Border Security and Challenges of Human Trafficking in Nigeria in the 21st Century

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Abstract
Human migration in Sub-Saharan Africa has far-reaching complex challenges such as illegal movement of small arms, human slavering, and smuggling of illicit drugs, human trafficking, armed banditry and so forth. The porous borders in Sub-Saharan Africa have remained a serious threat to human security in the region and Nigeria in particular where various forms of criminal activities have taken place due to perceived unregulated inflow and outflow of people and materials across the country's borders. The study examined how poor border security has contributed to human trafficking in Nigeria. To achieve this objective, qualitative-descriptive method was adopted and 'content analysis' employed as a technique for analysis. The study found out that human migration has contributed different forms of criminal activities in Nigeria. In the light of the forgoing, the study observed that human migration in African region has led to trans-border crimes, ranging from armed banditry to human trafficking with colossal security implications in Nigeria. The study recommended that Nigerian government should engage in professional training of border security agencies as well as employ modern technologies in dictating illegal movement of persons and materials across the country's borders. To effectively achieve this, there should be a renewed strong cooperation and collaboration of Nigerian government with other neighbouring countries such as Benin, Niger, Chad and Cameroun regarding provision of border infrastructures.

Introduction

Africa has witnessed immense incidences of cross-border human displacement, and has continued to expect more owing to internal contradictions cutting across, communal conflicts, terrorism, wars and other environmental calamities bedevilling the continent. In this regard, African countries are presumed to have produced more migrants than other continents of the world. In specifics, the situation has been attributed to high levels of human security challenges such as poverty, hunger, unemployment, diseases, natural disasters, armed conflicts, terrorism etc. Apart from movement from Africa to other continents like North America, Europe, there are still migrations taking place within African region. A typical instance was during the 2011-12 Horn of Africa drought and

famine where many people fled Somalia to nearby countries, such as Kenya and Ethiopia. There are cases where flooding usually leads to cross-border movement between Mozambique and Malawi. Incessant migration in Africa seems to be an insurmountable phenomenon that resists policy actions of national governments.

There is no gainsaying that the continent's high population growth and the absence of commensurate economic opportunities have remained a push factor. In 2050, the working-age population of Africa is expected to hit 1.3 billion, and this growth is not being matched with appropriate livelihood opportunities or the provision of basic services (Gonzalez-Garcia et al, 2016). Anticipated greater access to economic opportunities in destination countries, social networks, education and the media contribute towards increased mobility and aspirations to migrate (Flahaux, & de Hass, 2016).

The dimension of migration in Africa has constituted serious human and national security threats. Mass movement of people has largely posed serious challenges to available social amenities of the destination countries, especially in African countries like Nigeria that are already confronted with problems of infrastructure development. The porous nature of the Nigerian borders has been a major challenge to security building in the country. There have been reported cases of inflows and outflows of armed bandits, terrorist groups, human traffickers, smugglers among others. The inability of the security agencies to protect the borders against cross-border criminal activities is not only worrisome, but has created a general state of insecurity in the Nigeria. For instance, there are crimes ranging from human trafficking to armed robbery; from terrorism to killing of innocent people; from smuggling of illicit drugs to illegal movement of small arm fires, and other crimes.

The problem of smuggling of illegal and illicit drugs and arms has been a major issue facing security operatives across the border areas in Nigeria and West African sub-region. West Africa is under attack from international criminal networks that are using the sub-region as a key global hub for the distribution, wholesale, and increasing production of illicit drugs (Brown, 2013). The inflows of people to Nigeria and porosity of the country's borders tend to largely make it difficult of the security operatives to control the movement of people and goods. The increased activities of smugglers across the border area coupled with arms trafficking constitute a challenge to security in Nigeria (Mobolaji & Alabi, 2017). However, corruption has affected the operation of some security agents who are accused of aiding cross-border smugglers and traffickers largely due to financial

inducements. There is also a challenge of inadequate manpower as regards to security agencies from combating crime. Accompanying smuggling of illicit items is the related dimension of activities of international criminal gangs specializing in money laundering, arms trafficking, advance fee fraud and human trafficking (Ogwu, 2002). There is existence of manifold criminal activities within Nigerian borders, particularly Nigerian-Beninese border areas. Trafficking of small arms and light weapons, narcotics and human beings as well as cross-border armed attacks are prevalent in the country's borders (Adeola & Oluyemi, 2012). The degree of border porosity between Nigeria and as well as weak governance structure remains disturbing.

Conceptual Review

Various key concepts that are directly relevant to this study are conceptualized to actually understand their meaning and perception of scholars or writers.

The Concept of Migration

Most theoretical approaches to migration offer different but complementary hypotheses (Massey, Arango, Hugo, Kouaouci, Pellegrino & Taylor, 1993; Todaro & Smith, 2015). However, the neoclassical perspective underpins migration in the context of rational economic considerations and financial decisions (Todaro and Smith, 2015). Many studies of South–North migration are rooted in neoclassical frameworks of migration, which propose wage differentials as the key determinant of migration (Hicks, 1932; Lewis, 1954). Although wage and income differentials play a role in influencing the decisions of migrants, it is unlikely that this proposition adequately accounts for most migration, especially when migration occurs between countries with similar living standards and wage differentials. Push-pull framework has argued that migration is determined by certain elements in the context of country of origin and destination country. The push factors are typically influenced by poverty, unemployment and inequality. This dichotomous framework places emphasis on economic context of migration which has more or less recognised job and income differentials as determining variables. However, De Haas (2011) argues that migration is a function of people's aspirations and capabilities to migrate, and emphasizes that people only migrate when they have the ambitions and resources to make it happen, a factor that is ignored in push–pull models.

The Concept of Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is a modern form of slavery. It is an illegal business and a social problem. Human trafficking is a social problem because it affects many people. It affects different categories of people. It is a social problem because of the magnitude, the trend and pattern it has taken over the years. Human trafficking is organized crimes many people are involved. It is a chain or continuum, with people in the crime performing specific assigned tasks. In this organised crime, there are recruiters. These are people who go to villages to deceive young girls and boys through their parents. They give the impression to parents of assisting their relations for a better education, employment without the full knowledge of what await their children (OkesholaandAdenugba, 2018).

Dimensions of Migration in Africa

The free movement of people is generally regarded as a key element of regional integration. Much like the free trade in goods and services, the free movement of people is expected to lead to increased economic prosperity and poverty reduction (Klavert, 2011). According to the author, voluntary migration can promote political integration by stimulating intraregional trade and closer social interaction between countries. Contrarily, forced migration, (i.e. the involuntary movement of refugees, trafficked or smuggled persons), is a factor that works against regional integration. In this situation, countries tend to formulate policies against free movement of people. However, forced migration is a reoccurring reality in Africa. It is largely uncontrolled, because many borders in Africa are artificial or/and porous, and many countries are too weak to control their borders, often a mission impossible in any case (Klavert, 2011). In Africa, 78.5 per cent of all international immigrants were born in Africa (UNCTAD Report, 2017). In other words, four of every five international migrants in Africa come from the African continent. Africa recorded an increase in the stock of immigrants, including immigrants from outside and within the continent, from 12.4 million in 2000 to 19.3 million in 2017 (UNCTAD, 2017).

> The absolute number of international migrant stocks reveals the main destinations of migrants in Africa. In 2017, the main receiving countries were South Africa (4.0 million), Côte d'Ivoire (2.2 million) and Uganda, Nigeria, Ethiopia and Kenya (each exceeding 1.0 million, in descending order). The main receiving countries of intra-African international migrants were South Africa (2.2 million) and Côte d'Ivoire (2.1 million), highlighting their importance as migration hubs. Uganda, Ethiopia, Nigeria

and Kenya (each exceeding 1 million, in descending order) were also major receiving countries of intra-African international migrants (UNCTAD, 2017.).

In West Africa, migrants have historically included refugees, cross-border traders, professionals and clandestine workers. During the colonial era, Burkinabe, Malians and Togolese were contracted or subjected to compulsory work in plantations, mines and road construction in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria (Aniche and Moyo, 2019). These oil and gold economies historically attracted regional migrants while Benin, Cape Verde, Ghana, Mali, and Togo supplied labour. Population pressures, poverty and post-independence conflicts have further spurred migration (Fioramonti and Nshimbi, 2016). A more recent phenomenon, one that accelerated in the 1960s and the 1970s, is the migration of ECOWAS nationals to Europe. This increase of migration to European shores has been fostered by the recurrent crises in West Africa, which pushes people out of their homes in search of livelihoods. Migration to Europe is also the result of the relative lack of economic opportunities in West Africa when compared to Europe (Altai Consulting, 2015, in Aniche and Moyo, 2019).

Migration and Human Trafficking in Nigeria

The Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Law Enforcement and Administration Act (2003), defines trafficking as all acts and attempted acts involved in the recruitment, transportation within or across Nigeria borders, purchases, sales, transfer, receipt or harbouring of a person involving the use of deception, coercion or debt bondage for the purpose of placing or holding the persons, whether for or not involuntary servitude (domestic, sexual or reproductive) in forced or bonded labour, or in slavery-like conditions (Okeshola & Adenugba, 2018). Human trafficking according to Article 3(a) of the United Nations Palemo Protocol, is defined as "recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force, other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person for the purpose of exploitation" (Okeshola & Adenugba, 2018).

Human trafficking has remained one of the confronting challenges facing Nigeria and Africa in general. Cross border human trafficking has become issues of public discourse in this 21st century global system. For instance, the migration patterns in Africa have more or less constituted a big challenge, as it is believed to be the factor escalating

crimes in the continent. By way of clarification, smuggling of migrants is necessarily transnational, while trafficking in persons may be transnational or perpetrated within the borders of one state. Exploitation is the purpose of trafficking in persons (TIP) and thus a major interest of the trafficker. Also, the consent of a victim of trafficking (VOT) is irrelevant when any of the means provided for by the Protocol against TIP has been used, while in the case of smuggling of migrants, it is the smuggled migrants that resort to smugglers to emigrate (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC, 2015). There are three distinct "constituent elements" of trafficking in persons: the act, the means and the purpose. All three elements must be present in order for a case to be defined as a TIP. Each element has a range of manifestations (UNODC, 2014).

> The TIP Protocol specifies that "the act" means the recruitment, transport, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons. "The means" refers to the method used to lure the victim. Possible means are threat, force, deception, coercion, abduction, fraud, abuse of power or a position of vulnerability, or giving of payments or benefits. "The purpose" is always exploitation of the victim, although this can take on various forms, including sexual exploitation, forced labour, removal of organs or a range of other forms. Most trafficking flows are intra-regional. (UNODC, 2014).

Table 1: Nigeria's Cases of Human Trafficking Reported to NAPTIP in 2013

Cases	Reported		Investigated	
	No.	%	No.	%
External trafficking for sexual exploitation	96	23.6	75	78.1
Internal trafficking for sexual exploitation	17	4.2	5	29.4
External trafficking for labour exploitation	18	4.4	8	44.4
Internal trafficking for labour exploitation	37	9.1	15	40.5
Nigerians Deported as illegal Migrants	5	1.2	2	40.0
Child labour	54	13.3	41	75.9
Child abuse	78	19.2	54	69.2
Child abduction from guardianship	38	9.3	32	84.2
Forced marriage	3	0.7	1	33.3
Rape/sexual abuse	14	3.4	9	64.3
Others	47	11.5	24	51.1
TOTAL	**407**	**100.0**	**266**	**65.4**

Source: National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons-NAPTIP (2013)

Considering the data presented on the table above, the number and percentage of external trafficking for sexual exploitation is far higher than the internal trafficking for sexual exploitation. While, external trafficking for labour exploitation is lower than the internal practice. The information indicates that trafficking for sexual exploitation has been the major practice. This is because young girls and their parents are usually deceived to believe that there are decent job opportunities outside Nigeria, thereby making the victims to be excited and willing to migrate. Victims are transported from countries and regions of origin to destination countries and regions. In the process, victims of trafficking are subjected to various forms of dehumanising or inhuman condition, thereby exposing them to psychological traumas.

The victim might also begin to feel loyal towards the traffickers, as a survival mechanism, and might potentially suffer from memory loss and be unable to recount their story, due to post traumatic stress syndrome, or a forced drug habit.

Victims are often accompanied and are kept from making contact with other people. Sometimes, the victims give misleading information. As a result, victims of trafficking (VOTs) are often unable to find their way back and might not even know the country of their destination (Aniche & Moyo, 2019).

Despite legal frameworks against trafficking in Africa and Nigeria in particular, various forms of human trafficking have continued to increase on daily basis through porous borders in West African region. A typical example is the "Triangle of Shame". This represents Niger/Chad/Nigeria borders. In this zone, hundreds of girls trafficked from Edo State, Nigeria, end up in the sex industry in Italy (Adepoju, 2005; Yaro, 2008; Sofie & Olsen, 2011). In a similar vein, Black (2004) estimated that 10,000 Nigerian prostitutes work in over 300 brothels in Europe and South America. While some continue with the traditional two-step moves from a village to a coastal city and then to Europe, many others pursue varied routes through Sahelian or coastal African cities to reach Europe (Adepoju, 2000). There are three main routes to Europe from Africa. These are: the Central Mediterranean Route through Niger, the Central Mediterranean Route through Mali, and the Western Mediterranean Route from Mauritania (Adepoju, 2016). Libya has been the main departure point for boat crossings to Italy, as not less than 40 percent of all arrivals in Italy had departed from the Libyan coast (Adepoju, 2016).

Not all African countries in the West African region experience the same levels of security threats of trafficking. For instance, Mauritania reported fewer case of trafficking while Nigeria is reported to experience particularly high levels of trafficking with the NAPTIP reporting that there are no less than 100,000 Nigerians trafficked each year, particularly women in a context of sexual exploitation, and young boys in a context of labour exploitation (Adepoju, 2016). Accordingly, the number of women who arrived irregularly by boat in Italy in 2014 in the context of trafficking for sexual exploitation increased by 300% when compared to arrivals in 2013 and Nigerian women account for most of the increase. Arguably, human trafficking has continued to strive in Nigeria because of alleged collusion among security, immigration, embassy and airline officials and traffickers (Musikilu, 2008). These officials have been accused of often taking bribes in exchange for facilitating smooth passage across the borders for traffickers and their victims (Musikilu, 2008). In the same manner, Akinyemi (2019) also maintains that the never-ending business oftrafficking in humans across borders today is organized by individuals and groups, colluding with government officials and its devastating impact on exasperated individuals.

Figure: 1 Share of Child Victims among Total Trafficking Victims Detected in Nigeria, January 2008-March 2010

	2008	2009	Jan-March 2010
■ Number of adult victims detected	611	710	202
■ Number of child victims detected	628	540	168
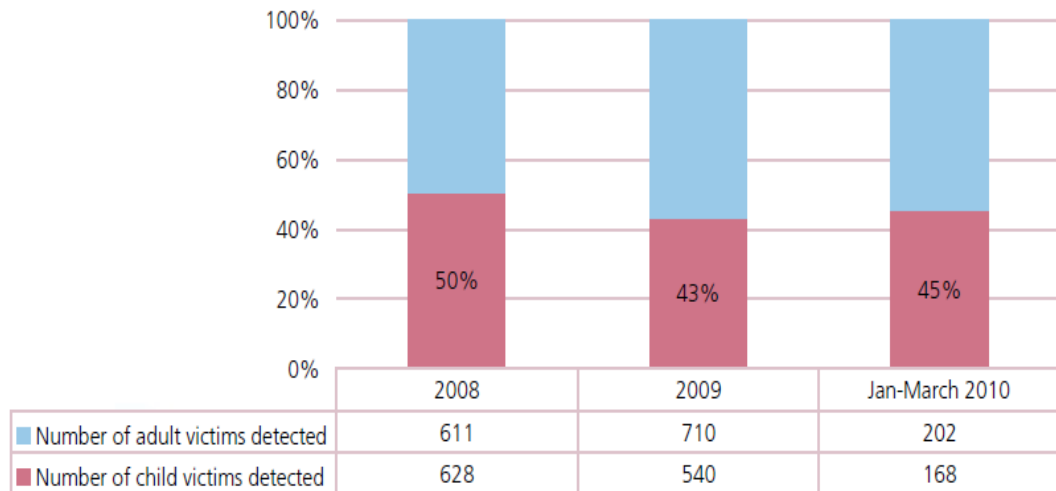
Source: National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons and Other Related Matters

An International Labour Organisation and International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labours (ILO/IPEC) report that 40 per cent of Nigerian street children and hawkers are trafficked persons (ILO/IPEC, 2000). In March, 2002, Women Trafficking and Child Labour Eradication Foundation (WOTCLEF) in a seminar organized by the International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA), reported that there are about 20,000 Nigerian women involved in the sex industry in Italy (WOTCLEF, 2002). The Daily Champion of July, 2002 reported that 80 per cent of foreign prostitutes in Italy were Nigerian women. According to Agbu (2003), most of the trafficked women were from Edo, Delta and Lagos States with an average age range of between 15 and 35 years. Also, Uzor (2001) reveals that in one instance, 12 prominent businessmen suspected of trafficking 13 Nigerian women for prostitution abroad were intercepted at the Nigeria's Seme border with Benin Republic. Similarly, it has been reported that in the last two decades there has been an increase in the internal trafficking of Nigerian women and children. Internationally trafficked Nigerians come from all parts of Nigeria but some States tend to provide more trafficked persons than others. Reports have shown that these States include Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Imo, Ebonyi, Kano, Delta, Ogun, Oyo and

Lagos. West African destination countries for Nigerian trafficked women and children are Republic of Benin, Togo, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Cameroon, Gabon and Guinea where trafficked persons are destined to work mostly as domestic servants and on farm plantations. More specifically, women and children recruited from Shaki in Oyo State are mainly trafficked to Guinea, Mali and Côte d'Ivoire to work as hawkers and domestic servants. In the report of Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, (2010), recently, Nigerian women and young girls were also trafficked to Benin for prostitution. Most of these trafficked persons find themselves deceived into believing that their destination would be Europe (Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, 2010).

Nigeria remains a source, transit and destination country when it comes to human trafficking. The latest Global Slavery Index (2018) Report, Nigeria ranks 32/167 of the countries with the highest number of slaves – 1,386,000 – and its National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) reports that the highest number of trafficked children in Nigeria, recently upgraded to a Tier 2 country on the U.S. State Department's Trafficking In Persons Report (2021), are girls between the ages of 12-17 (2020 Report). NAPTIP further contends that 75% of those who are trafficked within Nigeria are trafficked across states, while 23% are trafficked within states. Only 2% of those who are trafficked are trafficked outside the country, according to NAPTIP (2016). Human trafficking is the third most common crime in Nigeria after drug trafficking and economic fraud (UNESCO, 2006). The general factors that increase vulnerability to trafficking in Nigeria include extreme poverty (now the world's poverty capital), lack of economic opportunities, corruption, conflict/insecurity, climate change/resulting migration and western consumerism. The total number of human trafficking victims outside of Nigeria is largely unknown. However, it is undisputed that principally due to Nigeria's population, Nigeria is routinely listed as one of the countries with the largest number of trafficking victims overseas (particularly in Europe), with victims identified in 34 countries in four regions in 2018 (Pathfinder Justice Initiative, 2020).

According to NAPTIP (2019), two hundred and three cases concerning human trafficking were fully investigated by the Agency in the year 2019. Among this figure, foreign travel which promotes prostitution constituted 22.7% of the total cases investigated by the Agency during the year. Cases of child abuse and procurement of persons for sexual exploitation constituted 17.7% and 9.4% respectively. NAPTIP successfully investigated 59 cases which were established as external trafficking. Seven

hundred and one (701) arrests were made in the year 2019. 20.8% of the arrests were from foreign travel which promotes prostitution offence (NAPTIP, 2019). Buying and selling of human beings for any purpose, and procurement of person for sexual exploitation had 14.7% and 12.0% respectively. The Agency prosecuted several cases of human trafficking and secured convictions in 18 cases with 25 traffickers convicted. Procurement of persons for sexual exploitation had 38.9% of the total cases won while foreign travel which promotes prostitution had 22.2% (NAPTIP, 2019).

Free Movement, Cross-Border Crimes and Human Trafficking

Nigeria has been the new hub for all forms of trans-border crimes ranging from women and child trafficking, internet fraud (419), smuggling among others (Mobolaji & Alabi, 2017). These activities tend to affect the security measures already been put in place by the various security agencies. According to the authors, the porous border for instance has been an easy route for criminals to easily ply their trade with less difficulty. The quest for survival led many into smuggling various goods from Benin Du Republic; they avoid paying custom duties thereby reducing revenue generation by the government (Mobolaji & Alabi, 2017). They argued that though the Nigeria's border problem is related to colonial history, its porosity has been exacerbated by the failure of succeeding governments to properly administer these borders. As Onuoha noted, "the high level of insecurity on African borders is largely due to the way they are administered and managed, and less to do with how colonialists drew them" (Onuoha, 2013). Despite this spirit of enterprising and promising neighborliness, the borders linking the two Nigeria and Benin are the most problematic because of the activities of internationally reputed criminals engaging in smuggling and trafficking of virtually everything from human trafficking, ammunition, arms, and drugs manufactured goods, agricultural produce, prostitution, and child labour to religious fanaticism, terrorist attacks and insurgency (Adeolu & Fayomi, 2012). Accordingly, the demarcation of the border between Seme and Krake is through the use of ropes. The ropes are tied to drums filled with sand and after interrogation by the security agents, the rope is being lifted and vehicles can pass. This is just for vehicles and the security for humans crossing is unbearable. Individuals moves freely from one part of the country into the other without been asked questions or been checked and it's through this movements that crimes are been perpetrated (Adeolu, & Fayomi, 2012).

Border crimes have been one of the issues affecting the security of the Nigeria. The various crimes have posed serious challenge to lives and properties. Findings revels that, lives are been lost on regular bases especially in communities surrounding the border area when there is any gun fight between the security agencies and the criminals. Numerous times, there have been community clashes leading to the death of security agents and also smugglers in these areas. This often escalate into expanded conflict as findings shows that, there have been faceoff between security agents and the communities who always try to protect their people. The security agents need to conduct their work diligently but the communities always prove as a stumbling block and it's a danger to the security of lives and properties (Mobolaji and Alabi, 2017).

Criminal activities tend to increase daily as a result of border crimes. There have been cases of criminals from neighbouring country terrorizing citizens in Nigeria and because of the porosity of the border area; it's easier for the criminals to escape (Mobolaji and Alabi, 2017). According to them, research shows that, members of the communities especially in Seme often lead those criminals along illegal routes that are unknown to the security agencies. Not all routes are been guarded thereby enabling the continuous flow of criminals.

Conclusion

Cross-border human migration is a highly diverse and complex phenomenon that transcends societies, cultures and races. It is a phenomenon that has continued to impact and contribute to the transformation of the entire facets of various countries changing the racial, ethnic, linguistic and socio-cultural composition of their population. This study has been able to draw a connection between the porosity of West African borders and its contribution to the ills of criminal activities. In this study, the impacts of border insecurity have been systematically assessed and the trends and patterns of human migration investigated. In the light of the forgoing, it is noted that human migration in Africa has in one way or the other led to trans-border crime, thereby posing security challenges in Nigeria. The increased activities of human traffickers, illegal materials smugglers, armed bandits, across the border areas have posed a big challenge to human security in Nigeria. Body of literature has attested that in some cases security personnel aid illegal movement of persons and items thereby making curtail of illegality difficult if not impossible. Regrettably, there are allegations that top ranking officers in their offices are aware of

this ugly development, but due to financial inducements they are in connivance with the criminal elements. The current Nigerian government approach to curb border crime by reconstructing the entry and exit border post is a good development but the issue will be the maintenance of the facilities and collaboration with the neighbouring countries.

Recommendations

Considering the challenges associated with migration in Africa and security threats cross-border movement of people has posed in Nigeria, the study advances recommendations.

Beyond increase in manpower, there is the need for training and re-training of various border security agencies. These training and workshop exercises should be routine events to actually equip the security agencies to effectively confront further security challenges. Majority of the Nigerian security officers are not well trained particularly on the area border security Thus, specialization of security agencies on border security is very needful in this 21st century.

The introduction of modern technology should be the priority of the government in combating crimes across the border area. Due to the vast area of borders, developed countries often engage in the use of improved technology like cameras, robots, scanners among others. A central data base and watch house should be instituted whereby the cameras are been installed in hidden selected places. The communities if aware might destroy it but it should be strategically placed. New machine that can scan vehicles and humans should be introduced and it will make the job of the security agents easier and reduces crime

Further, the study suggests a closer border security cooperation of the Nigerian government with the neighbouring countries in terms of infrastructure and physical presence of security agencies. In this case, it is advised that Nigeria has the option of developing a strong tie with countries such as Benin, Chat, Niger and Cameroon regarding infrastructure development that can enhance security.

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