, political stability, rule of law and independence of the judiciary, free and fair, elections and respect for human right etc. These would have repositioned our economy but in the Nigerian situation, the reverse is the case, hence this study.

Although, scholars have studied the Nigerian crisis situations but not much has been done in the relating the Nigerian crisis situations as a way of repositioning the economy. Owing to the above, the researchers is thus inclined to argue that solving the Nigerian crisis situations can reposition the economy. According to Maier (2002), the house has fallen is a bracing and disturbing report on the state of Africa most populous, potentially richest, and most dangerously dysfunctional nation. The one regarded as the most corrupt in the world over. In Maier's view, Nigeria is a country of rising ethnic tension and falling standards of living. However, the Nigerian crises situations: a discourse on repositioning the economy has not been fully explored as it is in other cases with previous studies as shown on instability and political order: politics and crisis in Nigeria (Dublely, 1973), economic crisis, structural adjustment and social crisis in Nigeria (Ihonybere, 1993), energy crisis in Nigeria: technical issues and solutions (Obadote, 2009), underdevelopment and health care crisis in Nigeria (Alubo, 1995), political economy of resources curse and the Niger Delta crisis (Dode, 2012), the Niger Delta crisis in Nigeria: pre and post amnesty situation (Ering, 2013) etc. This shows that the Nigerian crisis situations have been the concern of most researchers.

A peaceful and crisis free Nigeria is the expectation of all her citizen owing to its importance and is a spring board for enduring development and better economy but such an Eldorado is yet to be accomplished. This has resulted to the crises situations such as high level unemployment, Boko Haram, killings by herdsmen, militancy in the Niger Delta, religious crisis, lopsided corruption fight, and invasion of court to pervert justice (attack on Judiciary) etc. Perhaps owner-managers (leaders) of the Nigerian state fail to realise the importance of a crisis free Nigeria. Based on these crises situations, this study is conducted to explore the relationship between Nigerian crises situations and the repositioning of the economy.

## II. AFFECTED CRISES AREAS

This various area affected by crises are seen in all aspect of the Nigerian society. One of the areas is in our shattered towers with battered gowns. The educational system and its graduates is one of the area. The nation's economy has fallen. There is generally an army of unemployed people and underemployment in the economy. Inflationary level in the country is alarming which has pushed the interest rate in the country high as compared to advanced economy of the world. The price of commodities is on the high side in the county etc. A nation into which billions of oil money flows but Nigeria per capita income dramatically fallen in the past two decades.

The judiciary as an arm of the government is another area that has been affected in the country. In recent past, we have experienced closure of court especially in Rivers State. There has also being attack on judiciary workers in Nigeria. Court orders are not respected by the high and mighty in the country. There seems to be no independence of the judiciary which is at variance with what happen in advanced society. There is also a failure of leadership and endemic corruption that have befallen Nigeria. Maier (2002) argued that the ensuing mismanagement of resources by the government is a let down on the high expectation held on the nascent independent country. In Maier's Opinion, the house has fallen and is liken to crises situations. Achebe (1983), as cited in Maier (2001) states that the trouble with Nigeria is squarely the problem of leadership. The bad leadership in the country affected the way politics is played in Nigeria. Our elections are characterised by killings of people, intimidations of political opponents, ballot box snatching, rigging of election results and all form of election malpractices have affected the repositioning of the country's economy. Elsewhere, Bird (2002) stated that military leaders also corrupted, manipulated and intimidated local-level, indigenous, and community institutions of conflict management and collective action. These various actions further affect the image of the Country as a nation make repositioning inevitable. Next will be crisis situations.

## III. THE NIGERIAN CRISIS SITUATIONS

Crisis is seen as any event that is going (or is expected) to lead to an unstable and dangerous situation affecting an individual, group, community, or whole society. Crises are deemed to be negative changes that occur in the security, economic, political, societal, or environment affairs, especially abruptly, with little or no warning (Wikipedia, 2018). The Nigerian crisis situation is viewed in terms of negative issues that have bedevilled the development levels in the country. It is also seen as those situations that threatens the peaceful co-existence of the country. Some of this crisis situations as they prevail in Nigeria are unemployment, Boko Haram, killings by herdsmen, militancy in the Niger Delta, religions crisis, corruption and attack on the judiciary to mention a few. These are further discussed.

**Unemployment:** This is a situation where one look for employment actively but not being employed. According to Gbosi (2006), unemployment is seen as the number of people who are actively seeking for jobs but unable to find jobs. These individuals are able and willing to work and even looking for jobs but they cannot find it. It is therefore a crisis in Nigeria and has badly affected our economy. This is because there is an army of them in our society. The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) states that the country's unemployment rate rose from 4.2% to 18.8% in 2017 (Vanguard, 2017). This rate seems to be on an upward trend in the past years and continuous unabated and now become a crisis situation in the country. Not only there is unemployment, there is also a high level underemployment which is more disturbing in the country. Many employable persons are underemployed in Nigeria thereby become unsatisfied with the available jobs they could find to make ends meet.

There is also a problem of disguised unemployment which is quite acute in Nigeria. This explains a situation where official unemployment statistics sharply differs from the true state of employed or the unofficial statistics. The officially recorded cases are understated as compared to the actual number of able and willing individual who are ready to work but could not find the job (Jajere, 2016). There is also a psychological dimension of the impact of unemployment. Those who are unemployed cannot marry especially the male, those who lost their jobs are depressed and it can lead to cases of divorce of marriages, sickness, low standard of living of the people, etc. It also increases crime rate in Nigeria since most who cannot find a job join criminal gangs to unleash terror on the people.

**Boko Haram:** This is a jihadist militant organisation based in north eastern Nigeria formed by Mohammed Yusuf 2002 in Maiduguri which is seen as its headquarters. The leaders are Abuka Skakau, Abu Musab al-Barnawi. This terrorist organisation called Boko Haram is an Islamic sect that believes that western education is evil. They have killed thousands of Nigerian since they started their campaign under Abubakar Shaka. They have claimed territories in the north making it a serious crises situation in Nigeria. According to Awojobi (2004), the continued bombings, killings, kidnappings' and the destruction of property by Boko Haram have been of great concern to the Nigeria government and the international community. The study conducted by Awojobi on the socio-economic implication of Boko Haram insurgency in the north-east of Nigeria reveals thus. The atrocities of Boko Haram have severe implications or negative consequences on the economy and social lives of the people of the north east where the activities of the sect are concentrated.

In the same vein, Shehu (2015) wrote on the impact of Boko Haram on the Nigerian national development. The study states that Boko Haram adopted a violent kidnapping, slaughtering and killings of innocent people, destruction of lives and properties, bombing of mosque, churches, institutions and other governmental parastatals, mainly in the northern Nigeria. The above are all in the name of religion, later it changed to political matters and now it difficult to even comprehend its mission and vision. The study found the activities of the Boko Haram insurgent have economic, political and social impacts on the Nigerian national development. The study saw Boko Haram as a threat showing it a crisis situation that has contributed to affecting our economy. If such a situation continues unabated our economy cannot be repositioned to the path of growth.

Shuaibu *et al.* (2015), claimed that the activities of the insurgent Boko Haram changed in 2009 after the crackdown on its followers by the Nigerian government that led to the death of Mohammad Yusuf. The study revealed that between 2009 to 2015 the insurgency claimed lives of more than 13,000 people. The study also reveals that apart from the different attacks on security agents and their formations, top governmental establishments, schools, mosques and the kidnapped of 250 Chibok schoolgirls. Boko Haram also undermines the very existence of Nigeria as one sovereign political territory as they declared a new Islamic caliphate to be governed strictly with Islamic laws in the territory under their own control. The study further reveals that poverty and misconception of religion were major factors that facilitated the emergence and development of Boko Haram sect. Also, Tochukwu (2013) observed that apart from the deleterious consequences from the political perspective of Boko Haram, the activities of the sect have negative effect on foreign direct investment (FDI). The study further asserts that the world investment report (WIR) 2013 reveals that foreign direct investments flows into Nigeria dropped by 21.3 percent in just one year from \$ 8.9 billion in 2011 to \$ 7 billion in 2012. This has also continued unabated showing a crisis situation in the country. The mass emigration of non-indigene from the north-eastern Nigeria affects the profitability of business establishment as well.

**Killings by Herdsmen:** The Collins dictionary defines a herdsman as a man who looks after a herd of animals such as cattle or goats. In Nigeria, the Fulani people are mostly into this trade. Therefore, they are commonly called the Fulani herdsmen. There have been series of killings of innocent farmers and villagers in parts of the country in recent time due to farmer herdsmen attacks. According to Iro (1994) Fulani herdsmen or Fulani pastoralist are nomadic or semi nomadic Fulani herders whose primary occupation is raising livestock's. The pure Fulani herdsmen randomly move with their cattle's whereas those who are semi-nomadic make transhumance migration and returns to their homes to camps they established (Iro 1994). According to Duru (2018) a couple and five others were, that weekend, killed in three separate incidents in Lugo, Guma and Ushongo local government areas of Benue state. No week passes without incessant killings by herdsmen in Nigeria. Some cases are not even reported and those reported the actual number of casualties is understated. In fact, this situation is a crisis situation and the vanguard newspapers refer it to be a mini war raging in Nigeria.

This killing by herdsmen negatively affects the economy of the country. Farmers and farms are destroyed by these killers in the name of grazing their cattle's. This will in near future causes food shortages in the country leading to importation of foodstuff which will erode our foreign exchange. Akinyetun (2016), studied staff to gun: Fulani herdsmen in Nigeria and discovered that Fulani herdsmen have changed their tactics from the use of staff to the use of guns and the effect it has so far and it will continue to have on the country Nigeria and the society at large such as routinization of violence, reprisal attacks, offshoot of another deadly sect and increase in illegal arms proliferation. Others are intensification of ethnicisation, increased kidnappings and attacks and encroachment on rights of the farmers at large. This also shows that the activities of these herdsmen have brought the country into a crisis situation. In most cases, there are reprisal attacks as a result of their own attacks. Livelihoods are destroyed and this is to breed more hunger in the land in the future.

In addition, Nwobi (2018) stated that the cattle of herdsman in most cases stray into farmlands and it leads to trampling on farmers' crops. These destructions gave rise to rivalry between the parties and generate hostilities and social frictions. The study asserts that the Fulani herdsman and farmers' crisis hamper economic development in Nigeria's. There is also the view that herdsmen/ farmers conflict will impact negatively on food security in the Nigeria. The result from the study shows these crises will affect food production and the security of lives and prosperity. The study further argues that the role of corrupt traditional leaders and their dwindling control over their subjects, increased desperation amongst the herdsmen competing for the use of local

resources, political tension being created by various forces and grazing land as being contributing to the incessant conflict experience amongst these groups at an alarming level (Anyabe *et al.*, 2017). Therefore, this should be tamed by those who have the authority to protect lives and property.

**Religious Crisis:** Crisis is seen as disagreement or disunity between two groups or one religion and or different religious group that fight against the coherent existence or practice within or without them. In Nigeria a clear and most popular example is the one between Christianity and Islam (<http://articlesng.com/religious.crisis-nigeria>). The country Nigeria has suffered so much with many lives and property destroyed owing to various religious crises we have experienced in the northern part of the country especially religious conflict in Nigeria is dated back to 1953 in the town of Tafawa Balewa to 1948 (Ibrahim, 1989).

It also calls for concern as Adebayo (2010) stated that in spite of the natural and mineral resources that Nigeria is endowed with coupled with government policies and her various programs to ensure the country co-exist peacefully, among the different ethno-religion groups the country is still a safe haven for incessant ethno-religious crisis. This is worrisome because it has contributed to the many woes of the country. The study went further to state that while the north is blessed with ethno-religious crisis, the south is contending with kidnapping and vandalism of oil installations which has made country experiences a lot of economic woes. Many have also attributed the Boko Haram insurgency to religious crisis owing to the number of worship places that have been destroyed by them. Nwaomah (2011) argues that the frequency of religious crisis in the northern part of Nigeria was between 1987 and 2011 and that has left a damaging effect on the socio-economic polity of the people. In certain instances, Christians have acted in self-defence to counter attacks from Muslims. This has further exasperated the crisis situation in Nigeria.

**Militancy in Niger Delta:** The agitation for resource control has been on in the Nigeria Delta since the era of Adaka Boro before Ken Saro-Wiwa and his co-travellers took over. After then a new crop of youth took over until recently when it became violent to the extent they were called Niger Delta militant. According to Ibaba (2008), the protests and agitations that were hitherto peaceful degenerated to militancy, violence and hostage taking, as a result of state repression and militarisation of the Niger Delta. The study argues that it started with hostage taking of expatriate oil staff but of recent it is a frequent occurrence in the region with destructive effects on the economy of Nigeria, owing to continuous destruction of oil installations and even productions. This adversely affected the economy of the country and has pursued investors away from the region.

In 2017, after a long cease fire, the Niger Delta Avengers announced a resumption of hostility and that calls for several reactions from government, opinion leaders and some elders knowing too well that it will affect the region's economy (Ogundele, 2017). In a similar study, Eregha & Irughe (2009), examine the oil related environmental degradation in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria and the emerging socio-economic multiplier effects on the people. The study shows that the emerging social disorder and HIV/AIDS at an alarming proportion in the region resulted from the economic multiplier effects such as unemployment and high level of poverty. When the people are not meaningfully employed they resort to violence, prostitution, oil bunkery etc.

In another development, Omadjowefe (2011) attributed the poor living conditions in the Niger Delta such as polluted environment, destroyed livelihood, unemployment, and loss of lives among others to the Niger Delta question. This question brought about agitations which eventually metamorphosed into the militancy that has dented the image of the region. It is also stated that in spite of the successful oil exploration in the region, critical infrastructure such as roads, hospital and school buildings still wear a sorry look. The aftermath of the neglect and underdevelopment led to youth restiveness and militancy and has hindered oil and gas exploration (Sunjka & Jacob, 2013; Ejibunu, 2007).

**Corruption in Nigeria:** In the recent past there have been damaging reports on the level of corruption in Nigeria which does not spell good for the image of the country. Corruption is a form of dishonesty undertaken by a person entrusted with a position of authority, often to acquire personal benefit. This includes activities such as bribery and embezzlement, and involves practices that are illegal in many countries (Wikipedia, 2018). To President Buhari, corruption is the greatest form of human rights violation. According to Okoye (2012), Nigeria was estimated to have lost over \$400bn to corruption since her independence in 1960.

According to Dike (2008), the damages that corruption has done to the polity are astronomical. The study asserts that the menace of corruption leads to slow movement of files in work places, police extortion at tollgates and slow traffics on the highways, port congestion, queues at passport offices and gas stations, ghost workers' syndrome, elections irregularities etc. The list seems to be endless and the level of damages it has brought to the nation's economy cannot be quantified in monetary terms over these past decades. It has affected our judiciary and the justice system and administration have experienced the most heat. Adjournments upon adjournment, court orders are not respected by the ruling class etc. The reason why Nigeria richly endowed with natural resources and quality human capital is yet to attain its rightful place in the comity of nations and is responsible to her socio-economic stagnation is the phenomenon of corruption (Ogbeidi, 2012). Mo (2001) in a similar study affirms that corruption reduces the level of human capital and private investment share. This undermines the level of development in the country.

#### IV. IMPACT OF CRISIS SITUATION ON THE ECONOMY OF NIGERIA

This paper reveals that crisis situation in Nigeria manifest through the high level of unemployment in the society, Boko Haram insurgency in the north eastern part of the country, killings by herdsmen, religious crisis of different types, militancy in the Niger Delta region of the country, and corruption of various forms both at the individual levels and the government or institutional level. These have hampered the level of development in the country. It has affected our economic system by increasing the price of goods and services, causes inflation in the country and reduced private investment level and even human capital development. The crisis situations in Nigeria is responsible for our poor economy situations and have collapse our infrastructures, the roads are bad, our electricity is non-existence yet bills are paid by customers. The crisis situation has affected our judiciary; court orders are flouted or disobeyed in the country at will by the ruling class. Rule of law seems to only be on the pages of newspapers and in the heart of those who professed it.

The crises situations in Nigeria are of immerse benefit to the ruling class because they capitalised on it and to perpetuate themselves in office to loot our treasury. Gyimah-Brempong (2002), stated that corruption decreases economic growth directly and indirectly through decreased investment in physical capital. The study further asserts that the combined effects of decreased income growth and inequality suggest that corruption hurts the poor more than the rich in African countries like Nigeria. Corruption has affected our health care system in the country to the extent that our hospitals are in a sorry state. There is no equipment, doctors and health workers are not well compensated leading to brain drain in the sector and incessant strike actions. The educational system is also affected as investment in education is below the UNESCO standard. There is no sector that is exempted from the rot and decay that have made Nigeria to be in crises situations. Indeed, Nigeria is in need of development and repositioning our economy requires addressing the identified crises situations that have dented our image as a nation.

#### V. CONCLUSION

This paper, look at the various crises situations in Nigeria and how our economy can be repositioned. It is stated that there is a lot of rots and decays in the system which have become crises situations and has affected our economy. Some of the factors mentioned are the high level of unemployment in the country, the Boko Haram insurgency, killings by herdsmen, and militancy in the Niger Delta, religious crisis, and corruption. The paper states that these variables mentioned are responsible for Nigeria being a country with fallen houses. That has affected our economic growth, health care system, educational system, judiciary, democracy and rule of law in the country. Indeed, Nigeria is a country with crises situations and repositioning of her economy is inevitable.

#### VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations will help ameliorate the crises situations in Nigeria and reposition the country's economy to the path of growth and development.

- (a) The anti-corruption war should not be bias rather it should be all-round fight to tame the beast.
- (b) The military should step up their fight against insurgency in the country and they should be well-equipped.
- (c) Dialogue should be adopted to address genuine grievances.
- (d) Since cattle rearing are private investments, herdsmen should not roam about with cattle to avoid clashes with villagers whose crops are damaged. They should provide feeds for them like other livestock kept by the farmers.
- (e) Religious and community leaders should preach peace in their worship places and community at all times.
- (f) The ruling class should not enrich themselves through corrupt practices at the expense of the people and societal development.

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