

**ECONOMIC CRIMES AND NATIONAL SECURITY: A PERSPECTIVE OF THE NIGERIAN  
MILITARY (2009- 2015)**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The period of 2009-2015 experienced the consistent failed operations of the military whereby security agencies at several times failed to subdue internal insurrections. Several reasons have been attributed to these failed operations such as insufficient supplies of arms and ammunition, low morale of the military, leaking of information to the terrorists, economic crimes, and more. Attributive theoretical framework was adopted for the study while the study relies heavily on authoritative and valid secondary sources of data with content analysis for data analysis. Findings of the study reveal that economic crimes during this period threatened the national security whereby the security operatives on several occasions fled from the attacks posed by the Boko Haram insurgents in the northern part of the country. This paper attempts to look at economic crimes and review to what extent these crimes could threaten the national security of the Nigerian state during the period under study. The paper therefore advocates the use of electronic means in the transfer of funds as against the cash transactions in the country which is in a bid to monitor the funds transferred across accounts of individuals in the state.*

**Keywords:** Military, Economic Crimes, National Security, Arms Scandal, Government

## INTRODUCTION

National security, traditionally, reflects military strength which is viewed from the realist perspective. Here, the object of focus in terms of security is the state which is assumed that the greatest hindrance to national security is external threat (Nwanegbo & Odigbo, 2013). National security from the strategic definition aligns with the realist perspective of the notion which explains it from the perspective of amassing arms to deter aggression. The concept of a state was founded on the bases of sovereignty with the distinctive meaning of national security as freedom from external dictation (Nwanegbo & Odigbo, 2013). It is therefore in line with this definition that states regard the military in high esteem. National security from this school of thought is concerned with emphasis on the military perspective.

However, after the Cold War, there was a re-configuration of the international security architecture which now broadened the central focus of national security from the military perspective to encompass the socio-economic factors which explains that there are other threats to human existence other than aggression from external forces (Okechukwu & Anyadike, 2013). The contemporary thought of national security has its central focus on the people – the citizens of the state as well as territorial sovereignty. It is the security of lives and properties, security of the health of the people, security of the cultures of the people, security of food, security of the economy, security of the environment and everything the society considers as valuable hence the term ‘human security’ can be likened to the contemporary concept of national security (Nwanegbo & Odigbo, 2013). National security projects assurance of the state as well as the individual’s wellbeing from a wide assortment of existential dangers, for example, hunger, infringement of human rights, wrongdoing and culpability, political flimsiness and strife, environmental degradation, poverty, among others (Agwai, 2014). National security goes beyond the territorial sovereignty of a state. Hence, national security is synonymous to human security which is also known as development and as without development; national security ceases to exist (Pogson, 2013). National security encompasses a broad range of facets, all of which encroach on the non-military security of the state and the values espoused by the national society. Therefore, national security is seen as the summary of the security of the sectors in a nation – food security, health security, energy security, arms security, ideation security. Socio-economic issues such as hunger, poverty, diseases, migration, human rights violations and more pose enormous threats to the national security of a state. This concept of national security encapsulates both the traditional security and the modern security (Pogson, 2013).

How can human beings live together in peace and avoid the danger of civil conflict? Thomas Hobbes answered this by saying human beings should submit their obedience to a sovereign being or group of people elected by the people to make decisions on their behalf – the social contract. It is in line with this philosophy that the concept of democracy was established. One of the most distinguishing features of a state is the provision of security for her citizens, and defending the territory (Laden-Baki, 2016). It is the constant worry of government to manage the increasing threats to her national security due to the complexity of the international world and this is why government set up strategies and policies in an effort to curb the excesses of threats to the security of her people and the nation (Okechukwu & Anyadike, 2013). National security consists of both the military and non-military security of the state and the values adopted by the society (Anyadike, 2013). The military of a state defends the territorial sovereignty of the state from both external and internal aggressions. We live in a world whereby most countries have adopted the democratic system of administration in running the affairs or activities of the government in these countries. The Democratic Peace theory by Immanuel Kant posits that democratic states do not go into war with each other which makes the world a secured place to live (Okechukwu & Anyadike, 2013).

However, there are threats which stir up internal aggression and weaken the very existence of the state. Threats as hunger, famine, drought, poverty, diseases, inequality in income, violation of human rights, migration, environmental degradation, and more as well threaten the existence of humans (Anyadike, 2013). These threats kill faster than the traditional military warfare and the death toll of humans is always enormous. National security encompasses of food security, energy security, military security, health security, ideation security, environmental security, and more. When a state is lacking in the security of a sector and the threat is not well-managed, it gradually weakens the state and it spills to create tensions within the state. It is the summary of the security of all sectors within a state that leads to the national security of the state. In modern age, besides from the military provision to ward off aggressions, the government needs to view security from a broader perspective such as securing the most fundamental necessities of life, fuel (energy), medications, shelter, asylum, and so on for her citizens.

The cost of national security is expensive (Pogson, 2013). Besides from the tragic loss of lives, the displacement of over one-third of the population of the country, the socio-economic damage and the billions of dollars spent by the government, even the cost of rebuilding the economy of the affected state is also an economic reminder of the costly nature of security. In the situation of counter-terrorism, terrorism has cost billions of dollars in too many nations. The 9/11 attacks on the United States made the Bush administration to divert more money to the creation of more agencies to counter-terrorism and the doubling of finance to established agencies such as the National Security Agency (PolicyNG, 2014). Sectors within the state need financing from the government to sustain the relative peace enjoyed by the citizens. A state that relies solely on foreign aid is at the mercy of external dictatorship which in turn threatens the security of the state. Supplies and financing is very crucial to the maintenance of the national security of a state (Dada, 2015). The 9/11 attacks on the United States, resulted to several heads of states returning to the realist perspective of national security with greater emphasis on the procurement of arms and ammunition to deter aggressions against external and internal forces (Okechukwu & Anyadike, 2013). The Nigerian state has joined the league of nations that annually channel a huge chunk of the national budget to the defence sector. This huge cut is seen in the procurement of arms and ammunition for the military and the welfare of the military (Okechukwu & Anyadike, 2013). Therefore, the federal government equips the military through defence funding or arms grants with finances and supplies. The funding of the military in Nigeria has over the years experienced increase annually with few exceptional years with the decrease in the allocation of defence finances (Okechukwu & Anyadike, 2013). Right from the post-Civil War era in Nigeria which witnessed increased military spending by the government at sustaining post civil war developments such as military housing, construction, substantial salary increase, and staff promotion to the present administration, the capital allocated to the defence is more than the capital allocated to the health and education sectors (Ezeani & Ezeibe, 2011). Adequate financing of the defence sector in a state enables the military to carry out effective and efficient operations and in any case, when the funding meant for the procurement of arms is not realised maybe as a result of economic crimes, the effectiveness of the military on the security of the state will be affected leaving the state exposed to external and internal aggressions. Despite the huge allocations annually by the federal government to the defence sector, insecurity within the Nigerian state has worsened which is because the allocations to the defence sector is not utilized for the purpose of national security (Ezeani & Ezeibe, 2011).

One major reason for the continual increase of insecurity within the Nigerian state is economic crimes. Economic crimes are crimes that generate economic profits either for the individual or group of individuals involved; thereby damaging existing laws in governing the economic activities of government (Arowosaiye, 2015). They are human activities involving breaking the economic laws of a state. Hence, they are illegal activities which are punishable by law. Such offences include bribery, fraud, embezzlement of public funds, breach of public trust, money laundering, illegal arms deals, misappropriation of public funds, illegal oil bunkering, tax evasion, kidnapping etc (Mehta, 2004). The beginning of the Fourth Republic witnessed new forms of violent and economic crimes which have resurfaced, such as; kidnapping for ransom which is common in the oil-rich region of Nigeria, pipeline vandalism, terrorism, political violence, maladministration, misappropriation of public funds, and siphoning of resources to private pockets or bank accounts (Otto & Ukpere, 2012). Economic crimes have made living in the Nigerian state to gradually degenerate to the state of nature where Hobbes describes as being “short, nasty and brutal”. Disorderliness slowly draws in as laws are taken into the hands of the people with or without the consent of the authority in charge. Everyone engages in activities as long as these actions are right in their sight (Okechukwu, & Anyadike, 2013). Even the rule of law is gradually collapsing. The Boko Haram insurgency is such that has claimed over 23,000 lives with over 2 million people displaced in the region (Oyewole, 2016). Economic crimes affect the political security of the state, the human security, environmental security, health security, military security, food security of the people. In all, it affects the national security of a nation. As a result of this, key institutions such as Independent Corrupt Practices and other related offences Commission (ICPC), and Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) were established to fight economic crimes. Security is synonymous with development (Pogson, 2013). Therefore, when there is security in a state, socio-economic activities take place which in turn leads to development of the state. This is why states go to any length to ensuring security within their territories such as financing of the military adequately and in addition to the defence budget from the federal government, the security votes. These votes seemingly are to combat security challenges that may occur in the different states within the federation. Reports (Dada, 2015; Egbo, Nwakoby, Onwumere, Uche, 2012; Kumolu, 2013; Nnebe, 2013) have shown that these votes collected by senior persons in the federation run into millions and sometimes billions of naira on a monthly basis. Despite

this, Nigeria still faces stringent insecurity which is because these allocations are not utilised for the intended purpose but are siphoned to the private pockets of the individuals. Although there is no exact figure on the amount collected as security votes because these votes are not subject to the legislative process of accountability, thereby making the details of these votes hidden from the general public, it is obvious that these votes are enormous in magnitude (Dada, 2015). The rising wave of insecurity that befalls the federation indicates that these votes have not been used for the purpose of tackling insecurity issues as these issues still persist because the votes collected by the senior personnel within the federation lack accountability and transparency on the pretext that a certain level of secrecy of government activities towards security of the state is needed (Dada, 2015). Security is a major issue in the Nigerian state because it is insecurity that leads individuals to engage in activities that disturbs the socio-economic development of the state.

Nigeria has been adjudged as one of the best contributors to world security, yet at home national security is a challenge. In the area of peace support operations, Nigeria has participated in over 50 peace support operations under the United Nations, African Union, ECOWAS, and Bilateral Arrangements in terms of finance, supplies and manpower (Yusuf, 2012). Nigeria has also played a big role in the regional stability of the African continent- hence the afro-centric nature of the foreign policies of the country. This can be witnessed in the formation of ECOWAS in 1975 mainly to promote economic integration among its member states yet at home, insecurity abounds because of the political structure and the struggle for power among the ethnic groupings which has led to the polarization of national security (Yusuf, 2012). For instance, the Boko Haram, the Niger Delta militants, the MASSOB. Questions are often asked by scholars as why the Nigerian military, one of the well trained military in the world especially in the efforts of global peace support operations, is often defeated by the militias or terrorists at home. Are these military personnel not the same with others that engage in peace support operation in foreign countries? It is therefore pertinent to note that economic crimes within the country have contributed to the ineffectiveness of the military in operations in terms of supplies and finance within the country.

It is against this background that this study seeks to provide answers to the following research questions:

- a. What is the relationship between economic crimes and national security?
- b. To what extent does economic crimes threatens the effectiveness of the military?

In line with the research questions intended by this study, the objectives of the study will include:

- a. Establish the nexus between economic crimes and national security
- b. Appraise the extent to which economic crimes constitutes enormous danger to the effectiveness of the military

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This section reviewed literature related to the key research questions of this paper with a view to clarifying the gap in knowledge that this study seeks to fill.

### **Conceptual Clarifications of Economic Crimes**

The United Nations view economic crimes as any “non-violent crime that results to a financial loss.” As well, she views economic crimes as that group of offences frequently committed in conjunction with legitimate economic activities and largely by offenders of a certain social status who enjoy considerable amount of respect in the communities (as cited in Agu, 2009, p. 389). Mehta (2004) stated that economic crime is likened to white-collar crime which is often committed by a person of a peculiar social class during the duties of his occupation. In committing economic crimes, the criminal employs the aid of technology and communications to carry out these unlawful transactions and the victims of such actions are often times unaware they have been cheated. Economic crime is a crime that generates economic gains or profits either for the individual or group of individuals involved, whereby damaging existing laws in administering the economic functions of government (Arowosaiye, 2015). However, a precise and widely accepted definition of economic crime has been difficult to attain. This is as a result of the magnitude and the complexity of these crimes. On economic crime, (Ribadu, 2004) posited that they are human activities that involve breaking economic laws of Nigeria or illegal and immoral acts of persons adversely affecting the economy of Nigeria that is punishable by law (as cited in Agu, 2009, p. 389). Culprits of economic and financial crimes scarcely consider themselves to be carrying out criminal offences but rather see themselves and are seen by the general public as sharp, quick, astute and sly nationals who have possessed the capacity to maximally and gainfully abuse the accessible economic opportunities, although these crimes do not have the tag of social

reproach attached to them (Okogbule, 2005). These offences include bribery, fraud, embezzlement of public funds, breach of public trust, money laundering, illegal arms deals, misappropriation of public funds, illegal oil bunkering, tax evasion, kidnapping, currencies forgery, goods smuggling, etc. (Okogbule, 2005). There is a thin line of difference between economic crimes and financial crimes as the crimes stated above could be viewed as both economic and financial crimes (Ribadu, 2005). Such crimes serve as financial crimes because of the monetary value involved, since economic crimes always affect the revenues of the government of a state. On the other hand, financial crimes in addition to economic crimes could also include crimes within a corporation as regards to the revenue or assets of the corporation in question as it is on this note that, according to the International Compliance Association, financial crimes are those activities that untrustworthily creates riches for those occupied with the lead being referred to (Ribadu, 2005). In addition, these crimes involve wrongdoings that do not include the deceptive taking of an advantage, yet that secure an advantage that has of now been gotten or to encourage the taking of such advantage. Notwithstanding this, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission Act enacted in 2004 defines economic and financial crimes as:

the non-violent criminal and illicit activity committed with the objective of earning wealth illegally either individually or in a group or organized manner thereby violating existing legislation governing the economic activities of government and its administration and includes any form of fraud, narcotic drug trafficking, money laundering, embezzlement, bribery, looting and any form of corrupt practices, illegal arms deal, smuggling, human trafficking and child labour, illegal oil bunkering and illegal mining, tax evasion, foreign exchange malpractices including counterfeiting of currency, theft of intellectual property and piracy, open market abuse, dumping of toxic wastes and prohibited goods, etc.

Hence it is plausible to say that all economic crimes are financial crimes but not all financial crimes are economic crimes.

Economic crimes are also likened to corrupt practices as Kanu and Osibanjo (1990) view corruption “as the act of turning power and authority into ready cash” (as cited in Omitola, 2009).

The start of the Fourth Republic in Nigeria ushered in heightened corrupt practices in the country which was so bad that the country was listed amongst the first ten corrupt countries in the world (Omitola, 2009). This led the president at that time, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo to establish anti-corruption institutions to mitigate the corrupt practices of public officers in the country (Omitola, 2009). The most obvious corrupt activities were allegations of N15 billion against Tafa Balogun, former Inspector-General of the Police; the national identity card scam involving four ministers of the federation – Chief Afolabi, Chief Akwanga, Chief Shafa and Chief Nwodo as well as the corrupt charges against former governors DSP Alamiyeseigha of Bayelsa State and Joshua Dariye of Plateau State who were arrested in London (Omitola, 2009). There were also accusations against Prof. Fabian Osuji- former Minister of Education, accusations against Adolfus Wabara, former Senate President. The permanent secretaries were also involved in these accusations as well as at the local government level (Omitola, 2009).

### **National Security**

National security traditionally, reflected military strength which was viewed from the realist perspective where the referent object of security is the state as it is assumed that the greatest hindrance to national security is external threat (Nwanegbo & Odigbo, 2013). The concept of national security has over the years had arguable perspectives from various scholars from the definition of concepts which is rarely definite and to the study of the level of analysis. Still two basic perspectives have surfaced to explain the various definitions of national security by different scholars (Nwanegbo & Odigbo, 2013). The first views national security from the strategic definition which aligns with the realist perspective of the notion as it explains national security in the terms of amassing arms to deter aggression. The second views national security from the non-strategic definition which encompasses the socio-economic factors as it explains that there are other threats to human existence other than aggression from external forces (Okechukwu, & Anyadike, 2013). The classic essay of Wolfers titled “National Security” as an Ambiguous Symbol’ portrays the fact that analysis of national security can be on the individual level, family level, society level, state level international level as well as humanity (Balwin, 1997). Despite the variations at the levels of analysis some scholars such as Buzan opined that no level of analysis can be studied in isolation as every level of analysis is intertwined to other levels (Baldwin, 1997).

Therefore, for the purpose of this paper, analysis of national security is based on the state level and at the internal security of the state. In addressing internal security of the state, focus is based on the effects rather than the causes, therefore security is perceived from the ‘criminality of the people and not what turns them into criminals’ in other words the greater emphasis is placed on the effect rather than the motive of these

actions (Igbogo, 2015). The concept of national security encompasses a broad range of facets, all of which encroach on the non-military or economic security of the state and the values espoused by the national society (Nwanegbo & Odigbo, 2013). Hence it is possible to liken national security as the goal in a game by other team players which constitutes all other aspects of national security like food security, health security, arms security, ideation security. The contemporary thought of national security imagines assurance of the state as well as the individual's wellbeing from a wide assortment of existential dangers, for example, hunger, infringement of human rights, wrongdoing and culpability, political flimsiness and strife, environmental degradation, poverty, among others (Agwai, 2014). Onuoha views national security as "the capacity of a state to pursue and promote the fundamental needs and vital interests of man and society and to protect them from threats which may be economic, social, environmental, political, military or epidemiological" (as cited in Agu, 2009, p. 396) hence the theory of national interest is embodied in the dictum: *salus populi est suprema lex* interpreting that the safety of the nation is the supreme law (Agu, 2009). It is in line with this thought that former Nigerian President, Olusegun Obasanjo and the Nigerian Defence Policy identifies Nigeria's national security interests to include defending of the territorial integrity, advancing her interest and objectives, containing threats, managing instability, controlling crime, eliminating corruption, enhancing development, preserving the national unity; and improving the quality of life of every citizen (Gbor, 2004). Modern global improvements, however, have struck the need to see security in the more extensive sense as the battle to secure the most fundamental necessities of life – fuel, medications, shelter, asylum and so on. The Nigerian military through defence funding or arms grants are equipped by the federal government with the financial resources to provide the needs, acquisition and project execution of the armed forces as the funding of the military in Nigeria has over the years experienced increase annually with few exceptional years (Muhammed, 2014). Right from the post Civil War era in Nigeria which witnessed increased military spending by the government at sustaining post civil war developments such as military housing, construction, substantial salary increase, and staff promotion to the present administration, the capital allocated to the defence is more than the capital allocated to the health and education sectors (Ezeani & Ezeibe, 2011). Defence funding empowers the military to obtain or to get military products that are required to keep troops all arranged with a specific end goal which is to accomplish effectiveness amid battle operations (Ezeani & Ezeibe, 2011). On this basis when this is complied with, the condition of battle status as far as the execution of a country's military, their constituent units and weapon framework would be reliable with the reason and mission for which they are organised (Muhammed, 2014). In any case, the opposite would be the situation when adequate attention is not paid to defence funding maybe as a result of economic crimes which could hamper the effectiveness of the military on the security of the state thereby making the affected state helpless against external and internal animosities. In spite of the annual allocation to military funding, insecurity has worsened which is because these allocations budgeted is not utilized for the purpose of national security (Ezeani & Ezeibe, 2011; Muhammed, 2014).

This work adopts the attributive theory which is concerned with how individuals interpret events and how this relates to their reactions in terms of thoughts and behaviour. It is also a concept that people make sense of their surroundings on the basis of what they consider is the cause and what is the effect of a phenomenon either the conclusion is correct or not. This theory explains well the difference between a friendly person and one in a friendly manner. Attribution theory is useful when trying to forecast or predict how things play out. (Heider, 1958) who was the first to propose the theory, posits internal attribution and external attribution. Internal attribution is viewed as how individuals interpret events by ascribing the cause of conduct to internal characteristics rather than external forces. For the purpose of this work, the external attribution is more relevant as it explains one's behaviour in a certain way due to the situation outside a person's control or the outside forces (McLeod, 2012).

## **METHODOLOGY**

Existing secondary data was utilized to enhance the quality of the study. Secondary data was collected from published and unpublished materials such as books, journals, as well as papers presented during lectures, seminars and conferences. Also data were sourced from internet. The type of research used is the descriptive research which involves observing trends and examining the trends. The nature of the data collected is an integration of qualitative and quantitative methods. Survey research design is used for the study. Data for the research are from primary and secondary sources. Qualitative method of data analysis is adopted on the data collected using logical reasoning to arrive at deductions which is the basis for the recommendations.

The scope of study covers the period 2009- 2015. This period was chosen because it was the period of heightened threat of insecurity in terms of economic crimes and the continual failed peace operations faced by the military in the North-Eastern part of the country due to incessant attacks by the terrorists.

## **FINDINGS**

Crimes in the Nigerian society are getting incessant, as more people are indulging in criminal activities daily. People are getting more desperate and determined through the means of technological advancement and sophistication in imbibing criminal activities (Otto & Ukpere, 2012). Previous military administrations did not witness laudable crime rate, as there were strict sanctions accrued to criminal acts, especially financial crime, crime however reduced and people who imbibe this act, did with utmost discretion (Otto & Ukpere, 2012). A lot of people use position of authority to bend policy processes and actions to their own advantage, and by so doing; they impoverish the masses or others who depend on their leadership skills and authority (Gbenga & Augoye, 2011). The allocations by the federal government to the defence sector in aiding to combat the insurgency attacks in North-Eastern Nigeria found its way to the pockets of Generals in the army as well as friends of the government and other government officials (Laden-Baki, 2016). This action was taken to the loss of the country in securing the territory of the North-East and the continuous expansion of the Boko Haram activities. The swearing-in of the president, Muhammadu Buhari opened the crimes done by those saddled with responsibilities such as the procurement of two helicopters which are neither airworthy nor are they recommended but were purchased at \$136,944,000 instead of \$30 million each (Laden-Baki, 2016).

The post Civil War era induced several criminal activities and miscellaneous acts of violence in the country which till this day has metamorphosed to conflicts with sophistication of weapons as against the post Civil War era, conflicts against religions, tribes and over scarce resources (Otto & Ukpere, 2012).

Since the beginning of the Fourth Republic, new forms of violent and economic crimes have resurfaced, these includes; kidnapping for ransom (this is common in the oil-rich region of Nigeria), pipeline vandalism, terrorism, political violence, and most importantly as regards this research work, is the issue of economic crimes, through the means of maladministration, misappropriation of public funds, and personal embezzlements (Otto & Ukpere, 2012).

Economic crimes had always existed right from the colonial era to the post-colonial era. Before the discovery of oil in commercial quantity at Oloibiri in 1956, the scale and operadus of economic crimes was smaller such as embezzlement, electoral malpractices, and more in comparism to recent times especially with the globalization of the world and the use of science and technology (Tamuno & Edoumiekumo, 2012). The discovery of oil as the main-stay of the Nigerian economy ushered new forms of crimes as kidnapping for ransom, pipeline vandalism, and more (Tamuno & Edoumiekumo, 2012).

Oil installations were attacked and oil workers particularly expatriate staff, at any rate, initially, were taken hostage for ransom. All these were happening, in spite of the heavy presence of the Joint Task Force (JTF), comprising the Navy, Army and Air Force, who were sometimes overran by the superior fire power of the militants (Aaron, 2010). The implications of this parlous security were grave. Oil production figures plummeted to all-time low, as many TNCs announced production shut-ins. Specifically, average production figure for 2009 was around 1.6 million barrels per day, down from 2.7 million bpd (NNPC, 2009). The country lost an estimated \$92 billion in oil export earnings to production shut-in and crude oil theft associated with the activities of militants (Davis, 2009). The cumulative effect of this was a drastic fall in the country's oil exports. Consequently, public finance was subjected to one of the worst crises since independence.

Economic crime or corruption can be likened to the description of an elephant discussed by a group of blind men as these blind men each have different ways of describing the part of the elephant which they can feel and touch and is often different from the other perspectives (Oseni & Sanni, 2016). This in order words depicts the fact as other social science's concept, this term has different perspectives to various people hence there is no centralised definition or understanding of the concept of economic crime or corruption. Despite all these, there are three levels of understanding the concept of corruption which includes street level corruption, business corruption and the high level corruption. The street level corruption emphasises on corruption of the daily activities among the citizens; the business corruption involves corruption amongst the small and medium scaled businesses and the high level corruption reveals corruption among officials in high power centres in the society (Oseni & Sanni, 2016).

It has been revealed that one of the reasons for corrupt practices in the country is the fear of the unknown (Oseni & Sanni, 2016). It is the fear of the unknown that makes an individual to steal up for the long run. A good example of this is a student upon graduation has no certainty of job availability in the society gets involved in corrupt practices (Oseni & Sanni, 2016).

These corrupt practices have nearly brought the economy of Nigeria to be bankrupt as salaries and wages were not paid for several months in the country and the recurrent expenditure was being financed by borrowing which is very appalling to the development and growth of the national economy (Oseni & Sanni, 2016).

The issue of economic crimes can be likened to corruption which is at the foundation of Nigeria's myriad of challenges visible in both the private and the public sectors. For instance, Africa illegally siphons about \$60 billion annually, over 60 per cent of this percentage comes from Nigeria only (Onuoha, Ichite, & George, 2015). As well, looking at the Haliburton \$180 million scandal, the \$15 billion concerning the customs scandal in 2011, the N74 billion Aids Fund scandal between 2003 and 2009, the River Basin Development Authority N30.6 million salary scam in 2008, the N5 trillion unremitted funds fraud issue raised in 2009, the N12.5 billion ghost pensioners scam issue in 2011, the Alaoji pipeline fraud (N1.3 billion), the power sector \$16 billion scam, as well as the more recent \$2.1 billion arms deal also known as the "Dasuki Gate" are evidences of the corrupt state of Nigeria (Aje & Felix, 2009).

The Boko Haram insurgency is such that has claimed over 23,000 lives with over 2 million people displaced in the region (Oyewole, 2016). These economic crimes have been seen in the different sectors and parastatals of government and evidences have proven that they have impacted on the national security negatively. As a result of such circumstance which exists within the country, life in Nigeria is gradually degenerating to the Hobbesian state of nature in which 'life is short, nasty and brutal.' Disorder draws in as laws are taken into the hands of the people with or without the consent of the authority in charge (Oyewole, 2016). Everyone engages in activities as long as these actions are right in their sight. Even the rule of law is gradually collapsing.

The defence sector is a critical sector which enjoys adequate funding from the national budget as over the years, the expenditure on the defence sector has increased by over 50 per cent in comparison to the detriment of the education sector, health sector, information sector, communication sector as well as the industry sector respectively in recent times (Ezeani & Ezeibe, 2011). Nigeria ranks 44 in the global rating in military expenditure which makes her one of the largest in Africa and the largest in West Africa (Ezeani & Ezeibe, 2011). However, even with the steep increase in defence expenditure annually, the level of insecurity in Nigeria has heightened. This is because the funds allocated for national security is underutilized for the purpose which it meant to serve (Ezeani & Ezeibe, 2011; Okechukwu & Anyadike, 2013).

### **Nexus between Economic Crimes and National Security**

Economic crimes make it essential for the personal interest of the citizen to supersede the public interest in the distribution of public resources by the workers, in this manner restricting the capacity of the government in the allocation of resources and delivery of services which also leads to frustration and deprivation among the citizenry hence making the country precarious and prone to all manner of internal aggressions (Agu, 2009).

Economic crime also known as white-collar crime is a crime which occurs as a diversion from the culprit's occupational role or in the course of legitimate duties and transactions which involves the criminal stealing of large sums of money as with no use of violence and employs technology to take out these unlawful commercial transactions as the victims of such crimes are naïve about these transactions (Mehta, 2004). Such crimes are very costly to the Nigerian state. These crimes are mostly perpetrated by the educated class of the society which is worse in terms of magnitude as against the violent crimes usually carried out by the uneducated class of a society and targeted at certain individuals (Okogbule, 2005). Crimes which involve the educated class of a society within a nation shows great danger to the national security of the state as this class of the society is supposed to interpret the national values of the state thereby promoting the values of the state as in contrast to shrinking the national values of the state (Akwara, Akwara, Enwuchola, Adekunle, & Udaw, 2013). This in turn leads to more frustration and resentment from the uneducated youth. The result of such tension within a state leads to insecurity of individuals and groups within the state which is an example of the Niger Delta crisis as indigenes are crying out to the Nigerian government at the generation of environmental hazards in their communities. Taxation is one of the sources of revenue for the government used to finance and support basic socio-economic responsibilities like better security, social amenities and better welfare packages for the society. However, most of the elite Nigerians do not pay taxes (Arowosaiye, 2015). This in turn leads to shortage of revenue accrued to the government.

Economic crimes as well hinder the capacity of the government to protect and bring development to the mass of the Nigerian people by making their standard of living unappreciated. The poor and deteriorating governance co-existing with economic crimes leads to the collapse of socio-economic welfare of the people. Consequently, economic crimes have distorted and tarnished the image of Nigeria, and highly placed people

in the private and public sectors of the economy are being charged and prosecuted in the courts as a result of it (Agu, 2009; Arowosaiye, 2015; Nwanegbo & Odigbo, 2013).

The siphoned fund from the government by these officers is as a result of greed and the thirst to seek for more wealth by whatever means just to keep up with their social status in the society.

From the private accounts of many military officers, millions of dollars were recovered which was so alarming as to the extent to which these officers could think of where to keep these monies whereby a mansion in Badagry with sewage chambers was created to keep these funds (Ezeamalu, 2014). Also discovered was the sum of \$1 million stored in plastic containers and kept in a soak-away and with all these the Nigerian soldiers were receiving little attention or no attention in combating terrorism in the country (Ezeamalu, 2014).

### **Extent to which Economic Crimes affect the Effectiveness of the Nigerian Military**

The previous administration witnessed the siphoning of huge amount of money by our leaders meant for the maintenance of peace and security within the Nigerian state into their private pockets with some eminent persons such as Col. Sambo Dasuki (rtd), former National Security Adviser to the former President; the former Chief of Defence Staff, Alex Badeh, Bashir Yuguda, even to the sitting president being accused of benefitting from the scandal (Mironovich, 2015). Nigeria is rated 136 out of 167 countries with a score of 26 out of 100 (showing the scale of corruption on a 0 as highly corrupt and 100 as very clean from corruption) on the 2015 Corruption Perception Index. The protest by the wives of soldiers at the Giwa Barracks showed the critical condition of the state of the soldiers in combating the fight against terrorism which reveals that these women are fighting for the right to life for the junior soldiers (they are the ones that go to the battlefield) especially with poor quality arms and low-ranking ammunition as against the sophisticated ammunition used by the jihadists which led many officers to run for their lives (Haruna, 2014). The BBC reported the battle against Boko Haram as being weakened on the grounds that the jihadists are more often better prepared than the soldiers as this have led many of these soldiers to flee and abandon their arms and ammunition as the jihadists take control of these devices (Ross, 2015). One recent anti-corruption campaign in Nigeria noted that \$2.2 billion which was budgeted for the procurement of arms was deflected to the re-election bid of former President Goodluck Jonathan by his national security adviser, Lt.-Col. Sambo Dasuki (Oyewole, 2016). Corruption, as noted, is the reason for mutiny within the military in the North-East.

Notwithstanding the situation in the country, President Buhari has proceeded with the endeavours to deny Boko Haram an asylum in Nigeria and her neighbours. The President has investigated defence spending since 2009 and discovered numerous top serving and retired military officers and contractual workers blameworthy of defilement and diversion of public funds (Oyewole, 2016). In tackling this menace prevailing the country at the North-East, the president charged the military to restore normalcy to the devastated region.

These, among other efforts, including improved deployment shifts, have raised the condition of service and boosted the morale of the operatives (Olufemi, 2015). The planned regional force is also taking shape with Nigeria as a leader. Nigerian-U.S. relations have also improved under President Buhari's administration. Despite these, Boko Haram remains resilient in its terror, as it defied the December 2015 deadline set by Buhari for the end of its violence. Although the security situation is improving, maintaining constant presence with the ability to gather intelligence and respond promptly have remained important to protect lives and properties against the growing "soft target" attacks in the region. Despite the huge allocation of the national budget to the defence sector, Nigerian security agencies still imply that they are being underfunded (Oyewole, 2016).

According to *Premium Times*, the sum of N4.62 trillion has been allocated to the federal security for the past five years (Olufemi, 2015). The heads of these agencies acclaimed to such attestations as they have refused to give accounts of its spending to the public which is contrary to a transparent government.

The \$2.1 billion arms deal is one of the procurement deals which ended up as embezzlement through the Office of the National Security Adviser under Col. Dansuki as the corrupt act was made public under the Buhari's administration which revealed that the arms deal was meant to purchase ammunition to combat the activities of the terrorists in the country (Olamilekan & Eze, 2016).

These siphoned funds kept been funded by the federal government on the terms that these funds were used to procure arms to combat the terrorist attacks which not done as intended. This was evident when a private jet belonging to Pastor Ayo Oritsejafor, the president of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), was arrested in South Africa with the people on board as well as the \$9 million which was also on board (Laden-Baki, 2016). It was revealed that the fund was used to purchase arms for the country which of course is a camouflage to the real intentions of the need for the money.

The activities of these military officers are treasonable because at a point in time, the Boko Haram insurgents virtually occupied many parts of the North-East as it was believed that the terrorists had better and sophisticated weapons to counter the attacks from the Nigerian military due to the high level of corruption in the country (Laden-Baki, 2016).

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

No doubt, the issue of economic crime is a big challenge in Nigeria's effort in developing and in sustaining her image as the big brother of the African continent. It is therefore evident that, economic crimes affect every sphere of national security and if security is not assured deprivation, frustration and tension are heightened which result in clashes among the groups within the state.

To this end, national security encompasses other issues besides the amassing of arms and ammunition to deter aggressions internally and externally. It comprises food security, environmental security, health security, and more. Most of the internal aggressions that arise within the state are due to fears, insecurities and tensions among the different groups. The lack of basic needs and tension created among these groups makes them to resort to clashes in expressing their fears as against the opposing group. It is therefore the duty of the government to make these groups feel more secured. Some scholars are of the view that as long as the defence expenditure increases at the detriment of other various sectors, the insecurity syndrome would continue to persist. By so doing, the government should review her allocations to the defence sector as well as other sectors as these sectors if not well funded can instigate insecurity crisis in the country. In as much as no nation can review her allocations for the defence sector downwards, what is important is the transparent and effective management of the funds because even where the budget is low, that does not stop corrupt practises. Hence a transparent procurement process in the award and the procurement of arms and ammunitions is highly recommended because this will help to check fraud. Moreover, the issue of whistle-blowing policy of the federal government should be incorporated to the dealings of addressing corruption at all levels in the society because this is a powerful tool to check economic crimes in the military and other aspects of the nation's existence.

Nigeria should reduce her spending on peace support operations especially towards countries where she has no strong economic interest. This fund would then be reinvested into the economy of the country to tackle some of the prevailing issues stirring up pockets of violence in the country (Ezeani & Ezeibe, 2011).

The Nigerian state must emphasize on the use of electronic means in the transfer of funds as against the cash transactions. This would enable these transactions to be monitored. Transparency in all of governments' biddings as well as both the private and the public sector should be encouraged. Lack of transparency is often times the first seed of sowing corruption within the system. Mr Ribadu, a former chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission also opined that "education is important to this process. Citizens need to be sufficiently educated to be able to sieve right from the wrongs and demand for what is right" (Ogundipe, 2016). By so doing, the stake that economic crimes hold on this state would gradually weed off.

The Bank Verification Number (BVN) is making it difficult for the 'siphoners' to deposit these hard currencies and the amounts into their accounts hence they choose orthodox means of securing these funds such as in overhead water tanks, ceilings in the homes, graves as well as underground bunkers for storing yams and potatoes (Oseni & Sanni, 2016).

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