ROLE OF THE MILITARY IN THE MAINTENANCE OF INTERNAL SECURITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN NIGERIA. (AN ASSESSMENT OF THE OPERATION PYTHON DANCE IN ABIA STATE)

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Abstract: *Nigeria from the days of colonialism has always been involved in internal crises. Even, in the recent times, there are still clear indications of internal crises witnessed in different forms of conflict ranging from sectarian to ethno religious crises, wholesale abduction, hostage taking, arson, incidents of cattle rustling and terrorism in some parts of the Country. The study investigated the role of the military in the maintenance of internal security and human rights in Nigeria: An assessment of the Operation Python Dance in Abia State..A simple random sampling technique was used to select respondents from the six major cites of the state. The data were analyzed using Correlation analysis to measure the relationships between the different variables. Systems theory provided the theoretical frame work for the study. The findings indicated that, military campaigns in civil-related conflicts had caused more damages than solve the problems that warranted the operations and it violated human rights of many Nigerians. The paper ended with proffering a number of recommendations which included that there should be adequate training of the military before being deployed in civilian crises. Government should use all medium available to ensure that the least educated person was aware of his or her rights in relation to all the law enforcement agents as it would go a long way in reducing the incidence of human right violations.Also, Economic development should be used as a distinct strategy for conflict resolution and crises management.*

Key Words: *security, conflicts, crisis management, human right.*

1. INTRODUCTION.

Internal security operations constitute a global phenomenon. National security is predicated on national interest as well as strategic calculations within the region and in the global arena. Inspite of the efforts of the United Nations to maintain international peace and security, international crises remain frightening and unpredictable. Experiences from developed countries, Middle East and emerging democracies show that stiff competition over issues of legitimacy, autonomy, and sovereignty can threaten internal security of nations. At the regional level, porous borders, insurgent movements, poverty and underdevelopment have been creating high degree of insecurity.

Nigeria indeed has witnessed a lot internal security challenges in recent times: These include killings and communal clashes (still on-going) in Benue State and it's environs and southern part of Kaduna, Tiv-Fulani/ Agatu-Fulani clashes, acts of terrorism engendered by Jama'atu Sunnah Lida Awali Wali Jihad (Boko Haram) and other sister organizations, oil theft in the Niger Delta area, electoral violence, IPOB which is the acronym for the Indigenous People of Biafra (currently led by Nnamdi Kanu, who is seeking the detachment of the South – East Nigeria, Biafra land) from Nigeria etc. Members of the armed forces have been deployed in aid of the police and other civil authorities to stem these rising internal security crises in Nigeria. The interventions, while lauded by many, have been critized on several fronts on the account of their alleged violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, culminating in allegations of rape, torture, arson, disproportionate use of force etc. This has compelled members of the international community to upbraid Nigeria. Indeed, after dislodging the IPOB from the South East of Nigeria, certain groups in the Eastern part of Nigeria petitioned the International Criminal Court at the Hague over alleged atrocities by   the Army in Abia where scores of civilians were allegedly killed in reaction or response to the demands of IPOB. Abubakar (2017) Military involvement in the internal security operations has however been the case ever since Nigeria was formed. It was also the case throughout the colonial period Even in recent times, where there are indications of internal crises, often the military has always been involved to maintain peace and stability. This move however, is not without challenges of its own as the military is not particularly trained for internal security operations unlike the civil authorities and as a result, consistently engage in acts which are not civil enough (Azinge, 2013). In view of the above assertion, the study aim to establish the relationship between the role of the military in the maintenance of internal security and human rights in Nigeria using the Operations Python Dance by the military in Abia State as a point of reference. The specific objectives pursued in the body of the study included to:

- Analyze the effect of conflict on military violation of human right;
- Analyze the effect of formal education on military violation of human right.
- Assess the effect of the Operation Python Dance by the Military on the socio- economic welfare of Abia State and her people.

Statement of Hypotheses.
Based on the research questions, the following alternate hypotheses were formulated.
H_1 Civil related conflicts have been effective on military violation of human rights in Abia State.
H_1. Victim's level of formal education has positive effect on the military violation of human rights of the victims
H_1. Operation Python Dance has negatively affected the socio- economic welfare of Abia State and her people.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:
Overview of Internal Crises in Nigeria.
Nigeria from the days of colonialism has always been involved in internal crises. Even, in the recent times, there are still clear indications of internal crisis and often, the military has always been involved to maintain peace and stability. The military has always been involved in internal security from the days of colonialism. In August 1914, as the First World War gathered pace, an Egba revolt was militarily crushed by ten companies of troops from the newly created "Nigeria Regiment". In 1929-1930 the regiment was called upon for a major internal security operation against Igbo women, mainly at Aba popularly known as Aba women riot . The Nigerian Air Force similarly participated in Military Operations Other Than War against Maitatsine elements in Kano and Maiduguri, against the Taliban in the Mandara Mountains and in Panshekara and are active with the Special Task Force – Operation Safe Haven on the Jos Plateau while the Nigerian Navy were deeply involved in the management of the Ijaw – Itsekiri crises in the Warri metropolitan area.(Idowu & Aregbesola 2013)

Both services, where they maintain a presence, have over the course of several decades actively cooperated with the Nigerian Army in Internal Security Operations geared towards restoring peace to various parts of the volatile federation. These include, but are not limited to, the Tiv and Western Nigeria crises of 1962-1965, the post-election violence of 1983 in Western Nigeria, Ife-Modakeke conflict of the late 1990s, the 2000 Sharia crisis in Kaduna which claimed thousands of lives. The Nigerian Army also had to intervene in Yelwa-Shendam, Jos and Kano in 2004 to restore peace after well over a thousand persons had been killed in ethno-religious violence between Hausa Muslims and indigenous Christian peoples in the central highlands and reprisal killings which followed in Hausa Muslim-dominated Kano thereafter. So serious was the violence that a rare state of emergency was declared in Plateau State.

Some years later, serious ethno-religious violence broke out and reprisal killings followed thereafter and across broad swathes of Northern and Eastern Nigeria in that order, occasioned by perceived indiscretion on the part of a Danish cartoonist in 2006. In 2011, post-election violence again broke out in some disaffected segments of Northern Nigeria leading to the deaths of over 800 people with thousands that were internally displaced.(okoli 2013). Other similar non -violence agitations ruthlessly quashed by the military intervention are operation crocodile smile and python dance launched against the Niger delta and the people of the south east of Nigeria.   Some studies have shown that at the end of most of those operations, the military stay behind as "armies of occupation". The question is how have the officers and men of the armed forces posted to maintain peace in those areas carried on with their official assignment, bearing in mind the fact that these were fellow Nigerians.

The Military Power and Crisis Management.
The term military power usually refers to the capacity to kill, maim, coerce and destroy. Although occasionally this same power may be possessed by individuals within the state – as the feudal barons possessed it during the Middle Ages and as drug barons and political warlords possess today in weak states – nowadays military power is monopolized by states and used primarily by governments to protect their states from external aggression and internal subversion. According to John Garnett, military power is the legally sanctioned instrument of violence which governments use in their relations with each other, and, when necessary, in an internal security role (Garnett, 1981). But because of the destructive capacity of the military, it ought to be used as a last resort when other non-violent means are apparently exhausted. It should be noted that war is a means of allocating scarce values to resolve conflict and in this view is a rational instrument of decisions and, in any case, war policies are decided by a logical computation of costs and benefits. But the claim to rationality is however controversial. Conflicts can be decided by arbitration, elections, courts and tribunals, administrative decisions, direct negotiation and compromise – even the flip of a coin (Jones, 1985). As Walter Jones has aptly asked: How is it rational to spill blood when non-violent means are available?
The Nigerian history is replete with the use of maximum force to attempt to resolve conflicts yet at the end of the day force never had the slightest capacity to terminate such conflicts. This madman theory should be checked especially in internal crises. The theory of applying maximum force, even to levels that have previously been regarded as

disproportionate to the conflict and to the objectives of the parties is needless. The theory has its origin in the Vietnam War.

The use of soldiers in the Tiv crisis in the First Republic, the intervention of the military in the politics of the First Republic through a coup de'tat, the sacking of the villages of Odi in the Niger Delta and Zaki Biam in Central Nigeria and the deployment of the Joint Task Force (JTF) to the Niger Delta and Northern Nigeria are instances of the madman theory. The usual excuse is that the military is often deployed for security purposes, as Barry and Jones (1981) ask: if security consists of retaining a relative advantage in relation to the other members of the system over a broad spectrum of activities, to what extent are the military means appropriate? They answer thus:

Military tools for all their technical sophistication are exceedingly crude in relation to many socio-political objections. They are well suitable to sweeping tasks like the destruction or disruption of existing structures, or the conquest and control of people, but they are much less useful for the fine-tuning of voluntaristic exchange relations where neither conquest nor destruction is required.

To be sure, technological miracles have given the average soldier in modern times mobility and fire-power infinitely greater than his predecessors. The global military establishment benefits from training and re-training programmers' than the civilian establishments. Additionally, global expenditure on military Research and Development (R & D) is heavier – always in the region of one quarter of all R & D expenditures – the average military product being some twenty times as research intensive as the average civilian product (Khan, 1988).

Instances of Internal Security Operations in Nigeria/Violations of Rights.

Azinge (2013) has chronicled a panoply of instances of internal security operations by the military such as: the Quelling of the Tiv Uprising 1960 - 1964, Western Region Election Crisis 1965 - 1966, quelling the Biafran Rebellion 1967 - 1970, Maitasine Religious Crisis in Kano, Bauchi, Kaduna etc. The seemingly endless Boko Haram crisis has provided opportunity for the largest deployment of the armed forces in Internal Security operations history.

In the conduct of internal security operations, the armed forces have been subjected to varying criticisms. Oluwasegun (2010) has documented some of these abuses in his well researched article. A 1997 report on Nigeria, a country Report by the US Government accused all branches of Nigeria security forces of gross human rights violations. Almost all the reports on Nigeria by the US governments for over a decade consistently criticized the human Rights records of government (the military inclusive). Horsfall, in a recent article on current threats to peace and security listed the following: oil theft, Niger Delta Military and Boko Haram (which he regards as the most challenging security operation since the civil war, among other crisis as Maitasine, Kalo-kato, all linked up with salafist and Al-Qaeda groups. Ahmed, writing on the Indian experience, noted that the armed forces in India have been accused of extra-judicial execution of innocent civilians, illegal imposition of curfew, rape, molestation and sexual harassment of women, torture, forced labour and large scale displacement. Lethal force was permitted in places like Jammu and Kashmir. In support of military operations contemplated by the Constitution, the Armed Forces Act, Emergency Powers Act and other laws, the military or armed forces have carried out a phalanx of activities: patrols, manning observation posts, identity checks, arrests of suspects, detaining of persons, escort duties, ambush, controlling demonstrations, cordon and search, protecting lives and property of persons threatened, guaranteeing safe passage for victims of crisis, road blocks or vehicle check points, bomb disposal or dealing with improvised explosive devices. It is in the performance of these laudable, patriotic duties that violations have also occurred.

Operations Python Dance (Egwu – Eke)

'Operation Python Dance' is a military doctrine conceived to put in check threats to national security from the south eastern region of Nigeria and partly translated into action through the instrumentality of a preventive show of military power and intimidation on Sunday, 10th September, 2017 in Afarachukwu, the home town of Nnamdi Kanu. IPOB is the acronym for the Indigenous People of Biafra, currently led by Kanu, IPOB is a largely peaceful campaign by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) seeking the betterment and inclusion of the region in governance. Thus, Operation Python Dance   necessarily has a security maintenace as a major objective, as well as show of military force and intimidation as a tactic. There are military operations in the north-west (Operation Harbin Kunama — "scorpion sting") and the north-east (Operation Lafiya Dole – "peace by all means"), but Operation Egwu Eke ("python dance") in the south-east . Unlike the Niger Delta militants and Boko Haram jihadists, IPOB has not launched an armed campaign yet. And unlike the Oodua People's Congress (OPC) in the late 1990s and early 2000s, IPOB did not attack police stations before the Python Dance Danfulani, (2017).

The research adopted Systems theory as its theoretical frame of reference. The theory was propounded by Ross Asby in 1968. Available literature on this school of thought shows a thesis that revolves around a major argument, which in the words of Faleti (2007), "provide a socio-structural explanation for the mergence of violent social conflicts". The major focus of this theory therefore, is that it tries to identify the reason(s) for social conflict in a particular

environment to the social context within which it occurs. Thus, for one to understand the reason for the upsurge of a particular conflict, one has to look closely within the primary environment within which it occurred.

3. METHODOLOGY:

The research design of the study was a survey research method. The primary data were obtained from four hundred (400) respondents that were administrated with questionnaire, in the selected six major cities of Abia state. which were randomly selected exploring the stratified random sampling technique. A 4- point scale questionnaire tagged " Military in the Maintenance of Internal Security and Human Rights Impact Scale" with a reliability value co – efficient of 0.82 obtained. The data was analyzed using Pearson product – moment Correlation to measure the relationships between the different variables

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

Analysis of the participants demographic characteristics showed that, 202(56%) male and 158(44%) female were involved in the study. 151(42.0%) were between 18 – 27 years, 117(32.5%) were between 28 -37 years, 48(13.5%) were between 38 – 47 years, those that were from age 48 up were 24(12.0%). While majority of the respondents were single 191(53.0%), 169 (47.0%) were married. Very high percentage of the respondents was shared between respondents with university and post graduate educational attainment consisting of 167(46.5%) and 128(33.5%) respectively. Occupationally, while 167(46.5%) of the respondents were civil servants, 193(53.5%) were self-employed. These revelations suggest a good spread of the respondents across status and class in society as such, elicit balanced opinion.

Test of Hypotheses

The essence for testing hypotheses is to confirm the truthfulness of the formulated hypotheses. Hence, accepting if validated or rejecting if not true. The decision rules are; accept the alternate hypotheses (Hi) if the calculated value is greater than the critical (table) value. On the other hand, reject the alternate hypotheses and accept the null hypotheses (Ho) if the calculated value is less than the critical (table) value, all at 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis 1

H_1: Civil related conflicts have been effective on military violation of human rights in Abia State.

Table 1
Cross Tabulation for relationship between Conflict and Military Violation of Human Rights .

	Military violation of Human Rights within conflict and Non- Conflict Areas.		Total (%)	x^2
	Very Frequent	**Not Frequent**		
Location				
Conflict Area	250 (90.7)	64 (55.7)	314 (76.6)	x^2 = 32.26
Non –Conflict Area	26 (9.3)	15 (44.3)	41 (23.4)	Df=1
Total	276 (100)	79 (100)	355 (100)	

Source: Field work 2018

From the table, it is observed that the critical value of x^2 32.26 at $p \leq 0.05$ level of significance and df.1 is given at 3.841 (table value). Since the critical (table) value is less than the calculated value the alternate hypothesis which states that military campaigns in civil related conflicts have been effective in the violation of human rights in Abia State is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected. In other word the relationship is statistically significant at 0.05 level.

Hypothesis 2:

H_1: Human right abuses by the military are associated with the victim's level of education.
In order to test this, responses to questions regarding military violation of respondents' rights and victims'
level of educational attainment were cross tabulated. Table 2. presents a detail break down.

Table 2: Cross Tabulation for Relationship between Military Violation of Human Rights and Victim's Level of Educational Attainment

Highest Formal Education Attainment	Military violation of Respondents Rights in crisis area of Abia state.	Total (%)	x^2

	Very frequent (%)	Not frequent (%)		
High level of education	42(19.3)	32(43.2)	74(29.0)	x^2=12.5
Low level of education	178(80.7)	72(56.8)	250(71.0)	Df=1
Total	220(100.0)	74(100.0)	**294(100.0)**	

Source: Field Work 2018.

To make the analysis less cumbersome, the level of education of the respondents was re-coded. Those who had no formal education, primary education, secondary education and NCE/OND were re-grouped as having low level of education. Those who had HND, University first degree and post graduate degrees were re-grouped as having high level of education. The data showed that 80.7% of respondents that had low level of education had their rights infringed upon very frequently; similarly 56.8% of those that had low level of educational attainment had the rights infringed upon not frequently. From the table, it was observed that the critical value of $x^2$12.5 at p ≤ 0.05 level of significance and df. 1 is given at 3.841(table value). Since the critical (table) value is less than the calculated value the alternate which is accepted and null hypothesis which states that: the lower the level of educational attainment the less likely it is for one to become victim of military violence is rejected. In other word the relationship is statistically significant at 0.05 levels.

HYPOTHESIS 3:-
H₁: Operation Python Dance has positively affected the socio- economic welfare of Abia State and her people.
Table 3:- Relationship of the presence of the Military on residents of the six cities under study.

	Military violation of respondents rights in the crisis areas of Abia state		Total	x^2
	Very often	Not frequent		
Positive impact	73 (31.2)	43 54.1	116 (75.9)	x^2=33 .21
Negative impact	153 (68.8)	31 45.9	184 (24.1)	Df=1
Total	**226 (100)**	**74 (100)**	**300 (100)**	

Source: Field Study 2018

From the table, it is observed that the critical value of x^2 33.21 at p ≤ 0.05 level of significance and df.1 is given at 3.841 (table value). Since the critical (table) value is less than the calculated value the null hypothesis which states Operation Python Dance intervention in Abia State has not positively affected on the crises areas is accepted and the alternate hypothesis is rejected. In other word the relationship is statistically significant at 0.05 level.

Discussion of Findings on the Effect of Conflict on Military Violation of Human Rights in Abia State.

Effect of conflict on military violation of human right in Abia state. The study confirmed this, through the comparism of the finding with the empirical review. The evidence was shown in the calculated value (32.26) which is less than the calculated value the alternate hypothesis which states that military campaigns in civil related conflicts have been ineffective in the maintenance of internal security in conflict areas is accepted. In the empirical review conducted by Peterside, Z. (2014) in his study to investigate the extent to which the military have been involved in the nation's internal security and the prospects and challenges associated with it, the findings indicated that It has been found out that, though a sophisticated establishment with up-to-date weapon system and or munitions, the military is very crude when mobilized for internal campaign purposes in internal affairs of states. But at the end of the day, the military would have compounded problems for Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings on the Effect of Level of Victim's Education on Military violation of Human Rights.

Level of victim's education has no positive effect on military violation of human rights. The study confirmed this, through the comparison of the finding with the empirical review. The evidence is shown in the calculated value (12.5) which is greater than the (3.841)table value. Since the critical (table) value is less than the calculated value the alternate which is accepted and null hypothesis which states that: the lower the level of educational attainment the less likely it is for one to become victim of military violence is rejected. Ameh, S (2016), in the empirical review conducted by his study, Military Infringement on Human Rights: A Myth or Reality in Contemporary Nigeria. It was found out

that: The lower the level of educational attainment the more likely it is for one to become a victim of military misconduct.

Discussion of Findings on the Effects of the Operation Python Dance Military Operations on the Socio-Economic Welfare of Abia State and her people.

Operation Python Dance military operations does not positively affect the socio- economic welfare of Abia State and her people**.** The study confirmed this, through the comparism of the finding with the empirical review. The evidence is shown in the calculated value (33.2) which is greater than the (3.841) table value. Since the critical (table) value is less than the calculated value the alternate is accepted. In the empirical review conducted by Akpan O. (2013) in a study examined the policy of using military resources for conflict resolution in Africa with Nigeria as a case study. It was found out that Nigeria has a policy of using the military for peace support operations but at the end of the day, the military would have compounded problems for Nigeria. Such problems are reflected in loss of lives, properties, creation of refugees, creation of fear and reversal of developmental efforts.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS:
Based on the outcomes of this study, it is hereby recommended that :
- The fact is that military operations have to a large extent proved ineffective in solving civilian crisis in Nigeria. They have been rather, largely used to serve the interest of some political elites. It is politically dangerous to encourage the drafting of military personnel to settle civilian problems in a democracy. It is important to note that one of the major factors that led to the first military coup in Nigeria, and a number of others after, was the act of using military personnel to settle civilian crisis. Owing to this fact, dialogue will be more appropriate rather than exhibiting use of force that will only complicate problems.
- The government should use all medium available to ensure that the list educated person is aware of his or her rights in relation to all the law enforcement agents as it will go a long way in reducing the incidence of human right violations in Nigeria.
- Economic development should be used as a distinct strategy for conflict resolution and crisis management. There is no doubt that economic development is the only antidote to violence in Nigeria and to that extent attention should be given to it in order to create jobs and make the citizens partners in the development of the country because no conscious person will like to scatter what he/she helped to build.

6. CONCLUSION:
This paper has examined the impact of using the military in internal security in Nigeria using its Operation python dance in Abia State as a case study. It has been found out that, the military is very crude when mobilized for internal campaign purposes in internal affairs of states. Nigeria has a policy of using the military for peace support operations but at the end of the day, the military would have compounded problems for Nigeria. Such problems are reflected in loss of lives, properties, creation of refugees, creation of fear and reversal of developmental efforts. Mass literacy is an important tool in the protection of fundamental human rights. The citizenry need basic education in order to identify their rights and to challenge a violation of such rights. Government should use dialogue more in resolving grievances in the rather than exhibiting use of force. It needs reminding that our military has a record of massacring defenseless civilians in Odi, Zaki Biam, Baga, Bama, Gbaramatu and Zaria. Up till today, there is no chance of justice. Kanu should stop inviting pythons to bite the people he says he is fighting for. As the Great Zik once said, only a fool will argue with a man who has a gun. Snake bites are deadly. If you don't have the antidote, you will dance with death

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