

Does Customs Border Management Role Stimulate Terrorism Incidence in Nigeria and the Neighbouring Countries?

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Abstract: The paper examined impact of Customs cross-border process (measured by Logistic Performance Index (LPI) and Ease of Doing Business (EDB)) on the fight against terrorism in selected West African Countries of Nigeria, Niger, Chad, and Benin. The study adopted panel OLS method with a linear gravity framework for secondary data (2017-2022) revealed number of findings. Firstly, both the LPI and the EDB have a positive and negative impact on terrorism indices along the Nigeria-Benin border, respectively. Second, within the Nigeria and Niger borders, the LPI reduces terrorism indices, whereas the EDB increases terrorism. Third, a percentage shift in the LPI and the EDB results in 11.3 percent and 15.5 percent decrease in terrorism along Nigeria's and Chad's borders, respectively. The study concludes that cross-border Customs process between Nigeria and Benin, Nigeria and Chad, and Nigeria and Niger produced varying results. Hence, the study suggests that EDB along Nigeria-Niger borders be enhanced. Also, that LPI should be improved along the Nigeria-Benin border.

Keywords: Customs, Border Management, West Africa, EDB, LPI, Terrorism.

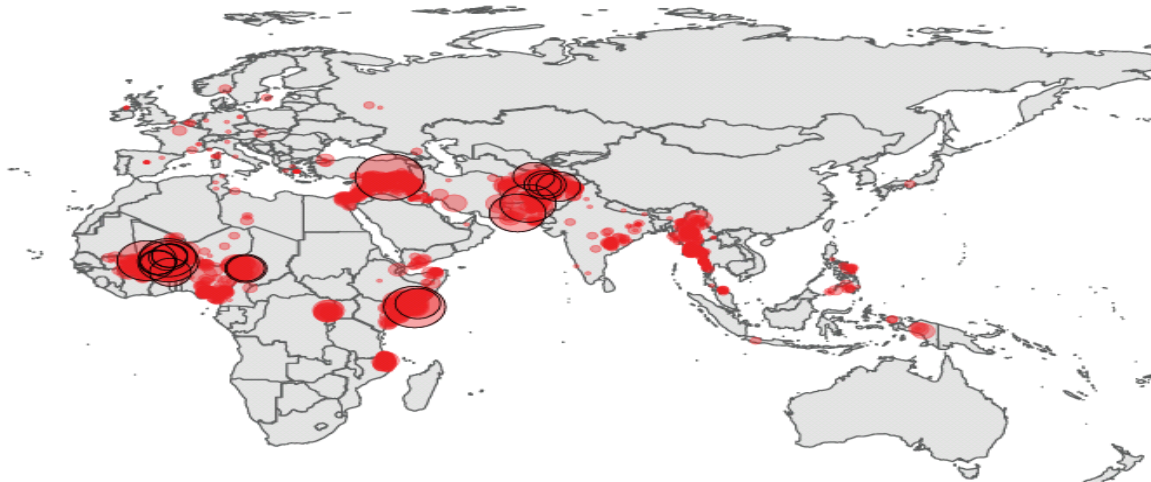
1. INTRODUCTION

Border security is a growing concern for sovereign countries who consider national security to be a critical component of national development. Overtime, transnational crime has taken on a troubling dimension, with little literature devoted to the expanding Customs border management role and its consequences for global instability. Trade clearance at the border could be an avenue by which terror is spread to countries through policies that are tailored to encourage bilateral and multilateral trade. Both the rising tide of terrorism in West Africa has become a significant burning issue. In order to minimize and attenuate the developing dimension of terrorism, academics are beginning to question border integrity and administration. Figure 1.1 depicts global terrorist attacks. The red dot represents locations where terrorism has occurred, such as Nigeria and its neighboring nations.

According to Griffiths (1996), African borders are characterized by significant porosity with little or absent of proper management. For example, African international borders are guarded by approximately 350 official road crossing points, or one for every 80 miles of border, with the majority of control stations located 16-20 kilometers away from the border. Furthermore, Africa has 109 international borders that span nearly 28,000 kilometers and divide 177 cultural or ethnic groups. Less than a quarter of all boundaries are legally delineated. Some geographical borders, for example, Central Africa Republic (CAR)-Congo; and Tanzania-Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), are not crossed by road, rail, or canal. This is because there are 27 national parks and wildlife or nature reserves along 20% of African borders, they are less porous. Only 414 highways in Africa cross borders, with 69 having no Customs posts. Only 20 African borders are crossed by railways, and 20 cross-border ferry links exist.

In Nigeria, however, just 97 of the 1,100 Nigerian borders are approved border checkpoints (Ali, 2017). There are several bush tracks, foot paths, and farmlands that lead to neighboring nations but are unmarked by the government. Almost three-quarters of border crossings are unapproved and so unattended by security personnel. These unauthorized border crossings have been and continue to be utilized for money laundering, child and human trafficking, drug trafficking, movement of illegal immigrants and terrorists, gun running, smuggling of light and heavy weapons and IEDs, contraband and substandard goods, and so on.

Fig 1.1



Source: Global Terrorism Index

Border management is a subset of border security (Eselebor & Kehinde, 2021). The General Agreement on Trade (GTT) Article VII (technical interpretation covered by the WCO), World Customs Organization's (WCO) instruments such as the Revised Kyoto Convention for harmonization of Customs procedures (RKC), Harmonized System (HS): System Commodity Code, and SAFE Framework (standard to secure and facilitate global trade) are archetype paths used to concretize and incentivize the need for interregional cross-border management and trade expansion. Border management is a broad term that refers to government actions employed to monitor and regulate the movement of people, animals, and trade across air, sea, and land borders. The United Nations (UN) considers efficient border control to be a critical component of countering transnational crimes and, thus, an essential component of most states' national security frameworks (UN, 2022).

The border delimits the sovereignties of two countries (Zarnowiecki, 2011). Border management strategies might be coordinated, integrated, comprehensive, or collaborative (Doyle, 2011; Grainger, 2008; Ahmed, n.d.). Domestic border management (inter-service and inter-agency interaction) or international border management (international cooperation) are both possible. Border management, in its broadest definition, includes border control, border systems, border monitoring, border protection, border coordination, and so on. Land border security is an important element in the value chain of border management. Land border security is one of the methods used to measure national security. All governments are concerned about the security of their borders.

Under international law, states are recognized for their ability to preserve their borders, safeguard their territories, and protect their citizens. One of the factors used to describe states as strong, weak, or failed is their capacity to secure national boundaries. A state's principal job is to defend its citizens' livelihoods from both internal and foreign threats. It should be noted that a country's strategic location impacts the potential for illegal operations that exist or can take place in its border areas. Some countries are more vulnerable to insecurity or mismanagement of other countries' borders than they are to their own. Highly efficient border management could help prevent foreign acts carried out by terrorist groups, as well as weaken them by locating their members ahead of time when they plan to carry out any act (WCO, 2021). Border security entails geophysical control of a boundary through effective patrolling, internally enforcing laws, controlling the transnational movement of people using the borders, improving inspections to ensure that harmful products or items do not enter into a country, enhancing management of institutions and systems that contribute to border security.

Border security is detecting and preventing criminals, and illegal persons, goods, drugs, and weapons, as well as other prohibited items, from entering a country. The purposes of border control beyond terrorism checks at the border, are to impose conditions under which people legally cross borders with documentations such as passport or visa, ensure that animals and plants do not transmit diseases and, that goods moved across border have been paid for (e.g., import duty, excise tax, levies, etc). Another import role of border control is to eliminate illegal activities at the borders such as smuggling of contraband goods, illegal importation of arms and ammunitions and IEDs, illicit drug trafficking, importation of dangerous and wild animals and infected plants, child and human trafficking, etc.,. It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to examine the impact of Custom's efforts in the fight against insecurity along the Nigeria's border lines. This paper is divided into six parts namely; introduction, literature review, methodology, result and discussions, as well as conclusion and recommendation.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Terrorism

Terrorism is not a novel phenomenon in human history. Those who choose to oppose nations, kings, and princes have employed violence throughout history. This type of violence is distinct from what is known as terrorism. Oppositional violence is frequently directed at troops and those in positions of power. Terrorism, on the other hand, is defined by the use of violence against civilians with the stated goal of instilling fear or panic in the public. Terrorism is not unique to the twentieth and twenty-first century. Terrorism existed during the reign of terror in 18th century revolutionary France, as well as among the Zealots of Palestine in opposition to Roman control around 2000 years ago. Terrorist activity can now be found in countries such as Israel, Indonesia, the United Kingdom (UK), Sri Lanka, Colombia, and the United States (US), to name a few. The September 11th suicide attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, as well as the attempted strike that culminated in the plane crash in Pennsylvania, are of particular interest here. Stern (1999), Wilkinson (2001).

The suicide assaults began at 8:45 a.m., when a passenger airliner hijacked en way from Boston to Los Angeles crashed into New York's World Trade Center. A second plane, United Airlines flight 175, also originating in Boston and destined for Los Angeles, collided with the south tower about 18 minutes later. Authorities established that the hijackers had their own pilot aboard because the action was so expertly performed. As further terror strikes took place, plumes of smoke blanketed the lower Manhattan skyline. American Airlines Flight 77, destined for Los Angeles from Washington, D.C., was hijacked shortly after takeoff at 8:21 a.m. by men with knives and box cutters. After veering off course, the passenger plane targeted the Pentagon, which was only 25 miles away, and crashed into the western front at 9:45 a.m.

Meanwhile, in New York, chaos reigned in the financial district surrounding the World Trade Center (also the site of a 1993 terrorist bombing that killed six people in the basement). Thousands evacuated the buildings and the surrounding neighborhood. Others who had not yet escaped the building, were assisting the injured, or were simply transfixed by what they saw fell victim to another tragedy. The 410-foot-tall south tower began to fall around 10:00 a.m., with one story tumbling onto the one below. The second tower collapsed forty minutes later. Meanwhile, another hijacked airline, United Airlines Flight 93, was reported to have crashed in Somerset County, Pennsylvania, southeast of Pittsburgh (Hoffman, 1998). For a time, terror reigned, fueled by false claims of explosions at the US Capitol and the State Department. The White House had to be evacuated. The border between the US and Mexico was closed, and the Federal Aviation Administration grounded all commercial aircraft flights into the US International flights headed for the US were abruptly rerouted to Canada.

As a result of the attacks, the US launched a war against terrorism and its sponsors, specifically targeting Osama bin Laden, a Saudi-born anti-Western, Islamic militant living in Afghanistan, and his al Qaeda organization. Al Qaeda (Arabic for "the Base") is an organization based in Afghanistan that has a history of terrorist involvement, and also an allied to the Taliban government in Afghanistan. The US launched a campaign against bin Laden and his al Qaeda organization, employing the military, law enforcement, diplomacy (including coalition formation), the Treasury Department, and other instruments of state. The US administration has gone to considerable lengths to emphasize that its actions are not geared against Islam, but rather against terrorism and its sponsors.

CAUSES OF TERRORISM

Terrorism appears to have a variety of reasons. There does not appear to be a single reason that drives people to commit terrorist attacks. Terrorist reasons have been classified as psychological, ideological, and strategic by academics. Psychological Perspective Terrorists may act for solely personal reasons, based on their own psychological state of mind.

Their motivation could be as simple as hatred or a desire for dominance. Auguste Vaillant, for example, bombed the French Chamber of Deputies in 1893. Vaillant expressed his motivation in terms of hatred for the middle classes before his conviction and eventual execution. Vaillant wished to contaminate the sense of economic and social success with his violence. In many ways, this terrorist is more concerned with gaining publicity for his or her actions than with achieving any big ideological or strategic aim.

Ideological point of view ideology is described as the views, values, and/or principles that a group uses to identify its specific aims and goals. Religion and political theories and programs are examples of ideologies. Terrorist groups inspired by ideology include the Irish Republican Army (IRA), the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in Sri Lanka, and the Bader Meinhoff in Germany. The IRA is driven by a political agenda to drive the UK out of Ireland and unite Ireland under a single flag. Similarly, the LTTE seeks to build a separate state in Sri Lanka for its people, the Tamils. Finally, the Bader Meinhoff was a terrorist organization comprised of middle-class people who were anti-capitalist and aimed to destroy capitalist infrastructure in Germany.

Strategic Viewpoint Terrorism can be seen as a logical extension of political failure; when people seek redress of their problems through government but fail to get the government's attention, they may resort to violence. Terrorism, according to this opinion, is the outcome of a logical study of a group's goals and objectives, as well as its evaluation of the chances of triumph. If success through more traditional means appears unlikely, one may conclude that terrorism is a superior alternative. In South Africa, for example, the African National Congress only turned to terrorism after all other options had been exhausted. Of course, not only individuals may be dissatisfied with the political process. Terrorists may be used by states to further their own geopolitical purposes. States may support terrorist organizations, particularly when the goals of the state and the terrorist organization are comparable. Libya, for example, allegedly hired terrorists to detonate a bomb aboard Pan Am 103 travelling from London to New York in 1988, in reaction to US and British bombing of Libya (Pillar, 2001).

RESPONSES TO TERRORISM

Terrorism has elicited a variety of responses throughout history. These have included the use of violence to combat terrorists, dialogue, and lastly the application of conventions to establish international norms in the fight against terrorism. While these are not the only ways governments have attempted to combat terrorism, they have undoubtedly been among the most popular.

The use of force and violence against terrorists has been demonstrated on several occasions. The use of force by the US against the Taliban in Afghanistan is an example of using force to combat terrorism. The Taliban was the focus of US military action because they were housing the al Qaeda network. In another case, three suspected Irish Republican Army members were shot and killed in Gibraltar in 1988 by personnel of the British Special Air Services. In this instance, force was employed against suspected members of a terrorist organization. The use of force is both a tit-for-tat approach and an attempt to impede terrorist operations.

Negotiation is a second strategy of combating terrorism. While states may refuse to cooperate with terrorist groups in public, they may pursue a different tactic in private. The UK, for example, had long refused to negotiate with the Irish Republican Army and its political affiliate, Sinn Fein. Nonetheless, negotiations took place behind closed doors, eventually resulting to the Good Friday Agreements, which went a long way toward stopping terrorist assaults in Northern Ireland. Another example is the negotiation between the African National Congress (ANC) and South Africa's apartheid regime. The ANC had been designated a terrorist organization, and the government refused to negotiate with them. Nonetheless, behind-the-scenes conversations took occurring, ultimately leading to the end of apartheid in South Africa.

International treaties are yet another attempt to combat terrorism. Resolutions are passed by international organizations such as the UN in order to encourage greater political action among member states. For example, the 1997 International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings demands that signatories to the convention make it a crime to use explosives or other dangerous devices in public with the goal of killing or hurting someone. Another example of international action is UN Security Council anti-terrorism resolution 1373, "Improving International Cooperation."

CONCEPT OF SECURITY

Scholars and analysts have different meanings of security. According to Afolabi (2015), security is the process of mitigating any form of harm to people and their valuable assets. This is why Buzan asserts that security is about freedom from threat

and the ability of governments to sustain independent identity and functional integrity in the face of hostile forces of change (Bodunde et al., 2014). From the foregoing, security is defined as the feeling of being safe from harm, fear, worry, oppression, danger, poverty, defense, protection, and maintenance of essential values, as well as threats to those values. According to William (2008), security is most usually connected with the alleviation of risks to valued values, particularly those threats that endanger the life of a specific reference object. According to Imobighe, security is the freedom from danger or threats to a nation's ability to protect and develop itself, promote its treasured values and legitimate interests, and improve the well-being of its people. Thus, internal security can be defined as the freedom from or absence of tendencies that undermine internal cohesion and a country's corporate existence, as well as its ability to maintain vital institutions for the promotion of its core values and socio-political and economic objectives, as well as meeting the legitimate aspirations of the people (Ogaba. 2010). As a result, security, whether classical, state-centric, traditionalist, or non-traditionalist, is all about protecting assets, both living and non-living resources, from loss or destruction.

Lippmann (1944) says that a nation is secure when it does not have to resort to war or the threat of war to protect its legitimate interests. Maniruzzaman considers national security as the defense and preservation of a nation's minimum basic principles of political independence and territorial integrity (Maniruzzaman, 1982). Orwa (1984) defines national security as the safeguarding of national interests, including national values, political and economic ways of life, from internal threats and challenges. According to Mandel, national security is the pursuit of psychological and physical safety, which is largely the responsibility of national governments, in order to prevent direct threats primarily from abroad endangering the survival of these regimes, their citizens, or their ways of life (Ngbale, 2011).

The concept of security is divided into two basic schools of thought. They are both traditional and unconventional. Traditional schools of thought define security as safety from danger and external attack or infiltration. The traditional security paradigm is a realist security construct with the state as the referent object (Abolurin, 2010). It correlates security with peace and conflict prevention through military measures such as deterrence measure, non-offensive defense, and so on. This is why Walt (1991) defines security as the study of the threat, use, and control of military force. It investigates the circumstances that make the use of force more likely, how the use of force impacts individuals, nations, and societies, and the specific policies that states use to avert or engage in war.

This school of thought is firmly linked to the military, which is why Buzan (1991) considers security to be underdeveloped and in need of rehabilitation. According to Nwolise, the Cold War period gave conventional security theory a high level of dominance, to the extent that security is based on the notion that only a military system can effectively repel assault and threat of force (Nwolise, 2008). This is consistent with Ken Booth's assertion that "one of the themes of new thinking is the idea that security policy should have political accommodation as a primary and persistent goal." Throughout the cold war, the harmful impact of equating security nearly entirely with military was clear. This approach is known as strategic reductionism, which is defined as viewing security in a technical and mechanistic military manner, as evidenced by a fixation with military balance and the deployment of cutting-edge technology (Nwolise, 2008).

The non-traditional school of thought on security conceptualization is the second school of thought. This school makes an effort to broaden and extend the meaning of security. It contends that other challenges, such as the environment, political, economic, and social threats, jeopardize individuals' lives and property rather than focusing on the state's existence. It argues that a primarily military definition overlooks the fact that the greatest threat to state survival may be environmental, health, political, social, and economic in nature. Contemporary security thoughts and opinions are all-encompassing. Security entails more than just military protection or protection from external threats. For many people in poor countries, security is regarded as the most basic element of survival.

As a result, the non-military dimension of security should be included in order to produce an integrated African Security Assessment. Security should now be defined broadly to cover economic security, social security, environmental security, food security, life equity security, and technology security (Ochoche, 1997). However, security in this context is concerned with human emancipation. It means that people/citizens must be emancipated from the obstacles, difficulties, and restraints that may hinder them from doing what they want freely, such as epidemics, poverty, oppression, bad education, crises, and so on. Today, non-military challenges such as politics, ecology, economics, and demographics pose severe risks to people's security (Afolabi, 2015).

Barry Buzan provides a theoretical framework for comprehending the concept of security, identifying three levels of analysis: individual, national, and international. He believes that individual security, also known as personal security by other researchers, entails the values that people aspire to secure, such as life, health, status, independence, and prosperity

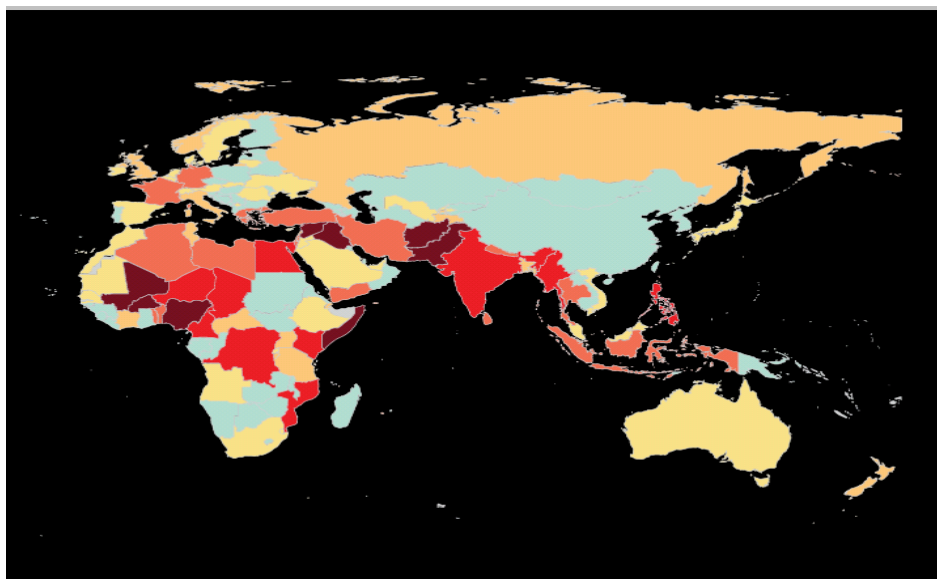
(Buzan, 1991). One of the hazards that individuals try to protect themselves from is what is known as social security. This includes physical threats, economic threats, and violations of human rights. Pain, damage, death, seizure and destruction of property, inaccessibility to labor or resources for human subsistence, injustice, unjust imprisonment, denial of normal civil liberties, and threats to human dignity are examples of these. Buzan's other two levels of analysis concern national and international levels of security.

Nations around the world value the safety of their territorial integrity, resources, and citizens. This informs the view that national security is the protection of a nation state's independence and sovereignty. In truth, every country has a wide range of interests to safeguard. These interests, when combined, form the national interest, which stems from values, good governance, and the protection of the social and economic well-being of the entire citizenry. Based on this, national security can be defined as the protection and maintenance of a state's or nation's national interests. This is consistent with Harold Brown's (US Secretary of Defense, 1977 to 1981) definition of national security as the ability to preserve the nation's physical integrity and territory; to maintain reasonable economic relations with the rest of the world; to protect the nation's nature, institutions, and governance from outside disruption; and to control its borders (Adedoyin, 2013). This is in line with Nigeria's need to preserve its sovereign integrity from external forces via its armed forces and manage the influx and outflow of goods and services via the Nigeria Customs Service and other security agencies.

Obasanjo also defines national security as the sum of all individuals, communities, ethnic groups, and the entire political entity's security interests (Obasanjo, 1999). Furthermore, Lynn and Miller define it as the politics and policies regulated by a less restrictive concept of security that is concerned not only with military threats but with other challenges that directly threaten to impair a national community's quality of life (Ngbale, 2011). The Reviewed Draft National Defence Policy (RDNDP) defines national security as an all-encompassing condition in which citizens can live in freedom, peace, and safety, participate fully in the governance process, enjoy the protection of fundamental human rights, have access to resources and necessities of life, and live in an environment conducive to their health and well-being (RDNDP, 2002).

National security is the ability to regulate the internal and international conditions that a given society's public opinion believes are required for it to enjoy its own self-determination or autonomy, wealth, and well-being (Maier in Nwaogu, 2013). The graphic in Fig. 1.2 depicts the increased terror around Nigeria's and its neighboring borders. The grey spot is in the top ten most terrorised regions on the planet, while the red mark is in the top ten most terrorised places on the planet, representing risks to national security.

Fig 1.2 Terrorized Places Based on Colour Classification



Source: Global Terrorism Index (2023)

Given the growing concern in the occurrence of terrorism-related incidents as seen in Fig 1.2, national security can be defined as the sum of a nation's efforts to safeguard and preserve the state, its institutions, lives and property, and the well-being of its entire people. In summary, the concept of modern security goes beyond the defense of territory and recognizes

the various components and institutions of state that have a significant role in ensuring a state's security because no country will allow itself to be exposed to internal or external risk. Thus, Nigerian national security is shared by the citizens, the Nigeria Customs Service, prisons, immigration, police, civil defense, and other private internal security organizations (Afolabi, 2015).

All governments are concerned about the security of their borders. Under international law, states are recognized for their ability to preserve their borders, safeguard their territories, and protect their citizens. One of the factors used to describe states as strong, weak, or failed is their capacity to secure national boundaries. A state's principal job is to defend its citizens livelihoods from both internal and foreign threats. It should be noted that a country's strategic location impacts the potential for illegal operations that exist or can take place in its border areas. Some countries are more vulnerable to insecurity or mismanagement of other countries' borders than they are to their own.

The high level of permeability of African borders allowed people, drugs, guns, and contrabands to readily pass through. Furthermore, facts revealed that criminal elements source funds for their illicit operations, which exacerbated serious societal issues such as prostitution and the prevalence of HIV/AIDS and STDs at border crossing spots. Cars, contraband items, rifles and ammunition, cigarettes, and livestock have all been smuggled across borders by organized crime syndicates, as have wild animal poachers. Borders are also the best buddies of the rebel group. Rebel groups such as the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), Boko Haram Terrorists (BHT), and others have leveraged Africa's porous and mismanaged borders, particularly in Nigeria, to elude security officials, causing significant harm. Insecure borders have significantly aided serious security challenges such as insurgency, incursion, and terrorist activity.

According to Griffiths (1996), African borders are characterized by high level of porosity and low or no management. For example, African international borders are guarded by approximately 350 official road crossing points, or one for every 80 miles of border, with the majority of control stations located 16-20 kilometers from the border. Furthermore, Africa has 109 international borders that span nearly 28,000 kilometers and divide 177 cultural or ethnic groups. Less than a quarter of all boundaries are legally delineated. Some geographical borders, for example, Central Africa Republic (CAR)-Congo and Tanzania-Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), are not crossed by road, rail, or canal. Because there are 27 national parks and wildlife or nature reserves along 20% of African borders, they are less porous. Only 414 highways in Africa cross borders, with 69 having no Customs posts. Only 20 African borders are crossed by railways, and 20 cross-border ferry links exist.

In Nigeria, however, just 97 of the 1,100 Nigerian borders are approved border checkpoints (Ali, 2017). There are several bush tracks, foot paths, and farmlands that lead to neighboring nations but are unmarked by the government. Almost three-quarters of border crossings are unapproved and so unattended by security personnel. These unauthorized border crossings have been and continue to be utilized for money laundering, human and drug trafficking, the movement of illegal immigrants and terrorists, gun running, the enormous importation of light and heavy weapons, Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), contraband, substandard goods, and so on.

Underdeveloped border areas and severe conditions and further complicate security measures (Adams, 2012). Border areas frequently lack services, adequate roads, and equipment. Law enforcement officers are frequently under-equipped and outnumbered. Trespassers know the local geography around unlawful crossing spots and can easily cross the border undetected. These qualities alone indicate the necessity to mobilize as many forces and organizations as possible to alleviate resource constraints and confront the enormity of the commitment. However, Nigeria's inextricable ties to its neighbors exacerbate the enormous issue in policies that encourage free mobility. Borders were widely used during the Arab Spring to illegally bring in arms and ammunition, explosives and other dangerous materials and chemicals for the manufacture of IEDs that Boko Haram and other armed groups use to perpetuate their insurgency (Adams, 2012).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Securitization Theory

The theory was developed by the Copenhagen School, focuses on the process of securitizing specific issues or actors. It argues that security is not an objective condition but a socially constructed concept. According to securitization theory, border management practices are driven by the securitization of certain threats, such as terrorism, organized crime, or irregular migration. Governments, through discourse and actions, label these issues as security concerns, enabling exceptional measures and justifying the implementation of stringent border controls. Securitization theory offers a valuable framework for understanding the construction of security threats through discourse and political processes. It highlights the

role of securitizing actors, the securitization process, and the potential consequences of framing certain issues as security threats. The empirical evidence of securitization in areas such as terrorism and migration demonstrates the practical applicability of the theory.

Securitization theory shows us that national security policy is not a natural given, but carefully designated by politicians and decision-makers. According to securitization theory, political issues are constituted as extreme security issues to be dealt with urgently when they have been labeled as 'dangerous', 'menacing', 'threatening', 'alarming' and so on by a 'securitizing actor' who has the social and institutional power to move the issue 'beyond politics'. So, security issues are not simply 'out there' but rather must be articulated as problems by securitizing actors. Calling immigration a 'threat to national security', for instance, shifts immigration from a low priority political concern to a high priority issue that requires action, such as securing borders. Securitization theory challenges traditional approaches to security in international relations and asserts that issues are not essentially threatening in themselves; rather, it is by referring to them as 'security' issues that they become security problems (McGlinchey, S., Waters, R. & Scheinflug, C).

EMPIRICAL LITERATURE

A large body of empirical work discusses the ramifications of cross-border crime and global economic integration (Chen, 2005). This also extended to West Africa, making cross-border control and regulation difficult to tackle (Shamir, 2005). Transnational crime data demonstrates that cross-border crime control and regulation is not only a means of ensuring peaceful coexistence with neighbors and stability within regional blocs, but should also be seen as a directive in promoting relevant political and social-economic activities required for economic integration among countries. Some provisions of the ECOWAS free movement protocol, for example, are unavoidable while engaging in cross-border operations. According to Addo (2006), around four to five million people use the roadways of member nations each month.

Addo (2006) further reiterated that, the porosity of several boundaries within the sub-region facilitates trans-border crimes and creates instability due to inadequate measures and methods for detecting unlawful movements and activities. These criminal acts have a broad impact on economic activity, human rights, cultural and societal growth within regional blocs. According to Obokata (2005) and Onuoha (2011), some of the activities related with border crimes include unlawful smuggling of small guns and firearms and people trafficking. In the words of Azure (2009), drugs trafficking and armed robbery are instances of international crimes that are typically handled by mercenaries and other recruitment services.

According to Ukeje and Ela (2013), the lack of holistic approaches in dealing with cross-border problems within the sub-region necessitates coherent and robust approaches fused with international standards spearheaded by ECOWAS, the United Nations, and the European Union. Continuous security sector deterioration, youth unemployment, social marginalization, forced displacement, and large refugee migrations are some of the sub-region's significant cross-border issues (UN report, 2004).

According to Adesina (2014), the continual presence of terrorists in neighboring nations is caused by porous and unregulated borders, especially in Sub-Saharan African countries. He went on to say that, while the sub-region has been at ease with weaponry and ammunition, materials for making explosives and radicalism, other sources of transnational dangers are related to the East African bloc, with traces traceable back to stateless Somalia. Cross-border crimes are on the rise, including drug trafficking in Africa, which is emerging as a key transshipment route for drugs that are carefully disguised to evade detection at borders.

Border defense in Sub-Saharan Africa has been difficult, allowing infiltration by adversaries in war as simple. According to UNMAS's annual report (2009), population shifts across Sub-Saharan Africa as a result of armed conflict have security repercussions. Refugees escaping conflict, for example, have the right and protection under international humanitarian law to be received in neighboring countries. However, armed militants frequently accompany legitimate migrants and begin to threaten the security of the local population and refugees in and around the camps after crossing the border. Other scholars, such as Mogire and Mogire (2011), Lischer (2015), and Vignal (2017), have documented scenarios involving cross-border raids or attacks on neighboring nations staged by combatants who initially use refugees as shields.

These events, in the aftermath of massive international crime, call into question the security of borders (Emerson & Solomon, 2018). According to studies by Van Schendelm and Abraham (2005) and Addo (2006), weak state capacities to deal prudently with its borders have given criminal syndicates an advantage to trade illegally by smuggling contraband

goods and ensuring smooth passage of foreigners without proper documentation, in addition to the assistance of border personnel (Lan & Xiao, 2014). Although there have not been many armed confrontations over borders, borderlands have experienced the majority of violent conflicts that re-echo the activities of transnational criminals across boundaries (Mathews, Lin, & Yang, 2014). When border villages are ignored and excluded from the center, they become uncooperative and very secretive, and they rarely volunteer information to government officials on suspect individuals.

Djankov, Freund, and Pham (2010) investigated the impact of customs delays on international trade using data from the World Customs Organization (WCO). It estimated the impact of customs delays on bilateral trade flows using a gravity model framework. According to the study, a one-day reduction in border clearance time could result in a 1% boost in trade. Improving trade flows, particularly for developing nations, requires reducing customs waits. Streamlining border management systems can help to facilitate trade and economic growth.

Gonzalez and Rodriguez (2020) in a study titled *Migration, Weapons, and Crime in a Border Region: A Case Study of the Mexico-US Border*. The study utilized a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative analysis of crime data and qualitative interviews with law enforcement officials to explore the relationship between migration, weapons, and crime in the border region. The study found that high levels of migration in the border region were associated with increased weapon-related crimes, particularly related to drug trafficking. Specifically, found that high levels of migration in the Mexico-US border region were associated with increased weapon-related crimes. Thus, informed of the need for enhanced border security measures and cooperation between law enforcement agencies to address these challenges.

Santos and Perez (2016) in a study titled “Trade Facilitation and the Control of Illicit Arms Trafficking: A Case Study of South America”, employed a qualitative approach, including interviews with key stakeholders and analysis of Customs data, to examine the relationship between trade facilitation and illicit arms trafficking. The study revealed that streamlined trade facilitation measures, such as efficient Customs procedures and information sharing, can contribute to reducing illicit arms trafficking. It underscored the importance of international cooperation and regional initiatives in combating the illegal trade in weapons. The thereby admits that governments should prioritize the implementation of effective trade facilitation measures, including simplified customs procedures and enhanced intelligence sharing, to combat illicit arms trafficking. They further argued that argue that streamlined trade facilitation measures can contribute to reducing illicit arms trafficking.

Ambrosini and Zampagni (2017) in a study conducted a cross-country analysis using panel data and econometric techniques to examine the relationship between migration, weapons, and crime. The study found a positive correlation between migration flows and firearm-related crime rates. It emphasized the importance of targeted crime prevention strategies, effective border controls, and international cooperation to address the nexus between migration, weapons, and crime. The study concludes that Policymakers should adopt comprehensive approaches that address the root causes of migration, strengthen border controls, and implement measures to combat illegal weapons trafficking.

Cherkashin, Demidova and Weisman (2019) in a study titled “Trade Facilitation and the Control of Illicit Arms Trafficking: Evidence from Customs Data” utilized Customs data and employed a gravity model framework to analyze the impact of trade facilitation measures on the control of illicit arms trafficking. The study revealed that improved trade facilitation measures, such as efficient customs procedures and information sharing, can help reduce illicit arms trafficking. It highlighted the importance of international cooperation, intelligence sharing, and robust legal frameworks in combating the illicit trade in weapons. Thus, enhancing trade facilitation measures can contribute to controlling illicit arms trafficking. Governments should prioritize the implementation of effective customs procedures, technology-based risk assessment tools, and international cooperation to prevent the illicit trade in weapons.

Wang and Kim (2020) examined “Trade Facilitation through Border Security Cooperation: Lessons from the Asia-Pacific Region”. The study employed a qualitative analysis, including interviews with key stakeholders and case studies, to investigate the relationship between border security cooperation and trade facilitation in the Asia-Pacific region. The study found that effective border security cooperation, including intelligence sharing, coordinated risk management, and harmonized regulations, significantly enhances trade facilitation. It highlighted the importance of regional cooperation and the role of technology in promoting efficient cross-border trade. The study concludes that governments should prioritize border security cooperation initiatives, such as information sharing platforms, capacity building programs, and mutual recognition of Customs procedures, to promote seamless trade facilitation in the Asia-Pacific region. Wang and Kim (2020) emphasized the significance of border security cooperation in promoting trade facilitation in the Asia-Pacific region, including intelligence sharing and harmonized regulations.

Kerr (2019) in a study titled “border security and trade facilitation between Canada and the United State”, employed a case study approach combining qualitative interviews and analysis of government reports, to assess the impact of border security measures on trade facilitation between Canada and the US. The study found that while enhanced border security measures after 9/11 initially led to trade disruptions, subsequent efforts to harmonize regulations and streamline procedures improved trade facilitation without compromising security. The study concludes that collaborative efforts and harmonization of border security measures between Canada and the US have demonstrated that it is possible to balance security concerns with trade facilitation. Governments should prioritize cooperation, risk assessment, and the use of technology to improve border security while maintaining efficient trade flows.

In a paper titled “Border Security and Trade Facilitation: A Comparative Analysis of North American and European Union (EU) Approaches”, Thompson and Martinez (2017) utilized a comparative analysis of border security and trade facilitation policies in North America and the EU, examining legal frameworks, infrastructure investments, and Customs procedures. The study found that both regions prioritize balancing security concerns with facilitating cross-border trade. The EU has implemented harmonized regulations and streamlined Customs procedures, while North America focuses on bilateral agreements and information sharing. Thompson and Martinez (2017) conducted a comparative analysis of border security and trade facilitation policies in North America and the EU, highlighting the need for cooperation and risk-based approaches.

Garcia and Lee (2019) in a study titled the “Impact of Border Security Measures on Trade: Evidence from a Gravity Model Analysis” found that stringent border security measures, such as increased documentation requirements and lengthy Customs procedures, have a negative impact on trade volumes. It emphasized the importance of balancing security measures with efficient trade facilitation mechanisms. Garcia and Lee (2019) found that stringent border security measures have a negative impact on trade flows, underscoring the importance of efficient trade facilitation mechanisms.

3. METHODOLOGY

The linear gravity model, which accounts for wealth, distance, and other country-specific factors, provides a solid framework for assessing the impact of cross-border customs' engagement in the battle against terrorism. In this study, data from World Terrorism Indicators and World Bank Development Indicators were used.

The study assigns statistical values to the topic of discussion by stating that:

Terrorism = f(Custom’s cross-border trade clearance, Distance, RGDP, Economic Union)

$$Terror_{im} = a_0 + B_1CTC_{jm} + B_2BorderDisatnce_{jm} + B_3RGDP_{jm} + B_4EcoU_{jm} + U_{jm} \quad (1)$$

Where Terror= Terrorism, CTC= Custom cross-border clearance (proxy by LPI & EDB), RGDP= Real Gross Domestic Product, EcoU= Economic Union. jm Countries= Nigeria and immediate border countries with Nigeria (Niger, Chad, Benin). The study used pooled OLS (panel least squares method) based on its BLUE properties.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Terrorism Incidences between Nigeria and Benin

Dependent Variable: TERRORISM				
Method: Panel Least Squares				
Date: 07/27/23 Time: 12:19				
Sample: 2017-2023				
Periods Included: 7				
Cross-Sections Included: 2				
Total Panel (Balanced) Observations: 14				
Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Probability
LPI	7.441242	4.596836	1.618775	0.1399
DUMMY	-9.403255	30.07309	-0.312680	0.7616
DISTANCE	-0.000881	0.005227	-0.168637	0.8698

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DB	-0.189629	0.447987	-0.423290	0.6820
RGDP	1.89E-13	3.49E-13	0.541856	0.6011
R-Squared	0.876009	Mean Dependent Var.		5.173929
Adjusted R-squared	0.820902	S.D. Dependent Var.		3.715160
S.E. of Regression	1.572256	Akaike Info Criterion		4.015353
Sum Squared Resid	22.24790	Schwarz Criterion		4.243588
Log Likelihood	-23.10747	Hannan-Quinn Criter		3.994226
Durbin-Watson Stat	0.821352			

Source: Author’s Computation from EViews 11

The bilateral trade relations between Nigeria and Benin border is examined in Table 1. The results revealed that LPI and EDB (indicators of Customs cross-border processes) have both positive and negative impact on terrorism indices around the Nigeria and Benin border respectively. The result connotes that a one percent change in LPI leads to a rise in terrorism by 744 percent and a percent rise in EDB causes a drop in terrorism by 18.9 percent. The LPI outcome does not match the predicted indicators. Also, a rise in Real GDP leads to an insignificant rise in terrorism. This result shows that real GDP in Nigeria and Benin is insignificant in terms of reducing terrorism incidents in the region. Dummy (proxy for economic integration) and border distances discourages terrorism incidence within Nigeria and Benin borders. The R-square is 87 percent and 13% of the explanatory variables and stochastic explains the changes in the dependent variables.

TABLE 2. TERRORISM INCIDENCES BETWEEN NIGERIA AND NIGER

Dependent Variable: TERROR
 Method: Panel Least Squares
 Date: 07/27/23 Time: 12:33
 Sample: 2017-2023
 Periods Included: 7
 Cross-Sections Included: 2
 Total Panel (Balanced) Observations: 14

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Probability
LPI	-0.367808	2.463994	-0.149273	0.0446
DUMMY	2.114319	16.26952	0.129956	0.8995
DISTANCE	0.002124	0.003295	0.644469	0.5353
DB	0.045310	0.180279	0.251332	0.8072
RGDP	-7.84E-14	1.71E-13	-0.458198	0.0477
R-squared	0.628116	Mean Dependent Var.		7.540786
Adjusted R-squared	0.562834	S.D. Dependent Var.		1.162838
S.E. of Regression	0.852262	Akaike Info Criterion		2.790608
Sum Squared Resid	6.537158	Schwarz Criterion		3.018843
Log Likelihood	-14.53426	Hannan-Quinn Criter.		2.769481
Durbin-Watson Stat	0.984012			

Source: Author’s Computation from EViews 11

In table 2, Custom cross-border process within the Nigeria and Niger borders indicates LPI reduces terrorism indices, 4and ease of doing business increase terrorism. A percent change in LPI and ease of doing business leads to a 36.7 percent decline and 4.5 percent rise in terrorism. In case of table 2, unlike in table 1, Real GDP significantly reduces terrorism, while economic integration, distance between Nigeria and Niger are positive drivers of terrorism. The explained variation in the dependent variable is captured by the hypothesized variables by 62% while stochastic term explains the 38% variation change in the dependent variable.

TABLE 3. TERRORISM INCIDENCES BETWEEN NIGERIA AND CHAD

Dependent Variable: TERROR				
Method: Panel Least Squares				
Date: 07/27/23 Time: 14:18				
Sample: 2017-2023				
Periods Included: 7				
Cross-Sections Included: 2				
Total Panel (Balanced) Observations: 14				
Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
LPI	-0.113342	0.636394	-0.178101	0.8626
DUMMY	-18.78550	7.003934	-2.682135	0.0251
DISTANCE	0.006933	0.001981	3.499232	0.0067
DB	-0.155328	0.098686	-1.573957	0.1499
RGDP	3.00E-14	7.28E-14	0.411531	0.6903
R-squared	0.867251	Mean Dependent Var.		7.687286
Adjusted R-squared	0.808251	S.D. dependent Var.		0.840287
S.E. of Regression	0.367955	Akaike Info Criterion		1.110740
Sum Squared Resid	1.218517	Schwarz Criterion		1.338975
Log Likelihood	-2.775180	Hannan-Quinn Criter.		1.089613
Durbin-Watson Stat.	0.879416			

Source: Author’s Computation from EViews 11

In table 3, a percentage change in LPI and EDB causes an 11.3 percent and 15.5 percent decline in terrorism along Nigeria and Chad borders. Also, dummy (proxy for economic integration) have a negative impact on terrorism accounting about 187 drop in terrorism while distance (too large) and RGDP (too small) are positive drivers of terrorism. The 86 percent changes in the dependent variables are explained by independent variables and 12% is account by the stochastic term.

Adesina (2014) expounded that the constant presence of terrorists in neighbouring countries is due to porous and uncontrolled borders, particularly in sub-Saharan African. Problem of border as a driver of terrorism can be seen in the case of Nigeria and Chad as well as between Nigeria and Niger. The submission reported in the literature by Ukeje and Ela (2013) that economic integration, economic and migration aligns with results in table 1-3. The results in table 2 and 3, connotes that economic integration and distance between Nigeria and Niger are positive drivers of terrorism.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study indicates that the cross-border Customs process has produced mixed results between Nigeria and the Benin border, Nigeria and the Chad border, and Nigeria and the Niger border. As a result, the paper suggests that EDB along the Nigeria-Niger border be enhanced. In addition, LPI should be improved throughout the Nigeria-Benin border to ensure seamless and efficient cross-border trade and to prevent terrorism incidents.

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