

AN APPRAISAL OF UNITED STATES MILITARY AID AND SECURITY EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The United States Military in her bilateral relationship with Nigeria offer a lot of assistance for her military effectiveness. The military effectiveness of any country is assessed in her efficacious capacity and successful performance in combatant defence and protection of the country. This support comes in form of financial assistance for war equipments and human capital development of the military. The researcher using the method of critical appraisal finds out that even though United States as a developed country has accepted and continued to help Nigeria, as a third-world nation, in forming and strengthening their security, there is an endemic-Nigerian-problem in making an appreciable use of United States magnanimity as a result of corruption and bad-leadership. The research therefore recommends a functional and proper security education across the sectors of Nigerian educational system and military academy and their trainings.

Keywords: United States, Military Aid, National Security, Security Education.

Introduction

In the contemporary strategic global system, foreign military assistance, in terms of provision of technical training, military hardware, finance and material resources, etc; has profoundly remained one of the useful instruments of the United States (U.S.) policy device. Presumably, the main objective is, more or less, to help build national security as well as combat the spread of complex web of overt or/and clandestine transnational security threats. In view of this, U.S. has seemed to demonstrate immense historic responsibility to provide military aids to many countries of the world, Nigeria inclusive.

In fact, Nigeria is the second largest recipient of U.S. bilateral foreign assistance in Africa, following another strategic partner, Kenya (Veillette and Epstein, 2007), and the U.S. is Nigeria's largest bilateral donor, providing almost \$700 million annually in recent years. In 2010-2015 Nigeria received \$3 billion grant from the U.S. government on the areas of Military Assistance, Anti-Terrorism, Defence and Security, Global HIV/AIDS Initiative, Global Health and Child Survival, Development Assistance etc. In January 2016, U.S. donated 24 Mine-Resistant and Armor-Protected (MRAP) vehicles valued at \$11m. In May 2014, U.S. donated a new warship by name NNS OKPABANA 80 foot flight deck that is capable of handling helicopters. In a bid to free the 270 *Chibok girls* abducted by *Boko Haram* United States government offered technical assistance and expanded intelligence sharing assistance (Sulaiman, 2016, pp.3).

It is widely expected that the military assistance offered to Nigeria by the U.S. would re-launch the 21st century Nigerian military into the realm of professionalism, acceptable international values, preparedness to combat terrorism, insurgency, piracy, transnational small arms trafficking, as well as viable intelligence gathering mechanisms. Today, the expectations that there would be dynamic configurations and security reforms in the structural organization, as well as the effectiveness of the Nigerian military have remained an issue that provokes public and intellectual discourse because Nigeria is faced with plethora of security challenges ranging from numerous inter and intra communal crisis, youth restiveness, various political crisis, the *farmers-fulani herdsman* crisis, *Boko Haram* insurgency to the recent issue of unknown gun-men. The security situation is made worse by armed banditry, different dimensions of violence, terrorism, hostage taking, cultism e.t.c. The effect of this is so much on the economic, political, social especially the psychological lives of individuals in Nigeria. It is feared that primordial and parochial factors such as ineffective security education at all level in the school system, tribal and regional politics could undermine the efficacy of the Nigerian military despite the quantum of national financial budgets and United State military aid channelled in the security sector of Nigeria. From the above perspective, the study examines the United States military aid for Nigerian security effectiveness: an appraisal of security education in Nigerian educational system.

Clarification of Key Concept

United States

United States officially United States of America, abbreviated U.S. or U.S.A by name America, country in North America, a federal republic of 50 states. The United States is the fourth largest country in the world in area (after Russia, Canada and China). The national capital is Washington, which is coextensive, the federal capital region created in 1790.

Foreign Military Aid

Foreign aid refers to any type of assistance that one country voluntarily transfers to another which can take the form of a gift, grant, or loan. Most people tend to think of foreign aid as capital, but it can also be food, supplies and services such as humanitarian aid, trainings and military assistance.

National Security

The term “security” may be looked at as a state of being protected from danger or anxiety. For a nation, security connotes conditions of peace, stability, order and progress. National security has been construed in different ways, each of which emphasized vital factors underlying ideals. Brennan (2001) holds that national security is the protection of national survival, while Ray (2007) says that national security is to be understood in terms of the desire and capacity for self-defence. Ochoche (2004) holds that national security focuses on the amassment of military armament, personnel and expenditure. All the above definition sees National security has changed overtime.

It was expanded to include international economics, long term goals of national development and reconciliation. They are very important for the security of any nation. With this approach, Asad (2007) says “that national security cannot be narrowed down to exclusively military term. Socio economic and cultural aspects, problems of development and modernization, and national integration should be deemed important in considering”. Al-Marshat (2005) suggested that national security is more than territorial defence and should focus on the “Physical, social and psychological equality of life of a society and its members both in the domestic setting and within the large regional and global system”. According to Matthew (2004), Global development now suggests the need for another analogous broadening definition of national security to include resources, environmental and demographic issues.

Security Education

This is the study of the protection, safety and well-being of man and his properties including natural and man-made resources in the environment. It also deals with disasters and risk reduction in our environment. According to Edozie (2004), security education may be seen as that cooperative, dynamic and lifelong process through which a society generates knowledge, values and skills for its survival, sustenance, enlightenment and empowerment against all forms of danger and threats to its well-being and coexistence. That this process is cooperative shows the complementary role of security education. Aside the formal school system, its content may be learnt personally, or given by different institutions of society and the neighbourhood. That it is dynamic shows its responsive nature. This implies that its content and methods can change over time as security challenges change. In addition, that it is a life-long process shows that it builds security consciousness and strategies in the individual all through his/her lifetime. CISCO Security Centre (2013) defined security education program as essentially an internal marketing campaign to raise awareness about security risk and promote corresponding good practices across the organization.

In a study, Parktinson (2019) examined the politics of America’s foreign aid and development in Nigeria, using descriptive statistics and dependency theory, the findings revealed that there are reasons behind America giving aid to Nigeria and other under developed countries which ranges from assistance for them to be able to get out of poverty and get developed, to the hidden interest of America influencing their polity, relatively controlling their economy. Similarly, the study of Sullivan and Tessman (2018) investigated United States Military aid and recipient state cooperation. The study relied on secondary data and employed content analysis, using competing theoretical models, the findings indicated that United State assistance is given to countries that United States depends on for some foreign policy “good” and the United States will continue to provide such aid as long as that “good” is valued in Washington. With this recipient state behaviour is actually likely to be increasing uncooperative as level of American dependency (and subsequent aid packages) increases. In a related study, Prendergast (2013) scrutinized security assistance in Nigeria: shaping the international environment to meet U.S. National security objectives in the global era. The study relied on secondary data and employed content

analysis; the outcome revealed that the fundamental purpose of the U.S. security assistance program is to promote U.S. foreign policy and national security interest. Therefore, it is in U.S. interest to enhance the security assistance program in Nigeria and take advantage of this unique opportunity to strengthen ties with most dominant economic and political power in West Africa. Furthermore, Abubakar (2019) examined United State- Nigeria relations: impact on Nigeria's security. Utilizing inferential statistics the findings indicated that poor outcome is not due to program problem mismatch, but due to the U.S. bureaucratic bottleneck in Washington and capacity of the Nigerian security agencies. The underlying causes of insecurity in Nigeria, such as low literacy rates, poverty and weak institutions also impinge on the program.

United States Provision of Military Aid to Nigeria

As contained in the Congressional Research Service (CRS) reports prepared by Blanchard and Husted, Nigeria received various military equipment from the U.S. via the Excess Defence Articles (EDA) programme, including naval vessels and Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles (MRAPs) (Blanchard & Husted, 2019).

Table 1. Military expenditure (2010-2022)

Serial No.	Year	Personnel		Overhead	Recurrent
		N (billion)	N (billion)	N (billion)	N (billion)
1.	2010	289.3	49.5	338.8	36.7
2	2011	278.4	33.8	312.2	13.9
3	2012	285.5	40	325.5	140
4	2013	254.8	37.3	334.8	35.7
5	2014	232.3	43.9	176.2	46.8
6	2015	255.3	37.3	192.6	39.4
7	2016	264.8	39.2	309.8	38.2
8	2017	254.8	41.6	296.4	35.9
9	2018	264.4	38.8	311,1	64
10	2019	273.8	40.5	314.3	35.4
11	2020	289.3	49.5	338.8	36.7
12	2021	278.4	33.8	312.2	13.9
13	2022	285.5	40	325.5	140

Source: www.budgetoffice.gov.ng

U.S. Foreign Financial Aid to the Nigeria 2010-2022

In 2010 Nigeria Government received aid grant of \$376 from US Government for Military Assistance, Anti-Terrorism, Defence and Security, Global HIV/AIDS Initiative, Global Health and Child Survival, Development Assistance. 2011 Nigeria Government received aid grant of \$443 aid from US Government for Military Assistance, Anti-Terrorism, Defence and Security. In 2012 the sum of \$465 aid granted to Nigeria by US government for Military Assistance, Anti-Terrorism, Defence and Security. In 2013 the sum of \$195 aid to Nigeria by the US government for military assistance, anti-terrorism, defence and security. 2014 of \$223 aid to

Nigeria from US government for military assistance, anti-terrorism, defence and security. 2015 the sum of \$232 aid to Nigeria from US government for military assistance, anti-terrorism, defence and security. In 2016 US grant Nigeria aid for military assistance, anti-terrorism, defence and security, global HIV/AIDS Initiative, Global Health and Child Survival, Development Assistance of \$348. In 2017 US Government gave support to Nigeria with \$332 aid grant for Military Assistance, Anti-Terrorism, Defence and Security, Global HIV/AIDS Initiative, Global Health and Child Survival, Development Assistance. 2018 \$364 aid to Nigeria by the US Government for Military Assistance, Anti-Terrorism, Defence and Security. 2019 the sum of \$350 aid granted to Nigeria by US Government for Military Assistance, Anti-Terrorism, Defence and Security, Global HIV/AIDS Initiative, Global Health and Child Survival, Development Assistance. 2020 the sum of \$376 aid granted to Nigeria by US Government for Military Assistance, Anti-Terrorism, Defence and Security, Global HIV/AIDS Initiative, Global Health and Child Survival, Development Assistance. 2021 \$443 aid granted to Nigeria by US Government for Military Assistance, Anti-Terrorism, Defence and Security, Global HIV/AIDS Initiative, Global Health and Child Survival, Development Assistance. 2022 \$465 aid granted to Nigeria by US Government for Military Assistance, Anti-Terrorism, Defence and Security, Global HIV/AIDS Initiative, Global Health and Child Survival, Development Assistance.

Operational Effectiveness of Nigeria Military

The Nigerian armed forces and their counter-terrorism operations have been an issue of national and international concern. Despite reported foreign assistance provided for the Nigerian military to win the war against terrorism and national insecurity, available evidences have indicated the opposite. Those factors include:

Inadequate Security Education

Security education has an important role in the system of preventing the effects of natural and technological disasters. We lack the adequate competence, training and knowledge to handle national challenge and because of this our young people are not prepared for defence against security threats. The new model of security education is not applied to accommodate new culture of learning which include research activities which is called learning in compliance with the brain.

Corruption

Corruption in Nigeria has been characterized as “massive, widespread, and pervasive,” by the State Department, and by many accounts, Nigeria’s development will be hampered until it can address the perception of impunity for corruption and fraud (U.S. State Department, 2017). Systemic and far-reaching implications of corruption have affected the entire security sector and Armed Forces in Nigeria. The high level corruption in the Nigerian military has manifested in various ways. According to International Crisis Group (2016), the processes of defence acquisitions are shrouded in secrecy. In this case, rather than to explore government-to-government arrangements, there is an overwhelming preference for dealing with rent-seeking middlemen, so equipment can be bought at grossly inflated prices, with contractors

and military/government officials reportedly sharing the huge margins. Allegations of inflation or over-invoicing of contracts, award of phantom contracts through which funds are diverted to private accounts and fraudulent acquisition of substandard, sometimes useless, equipment are common.

Thus, the magnitude and expansion of terrorist/insecurity activities in Nigeria are documented. The failure of the Nigerian armed forces to defeat *Boko Haram*, kidnapping, unknown gunmen can be well situated on corruption. Nigeria has one of the most corrupt defence and security sectors in the world (Transparency International, 2020).

Accordingly, Transparency International revealed that Nigerian former military chiefs and politicians had stolen a whopping sum of \$15 billion through the fraudulent arms procurement deals (Transparency International, 2020). The report further reviewed that fifty five people including military chiefs and political appointees by Goodluck Jonathan administration stole over 1.3 trillion naira (\$6.8 billion) over a seven-year period; while an additional \$2 billion was allegedly stolen from the National Security Budget under the watch of former National Security Adviser, Colonel Sambo Dasuki who was arrested and detained by Buhari's government. It was also reported that in 2013, Nigerian officials were alleged to have embezzled U.S. \$20 million from an internet surveillance contract directly awarded to an Israel company in defiance of public procurement competition rules. Likewise, a former air force chief admitted embezzling millions via seven arms contracts directly awarded to a Ukrainian company. In fact, Schmitt, (2014b) maintains that 'corruption prevents supplies (as basic as bullets and transport vehicles) from reaching the front lines of the struggle against security threats in Nigeria'.

God-fatherism

Facilitating this capture are powerful senior figures - godfathers - who select and appoint personnel to defence sector positions (not according to merits or professionalism), but in order to *operationalized* systemic control over defence finances (Anderson & Page, 2017). In view of this, the selection in the Nigeria Military recently is done based on ethnicity/tribalism and religious interests.

Outdated Military Equipments/Inadequate Military Training

Issues of outdated military equipment to inadequate professional training are not forgotten; as many have blamed series of security attacks on hundreds of military officers on equipment shortfalls as well as low morale among army leaders (Premium Times, 2016). It is in view of this that the defeat of insecurity in Nigeria has seemed to be elusive.

Misplaced Priority

At the initial stage of *Boko Haram* insurgency, Akpan, Ekanem, & Olofu-Adeoye, (2014) opined that there appeared a common consensus that the Nigerian Government's response to *Boko Haram* insurgents was reactionary rather than

proactive. This is because, the military or security agencies reacted to attacks carried out by the insurgents rather than preventing them. Attacks on Churches, Schools, Police Stations and other public institutions were actually common and were in a large scale. There were also attacks on community people who seemed to be poorly defended by the security forces. According to Al-marshat (2005), in those days, there was an evidence that Nigerian security forces retreated from the line of fighting, leaving villages and civilians without any protection. It was argued that situations such as lack of military equipment, inadequate salaries for soldiers and unfair working conditions are sources of poor defence of civilians.

Security Education in Nigeria

Security education is one of the ways to help educate young people the importance of peace and security in Nigeria. It is channelled towards ensuring good citizenship education in the country, which will promote peace, co-operation, security and national pride. It came also to address the issues that are confronting us today like: terrorism, armed robbery, hostage taking, suicide bombing, cyber-crimes etc. security education supports one to know what security is all about; why they should be aware of their surrounding; know what can lead to security breach, how to report the breach, know what is crime prevention etc.

In Nigeria, the vision of security education has not been followed, security has not been seen as everybody's business, the children are not introduced into the business of security, the citizens are not inculcated the consciousness of security, some of our young ones can't recognize security threats and how to communicate dangerous or life threatening situations or handle simple personal security issues. Security education is not taught well at the primary school level and most schools don't teach it at all not minding federal government proposal for the introduction of the subject at this level, in the secondary school curriculum, it is only in the junior level merged with other subjects like social studies and national values. The senior secondary curriculum did not inculcate security education at all and it is supposed to be handled more at that level. Security studies are not seen in most of our tertiary institutions only few handle security studies.

Although, the Nigeria Defence Academy in Kaduna offers undergraduate degrees and commissions to junior officers with military and civilian instructors, qualified civilian instructors to teach academic courses in three faculties: arts and social sciences, sciences and engineering and uniformed instructors teach military courses some of which receive academic credit. In 2004, the Nigeria defence Academy added a postgraduate school expanding it in 2009 as an integrated campus and it was accredited in 2012 but the individuals in the NDA do not have the foundations to garb the teachings and put such into practice so as to utilize the military aid pumped into the defence sector.

Conclusion

The study examined the relationship between the United States Military Aid and its effectiveness in National Security: an appraisal of security education in Nigeria. The study relied on primary and secondary sources for data collection. The paper employed the method of critical appraisal to find out that even though United State as a developed country has accepted and continued to help Nigeria, as a third-world nation, in forming and strengthening their security, there is an endemic-Nigerian-factor as a problem in making an appreciable use of United States magnanimity due to inherent inadequate security education, corruption (including diversion of funds, systematic corruption, lack of maintenance culture, bad-leadership, etc. The study concluded that for Nigeria military to effectively handle security threats in the country, functional and proper security education across the sectors of Nigerian educational system and military academy and their trainings. Effectiveness in national security will be achieved if we have effective and efficient security education. It is obvious that introducing security education at all levels in educational system will go a long to address Nigeria's security challenges and other discussed factors that has hindered military effectiveness in the country. We have to explore the content and influence of security education in Nigeria: who is learning what? Are security leaders only learning to fight wars and suppress domestic threats or are they learning to manage security and prevent violence? Can we educate professional managers of violence to construct collaborative solutions to the security dilemmas of the future?

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made to improve and ensure effective national security through security education:

- There is need to include security education as a compulsory subject from primary to secondary level of education and as course in tertiary institution in Nigeria because education has become a universal cure-all, if taken in regular doses according to standardized prescriptions is hoped to solve a multitude of societal challenges.
- The junior officers should be recruited with at least a bachelor's degree; this will provide requirement for and appreciation for critical thinking.
- The senior officer education should be conducted in the country (tertiary Professional education) because it attracts civilians and international participants. These people will come in with new ideas on how to improve our national security.
- There should be effective research centres associated with security education; this indicates production of indigenous security knowledge.
- Also, once in a while, our instructors or officers should be sent out on a course to other countries to gain new ideas on how to handle national security problems. This is another indicator of international engagement.

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