

Illegal Democracy and the Rise of Security Challenges in Nigeria: Exploring the Impact on National Development Trajectory

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Abstract

In inverted democracy, the out-of-power political elites constantly strive to put credible force together, either to challenge those in government, and, or by implication limit their own vulnerability to different strands of political harassment from those in power. This does not only contradict the ends constitutional democracy seeks to secure but also promote the proliferation of small arms which encourage insecurity in the society. Using empirically data generated from the secondary sources, the study attempt to unveil its impact on Nigeria development trend. Specifically, it attempts to ascertain if 'There is a relationship between election related insecurity in Nigeria and the crises of national development'. With qualitative method of data collection as well as analysis and the time series research design with the theory of failed state as its analytical framework. It was reveals that there is a correlation between election related insecurity in Nigeria and the crises of national development. Among other recommendations offered by this study, it insist that the federal government should as a matter of urgency seek for an inclusive anti small arms proliferation campaign through electoral law review that discourage the use of thugs in election.

Keywords: Democracy, Political thugs, Killer Herdsmen, Boko-haram, Inflation Rate, Youths Unemployment, Poverty Headcount.

Introduction

From the time of Socrates as well as Herodotus through the middle ages up to the contemporary times, the term or concept of democracy has always been used to refer to primarily, the government of the people, because it seek to harmonize divergent interest through periodic elections. This view of democracy as a system that subsumes periodic election of governments or public officers as already emphasized, did not end during the time of Socrates and Herodotus but expanded up to the time of Alexis de Tocqueville, Joseph Schumpeter including Robert Dahl who gave it objective explication that made it a household concept in the social science literature in contemporary times. In our own time the concept is used to denote a system of government under which the people exercise their government

powers either directly or indirectly through representatives who are periodically elected by the entire population within the political boundary (Appadorai, 2004). This perspective of an ideal democracy somewhat agrees with the commonsense notion of the term, that a state in the management or political science view can be designated as a democratic society if it provides the enabling social institutions for the promotion of popular will, and in the matters of public concern the supremacy of that popular will, especially on those basic question of social direction and public policy. It follows therefore, that when there is an increase in political participation as a result of enfranchisement or review of a particular electoral law in any society they are termed democratic or democratizing society. The point being made is that a democratic government must be a representative of the people and the process of their selection must be free and fair, they must guarantees justice as well as a comprehensive blueprint of social, economic, political, and religious rights to the people over which they govern and most importantly, they must ensure security of life and property to all the citizens irrespective of social status or ethnic affiliation without which the government cannot be referred to as democratic but a mere nomenclature to attract general legitimacy rather than a descriptive category (Zakaria, 1979). In other words, open, free and fair periodic elections are the essence of legal democracy and the inescapable *sine qua non* for any society to be referred to as democratic. From the testament of Schumpeter as cited in Zakaria (1979) democracy as a system of government is one public virtue hence, its relation to other public virtues as well as vices can only be comprehensive if the basic principles, ideals and values of democracy are unambiguously distinguished from other characteristics of political system as we have done so far.

A legal or constitutional democracy as here used is not just about the process or methods for selecting government officials through a periodic free and fair election, it rather encompasses the total objective and behavior of the governmental institutions, ranging from the executive, judiciary and the legislative branch, including other related relevant ministries within the government. It embodies an administrative tradition, rooted in western history, with the sole aim of protecting individual or group's autonomy and self-respect against intimidation, domination, coercion and violent from whatever source they may be coming, be it from another group or individual, military or the police force, church, the state, or the society as a whole. It is legal because its administrative behavior and transition process does not contradict the accepted rules of the land as well as the basic principle of the system itself as it draws from the established tradition, originating from the Romans principle of the rule of law. It is free and fair because it rest on the philosophical foundations of the accepted system of governance, drawing from the Greeks culture that emphasizes individualism (Zakaria, 1979). A legal democracy unlike the Greek

popular democracy which emphasizes participation was developed and extracted from the United States and Western Europe's administrative system that ensure equity in socio-political relations and protect the individual right to life and property, including freedom of speech as well as religion. To ensure that these rights are not violated, the system promotes and emphasizes checks and balances of the power allocated to each level or branch of the government in accordance with the extant law. A method called constitutionalism by most social science scholars. The system also emphasizes the separation of church from the state as well as impartial court and tribunal, including equality under the law. In almost all of its variations and perceptions legal democracy consistently posits that there are certain natural and divine inalienable rights bestowed to any human being by God, and that government of any coloration must ensure that its power does not transcend the limit required to secure those inalienable rights just to avoid civil disobedience or outright revolution by the population over which it governs.

There is no doubt that there are spectrums of illegal democracy in contemporary time. Illegal because they contradict and violate the very principles of democracy, spanning from modest offenders such as South Africa and Argentina, to almost tyrannies such as Nigeria, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Guinea-Bissau, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Guinea and Sudan, including Romania, Bangladesh and many others along the spectrum. In these countries mentioned above, especially in Nigeria, periodic election which is a *sine qua non* for legal democracy are conducted merely to claim the title of democratic state, but they are rarely as free and fair as demanded by genuine and legal democratic principles. However, they do reflect the reality of popular participation in politics even when the outcome of the election does not reflect the directions of the vote casted in most general elections. The resultant governments from this types of electoral process tends to be corrupt, inefficient, irresponsible, shortsighted and dominated with values that contradict the public demand, aspirations and interest. These obnoxious qualities of the resultant government only make them undesirable but they do not make them undemocratic since they still possess some requisites qualities required for a society to be referred to as democratic, hence we designate them *illegal democracy* in this study. The ruling party in Nigeria politics increasingly relies on violence against the oppositions in the society and even with the rival factions within its own party; consequently election assumed the character of warfare and by implication paved way for the ascendancy of violence in the Nigeria electoral process. Since the return to democracy in Nigeria in 1999 insecurity and violence have been on the increase and have become integral components of elections in the country as political elites hire different brands of political thugs to achieve their electoral objectives (Onwudiwe & Berwind-Dart, 2010). Such practice and its concomitant effects

have not been adequately examined in the study of elections in the Nigeria. Or have been constantly ignored by the ruling political class that mostly orchestrates the violence through hiring of political thugs in every election. Political thugs are merely the armed groups of any given political party or ethnic groups that are involved in violent conflict for the purpose of achieving their political objectives through any available means, including intimidation and, or threats of use of physical force. Political power in Nigeria are sought by all means and maintained by all means, these thugs are mostly internally trained and brainwashed armed members of the society who work often for the aggrieved ethnic political elites often referred to as the *Godfathers* to achieve their political aim, but can also be hired or paid like mercenaries to protect, defend and secure the interest of other political group, parties or persons that contracted them for related issues.

The rising trajectory of abuse of rule of law by the Nigeria political leaders' present good environment for the rise of insecurity in the country since the out-of-power political elites constantly strive to put credible force together, either to challenge those in government, and, or by implication limit their own vulnerability to different strands of political abuses and harassment by those in power (Ake, 2003). A further implication of illegal democracy is that no ethnic group would desire to remain at the border of political power tainted by illegal democracy till the next round of general elections without any effort to protect themselves against political harassments while getting ready. Consequently, they either engage in regional security network or establish their ethnic militias as a means to defend their ethnic interest since the justice department under such democracy is not dependable (Kwaja 2019). Therefore, this contradiction inherent in illegal democracy degenerated to small arms proliferation in the country side and this arms build-up has fuelled violence in various parts of Nigeria especially, communal clashes and ethno-religious conflicts. However, between 1999 and April 2019, Nigeria recorded at least 213 ethno-religious conflicts, leading to the death of several thousands of people (Osman, 2020). These weapons helped to prolong conflicts, induced huge internal population displacement, undermined social peace and devastated the economic livelihoods of individuals and communities as well as the country. Nigeria's problem with small and light weapon proliferation is not new, but its increasing availability in the last decade through various elections has helped stoke a wave of insecurity, ranging from insurgencies, ethno-religious conflicts, killer herdsmen attacks, cross-border banditry, kidnapping, terrorism, human trafficking and drugs, including armed robbery and other

violent crimes which combined is threatening the economic development trajectory. The impact of Nigeria's small arms and light weapon proliferation problem on human security is also evident in financial losses induced by conflicts. About 10 major ethno-religious conflicts between 1999 and 2004 alone cost the Nigerian government over 400 million naira, about US\$2.02 million or thereabout (Yoroms, 2005). Just to take care of those in IDPs, because situations of internal displacement undermine human security both at individual and community levels. But many more are still leaving their ancestral homes every day as those who remain are being killed in their numbers in places like Borno, Benue, Plateau and other violent infested states in the region, Ujah, as cited in Emenike and Iniobong (2021). In modern Nigeria regimes born of illegal democracy are routinely ignoring limits on their power and depriving citizens of basic rights such as freedoms speech, association and security. But have linked the rising insecurity to the prevailing illegal democracy this study will attempt to unveil its implication to the development trajectory.

Inverted Democracy and the Dialectics of Insecurity in Nigeria

From the return to democracy in 1999 to the contemporary time, Nigeria have witnessed the rise of a number of troubling phenomenon in the socio-political and cultural existence of its people, due to the practice of illegal democracy. It is here referred to as inverted, because the Nigerian brand contradicts almost every principle that genuine democracy as a system of government stand for and does not pursue the ends it seek to propagate. Nigeria brand have no constitutional liberalism and consequently produces a centralized regimes, corrupt justice system and erosion of liberty, ethnic inequality, conflict and civil war, including fierce competition for political offices. The basic human rights and the rule of law which constitutes some of the inescapable conditions for any genuine democratic society as put forward by the founding fathers are falling apart in Nigeria just as the periodic election also a *sine qua non* has become the major source of political tension and violent in the country. Our emphasis on election and insecurity stems from the panic and fear it generates and has continued to create in the country each time it comes up, and more importantly the problems it has continued to create in the practice of democracy in Nigeria. In 2015 general election for instance, the APC (All Progressive Congress) political party was accused of importing nomadic Fulani herdsmen from the neighboring countries and armed them with AK47 rifles to help the party win the election and was instructed to make the country ungovernable should the party fail to win (Omokri, 2021). Whether these weapons were recovered after the election is still unclear, however, the authenticity of the

above accusation remains vague at this point, but fact is that APC which later won the presidential election has not officially reacted to the accusation till now, though their body language towards the current activities of the killer herdsmen in the middle belt region and indeed the whole country suggests the unthinkable.

If proven the APC may be the first political party to arm foreigners in form of political thugs but they are not the only political party in Nigeria that has used political thugs in the general election. The point being made is that these political attitude in the name of democracy only proliferate small and light weapon in the country which encourage different types of social problems, including, kidnapping, killer herdsmen attacks, boko-haram insurgency, armed robberies, as well as the separatist movement in the county. The ongoing Tigray crisis in Ethiopia is a clear case of proliferation of small arms and light weapons, considering its historical antecedence. In contrast to the conventional believe inherited from the interwar period that wars are major sources of insecurity, emerging security problems in countries that have not experience wars in recent times have confirm the role of small arms proliferation as stimulus to insecurity and a harbinger of massive human rights violation as well as humanitarian crises not just in Nigeria but in every society it is allowed to thrive. It also prolongs conflicts and always put civilians at high risk of death or injury from weapons-related violence. In recent time some African countries, especially Nigeria have been under serious attack from different armed militant groups, originally from the dreaded Boko-haram jihadist groups in the north, but in recent times are being supplemented with the killer herdsmen in the north and the unknown gunmen in the south, not to mention the migrant Fulani bandits that has continued to terrorize the whole country till date (Onyishi, Obiorah & Oji, 2021). Thirty six people were killed in two villages last year in two simultaneous attacks by the killer herdsmen in the northern Nigeria just to mention the recent ones that quickly comes to mind. The attack claimed eighteen lives each from two villages affected which are located in different states within the region, one in Kaduna and the other in Katsina state respectively, including several houses that were burned down in the process (The Cable, 2021). Also in August 2021 thirty six people were killed in a village raid in Plateau State, close to the central Nigerian city of Jos, this is excluding the twenty two people that were killed earlier with several houses that were burnt down in the same state, precisely on the 14th day of the same month by the killer herdsmen (Reuters, 2021).

Though, Benue and Plateau state so far have a greater number of historical attacks by the killer herdsmen in the north but that is not to say that they are the only state in the region that is still under siege, since even the Sokoto caliphate have had their fair share of the menace. In recent times unknown gunmen have also enveloped the southern part of the country and are gradually turning it into the present situation of the north-east, west and north-central Nigeria, where the killer herdsmen renamed bandits and their new found friend (boko-haram) are busy increasing the IDPs (internally displaced persons) camps just as they continued to attack villages on daily bases, increasing casualties and kidnapping victims with little or no resistance from the federal security agents. All this would not be happening if political thugs have been relatively under control. The determined efforts to ensure that small and light arms proliferation were included in the coverage of the Arms Trade Treaty reflected the extent to which they remained central to the international security agenda. However, it was underlined with the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 2117 in September 2013 which was the first UN Security Council Resolution to focus exclusively on the problems associated with the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapon (Abiodun, 2016).

Prior to that, United Nations Security Council (UNSC) voted in favor of its presidential statement in 2005 encouraging the arms-exporting countries to exercise the highest degree of responsibility in small arms and light weapons transactions according to their existing responsibilities under relevant international laws (2016). However, numerous irregularities such as concealing arms as humanitarian aids and bribing of border officials including document forgery and interventions by corrupt politicians undermine those provisions to a significant extent. The high premium placed on the political offices in Nigeria has turned election into a violent exercise which has undermine the consolidation of the basic principles of democracy as it has been argued that electoral violence in Nigeria has been a central factor in evaluating the prospects and challenges of democracy consolidation in Nigeria (Ogundiya & Baba, 2005). It is not difficult though, to identify the link between the practice of democratic in Nigeria and the rise of violent and insecurity in the country since democracy has been used to refer to liberal political system in the west for over a century. Liberal because it represent a political system marked not only by free and fair election but also by separation of power among the branches of government, the rule of law, and the protection of basic freedom of speech, assembly, property and more importantly life. It follows therefore that what is used as democracy in Nigeria is practically and theoretically distinct from legal or

constitutional democracy as propounded by the founding fathers. So much on the concept of illegal democracy and the dialectics of insecurity in Nigeria we shall now turn to the chosen framework of analysis.

Theoretical Framework

The concept 'illegal democracy' reflects a flaw in a political system, hence, the 'theory of failed state' as articulated by William Zartman (1995) appears the most appropriate framework of analysis. Its basic tenet posits that the state in the final analysis is a service provider, in other words, should strive to ensure the comfort and security of the population within her territory. A state according to Zartman is deemed collapsed when the basic functions of the state such as electoral security are no longer performed within its territory. A similar alternative is to describe states that have not been able to establish the features associated with statehood as 'failed states'. They are characterized by social, political and economic failure as argued by Rotberg (2003). Both Zartman and Rotberg distinguish between a variety of services that states may provide, ranging from security to the rule of law, the protection of property, the right to political participation, election security, provision of infrastructure and social services such as health and education. According to Abiodun et. al. (2018), common characteristics of a failed state is when a government is so weak or ineffective that it has little practical control over much of its territory, non-provision of public utilities or services, widespread corruption and criminality; refugees and involuntary movement of populations, as well as sharp economic decline. The provision of security is the most fundamental service states provide, in the sense that security is a condition for the provision of all other services such as socio-political and economic development, including infrastructures.

The theory also argues that states failures serve as the breeding ground for violent as many extremist groups will be uncontrollable, just as is evident in Nigeria. Clarke, (2015) notes that failing states are invariably the product of a collapse of the power structures providing political supports for law and order, a process generally triggered and accompanied by anarchic forms of internal violence. It is the collapse of state institutions, especially the police and judiciary with resulting paralysis of governance, a breakdown of law and order, and general banditry and chaos. The Nigeria state maybe prepared to wage war against the detractors but non-state actors differ fundamentally from state actors; the former are moving targets and mostly faceless. They depend on highly decentralized structures that are semi-autonomous and can act and survive on their own. The list of internal challenges is extensive and growing though no region of the world is completely

unaffected but the Nigeria situation is getting out of hand. It is as a result of these failed states that most people take laws into their hands, and start committing various crimes, which make it possible for the movement of small arms and light weapons across the Nigerian borders by both known and unknown criminals.

Methodology

A theoretical explanation of the research methods employed in this study shall be presented in this section. It is expected to discuss the systematic steps taken in gathering of the relevant facts, analyzing them and drawing conclusions so as to achieve the study objectives. The steps therefore, include research design, methods of data collection, as well as methods of data analysis. The research design, is seen as “the logic or master plan’ of a research, it elucidates how the study is proposed to be carried out. It presents an exposition of how all the essential part of the study, measures, treatment or programs, work together with the purpose of addressing the research problem or questions. The research design employed in this study however, is the **time-series** research design. In many ways the single-subject approach is similar to a time series analysis in that the stability and changes in behavior are studied across time (Box & Tiao, 1965). Time series analysis is characterized by repeated measurements of the dependent variable over time with an introduction of the independent variable at a particular point in time (Box and Jenkins, 1976). Trends or patterns of behavior are observed both before and after introduction of the independent variable. The sequence of analysis is comprehensively highlighted in this design. Our first step will be to identify the variables, which is that unit of research that change when situation changes. In this *time-series* design, “the quasi-independent variable is the **x** variable, which is the variable that is being manipulated to effect a dependent variable’ but the predicted outcome would be observed in the dependent variable, which is denoted as the **Y**. Using a time series analysis the dependent variable is observed over a long period of time for any variation or changes that might occur as a result of the manipulation of the **x** variable.

Methods of Data Collections and Analysis

Qualitative method of data collection was employed in this study. The strength of this method is its ability to provide textual descriptions of how people experience a particular research issue. This method, provide facts about the human’ side of a particular issue. That is, the usual, conflicting beliefs, behaviors, emotions, opinions, and individual relationships (Devizin &

Lincoln, 2000). Qualitative method of data collection are also very potent in identifying palpable factors, such as the norms, gender roles, socio-economic status, ethnicity and religion whose part in the research problems may not be readily obvious. When used together with quantitative methods, qualitative methods can assist to elucidate and comprehend better the complex reality of a given situation and the insinuations of a quantitative data (Behard, 1995).

Also, the qualitative method of data analysis was employed in this exploratory study, this methods of data collection and analysis can go in *pari pasu*, in an interactive manner because the result of the analysis will definitely assist and, or help guide the subsequent collection of data. Qualitative method of data collection and data analysis derive or complement each other, with result that help the analysis to a higher level synthesis of the information being sought (Dunnin, & Saumik, 2009). Qualitative method of data analysis as perceived by Bogdan & Binlen (2003) is a process that advocates “working with data, organizing them into meaningful unit, coding them, synthesizing them and searching for patterns” (2003, p.33). The objective of analysis of qualitative data is to unveil patterns, concepts, meaning and themes as they exist without any manipulation. However, in order to reduce threats to validity, this study employed a multiple approach to data analysis. Consequently we employed the use of line graph, tables and percentages to analyze our hypotheses.

The Rise of Insecurity and Nigeria Development Trajectory

We shall now discuss the findings related to the study hypothesis which stated that ‘*There is a positive relationship between election related insecurity in Nigeria and the crises of national development*’ From the data gathered for this study it is revealed that there is a positive relationship between the dependent and independent variable in the study hypothesis. It is revealed that the premium placed on political offices turned the character of political competition in Nigeria into a warfare, and by implication paved way for the proliferation of small arms and the ascendancy of different elements within the ethnic groups in Nigeria that delight in violence and war. Between 2014 and 2021 which subsumes the 2015 and 2019 general election in Nigeriathe costs of killer herdsmen as well as boko-haram attack which is powered by small arms proliferation on the rural farmers of the middle-belt region and the State Government Revenues is devastating. These states in the region records different degree of losses in IGR do to various attack on their rural farmers (see table 2). However the current security failure due to small arms *related violence in Nigeria*

has dislocated a numbers of farmers and has continuously discouraged them from going back to their farms any time soon. Nevertheless, it may not be wrong to regard

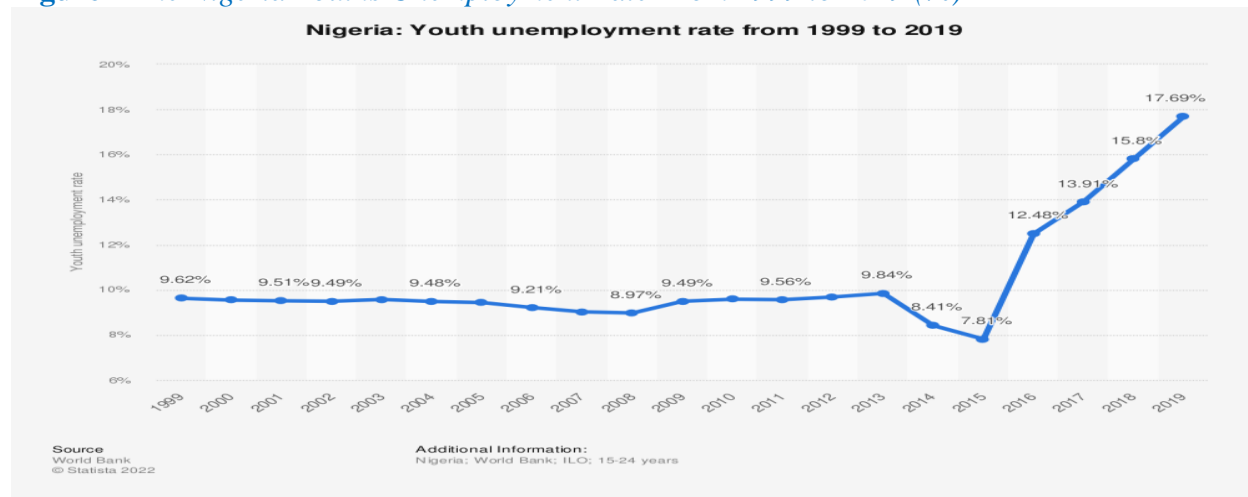
Table 1: Trends of Fulani Herdsmen Attack and Recorded Deaths 2010 – 2021 (tsnds)

DEATHS BY ACTOR = FULANI MILITANTS	VICTIMS = CHRISTIAN POPULATION STATES (BENUE, KADUNA, PLATEAU, TARABA)	VICTIMS = NIGERIA TOTAL
2010-14	5,890	7,551
2015-17	3,452	4,722
2018	2,484	3,286
2019 – 21	4,253	6,725
TOTAL: 2000-21	16,079	22,284

Source: ICON 2021; Statistica 2021

Nigeria as a country at war induced by carless electoral practice, since the conventional threshold that is needed for a country to be referred to as such has been attained and surpassed in the present activities of the various armed group that have seized the control of the country and humbled the Nigeria security structure. It has been argued that the desideratum for an armed conflict to be classifies as civil war is upon their record of one thousand deaths from the resulting attacks (Guseh & Oritsejafor, 2019). It’s no secret that Nigeria has recorded more than that required number only from the killer herdsmen independent of the dreaded Boko-haram and the recent bandit attacks on the Nigeria people (see table 1 and figure 2). Although figure will continue to rise as long as the invaders are still at large, it has been revealed in a recent study that the Boko Haram terrorist group alone has claimed about 3,426 to 3,753 between June 2017 and June 2018(Campbell & Harwood 2018).

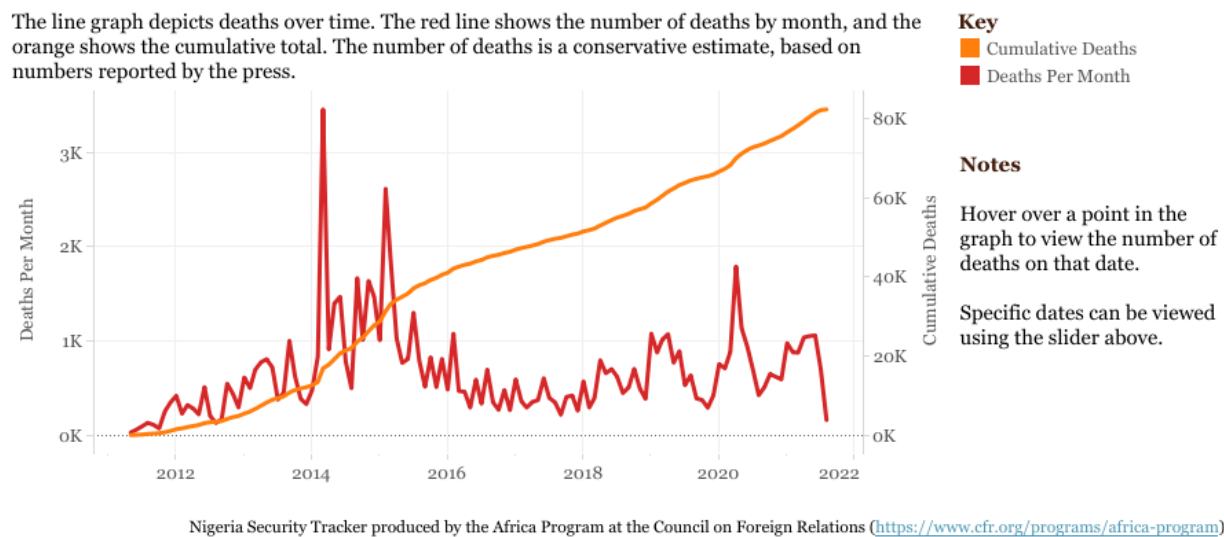
Figure 1 *The Nigeria Youths Unemployment Rate From 1999 to 2019 (%)*



Source;World Bank 2021; Statistica 2022

the consequences of small arms proliferation in Nigeria has increased violent deaths which encompasses intra and inter community conflicts and other fatalities from different types of violence with the highest number resulting from the killer herdsmen attack on the rural farmers, the Boko-haram activities in the north as well as the migrant bandits that recorded 3,425 deaths in 1,191 incidents (Ukoji et al, 2019). All these insecurities combined has stretched the civil and social fabrics of the Nigeria nation and steered in obnoxious kind of unemployment trend that has continued to climb as the rural farmers abandon their farms for fear of death while the various attack increases in magnitude. A review of the data presented revealed that both unemployment trends, Staple food prices and poverty incidence in Nigeria tend to increase as the coordinated attacks by various militant groups on innocent people necessitated by electoral violence increases (compare figure 1,3 & 4 with table 1 and figure 2). For instance the existing

Figure 2: *Number of Boko-haram victims in months and the cumulative total 2010 – 2021 (tsnds)*



Nigeria unemployment trend and their annual change have continued to climb since 2015 general election after the alleged importation of political thugs from neighboring countries (see figure 1), just as the red line in the graph spiked within the same period under study (see figure 2). The figure as shown in the graph has risen from 4.3% in 2015 to 8.9% in the 1Q of 2021 just as the orange line in the graph is relentlessly approaching the eighty three thousand deaths mark in the cumulative calculation. The percentage trend has also abandoned its negative route and assumed a positive position as a result of the rising insecurity in the country powered by small arms proliferation engendered by political thugry (see figure 3). The youth unemployment rate as used

in the study indicates the percentage of the out-of-work population within the age bracket of 15 and 24 years as compared to the total labor force in the country. They are often higher than the overall unemployment rates, obtainable in every society including Nigeria. As already emphasized or depicted in the figure above the general rate of unemployment was approximately 7.81% in 2015, just before the general election. This figure shoots upward as the imported political thugs and the already existing ones on ground turn against their masters' instruction and start attacking the innocent population with the arms given to them but never recovered after the election. This development creates tension and insecurity in the process to the point that farmers have to abandon their farms and run for their lives. This act of violence sent the agrarian rural dwellers out of their farms and by implication increase unemployment (see figure 1 and 2)

Table 1: *Economic Cost of Small Arms Proliferation violence in Nigeria (Selected States)*

State	Cut Point	Total IGR Lost	Predicted Effect (Avg. Estimate)	Predicated Effect (Conservative)
Benue	2015—20	361,839,070.00	-47,704	0
			-44% 0%	0%
Kaduna	2000—21	527,448,060.00	-64,955	-29,570
			-22%	-12%
Nasarawa	2014—21	194,366,400.00	-27,746	-6,180
			-45%	-15%
Plateau	2013—20	270,109,090.00	-207,051	-73,543
			-75%	-51%
Total		1,353,762,620.00	-347,456	-109,294
			-47%	-22%
As Percentage of Synthetic Predictions			96%	90%
Source: <i>Mercy Corps 2014; NBS 2020</i>				

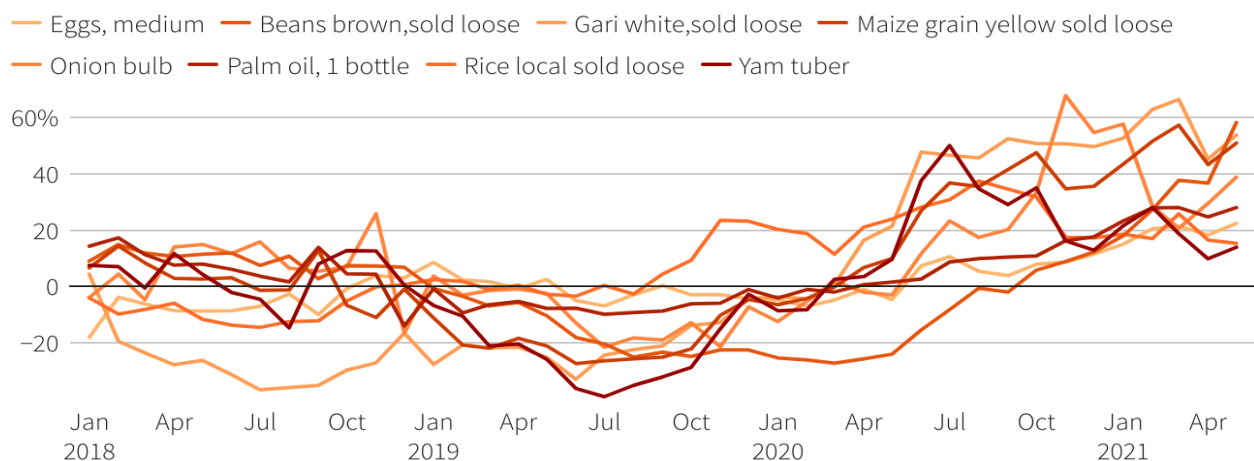
Even when the government has continued to pay less attention to the security reality of the country it is apparent that small arms proliferation present a situation that have crippled the Nigeria security structure, increase the staple food cost, its annual percentage change as well as poverty head count percentage of the population, including the unemployment trend as is evident in figure 1, 2, 3 & 4 as well as table 1 of this study. Nigeria current unemployment rate remain one of the country's most challenging socio-economic encumbrance to autarchy and has continued to increase cost of food items since farmers are afraid to go back to their farms. The figure 3 above present a historical review of the cost of Nigeria food items between 2015 and 2021 when the effect of the small arms

proliferation in the Nigeria is presumed manageable to when they have become unimaginably catastrophic see figure 2 and table 1 above. This revealed that between 2001 and 2014 the staple food cost sloped to -20 to 29% between May 2018 and July 2019 especially tuber yam, palm oil, Gary white and local rice but started rising from august 2019 as the attacks on rural farmers increases in 2020 and have continued in the upward trend till 2022 (see, figure 3). These situations no doubt threaten food security as the trend has continued in that path as the

Figure 3. *The Increase in Staple Food Cost in Nigeria 2017 to 2022 (%)*

Staple food costs rise dramatically

Rising prices for eggs, beans, rice and oil adds strain to Nigeria's struggling families

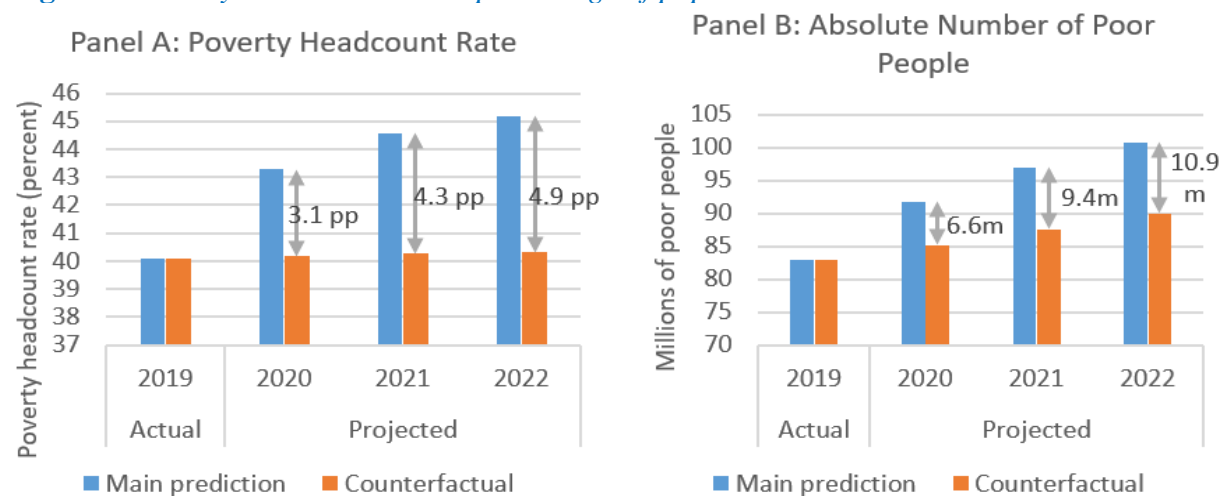


Note: Shows annual percentage increase for food items each month
 Source: Nigeria's National Bureau of Statistics

killings and other insecurity crisis related to small arms proliferation continued to ravage the countryside. In the 1Q of the 2022, as shown in figure three above, some food items such as beans, gary, egg and maize already recorded 65.9 and 64.58% increase in prices while the rest of the selected items has continue on the upward position as a result of the recurrent attack on the farmers by the killer herdsmen as well as Boko-haram (scompare table 1 & figure 2 to 3). There is no doubt that no nation can ever achieve food security independent of agricultural development in that society. To do that requires first and foremost the provision of security to the concerned farmers, which starts with the control of small arms proliferation, protected source of farming materials, abundance crop and livestock as well as prolonged opportunities for profitable employment of labour, including arable lands, food utilization and food quantity as well as quality to meet local consumption, national reserves and export (Ayinde, 2019). to achieve economic autarchy food

security must be secure at five different levels which include the household, the individual, the national and international level, at national level which is our concern here its only achieved when all the citizen irrespective of social status continuously enjoy physical and economic access to adequate nutritious and safe food, to satisfy their dietary requirements as well as favorite foods for energetic and healthy life (International Crisis Group, 2017). Although it is difficult to achieve that under a recurrent violence situation created by the small arms proliferation in Nigeria, it is not entirely impossible. Achieving the above postulate means the attainment of poverty reduction in Nigeria which has continued to increase as the attacks on rural farmers continues in the farming communities. It's evident that the poverty situation in Nigeria is underpinned by the high unemployment rate, calculated at 8.9% in 2020 (World Bank, 2021). The data in figure four below indicate that more than ten million Nigerians might be pressed below poverty line by the economic effects insecurity in the country. Had it been that the contemporary insecurity situation in Nigeria did not arise a “counterfactual” scenario, the poverty headcount rate, that is, the national poverty line remain almost constant at a little over 41%, %, however, the number of poor would be expected to increase from 82.92 million in 2019 to 90.03 million in 2022 naturally, due to population growth (see Figure 4). Nevertheless, with the impact of insecurity and violent on economic activities the national poverty rate is instead anticipated to leap from 40.13% in 2019 to 45.24% in 2022,(see figure 4), meaning that about 100.9 million Nigerians will be living below poverty line by the Q4 of 2022. However, this estimation only cover the monetary poverty, other aspects of poverty is even more pervasive in Nigeria and is also expected to increase if the government refuses to find a lasting solution to the security problem in the country.

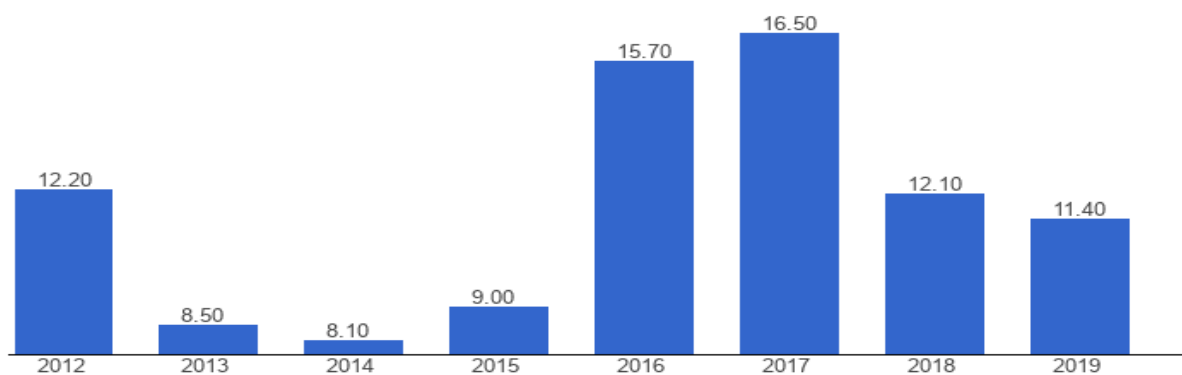
Figure 4: Poverty headcount rate in percentage of population in strata 2019 to 2022



Source: NBS Nigeria Living Standards Survey, 2020; 2018/19 NLSS, United Nations population projections, and World Bank estimates. Real consumption deflated temporally and spatially to compare with the national poverty line. Pass-through from per capita real GDP growth to household consumption set to 1 **Note:** The estimates exclude Borno state

Between 2018 and 2021 which was the period of this survey, concentrated insurrectionary attacks in the northeast and north central have continued to increase poverty headcount with attendant food scarcity as well as displacement of persons in the region (FEWS NET, 2019; 2020). This is also true of many households who are victims of the killer herdsmen and boko-haram in the central and northern states of Plateau, Katsina, Adamawa, Zamfara, Benue, Taraba, Nasarawa and Kaduna. Due to the security failure in these states engendered by small arms proliferation, the households no longer engage in their usual livelihood activities including farming as there is no safe access to farms and farm produce as well as market for them, including other related income opportunities in the region (FEWS NET, 2019) thereby increasing the poverty headcount as well as the absolute number of poor index (see figure 4& table 2).

Figure 5: Nigeria: Inflation: percent change in the Consumer Price Index, 1960 - 2019:



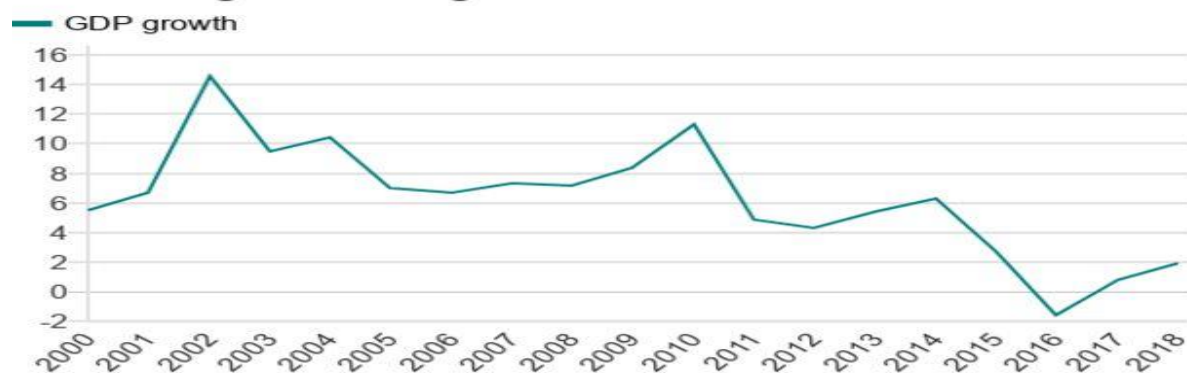
Source: NBS Nigeria Living Standards Survey, 2020. Note: The estimates exclude Borno state

The headcount ratio as here presented describes the proportion of population of the household's dwellers where the value of per capita total consumption expenditure is below or equal to the poverty line. As the recurrent insecurity in Nigeria increases unemployment, it also increases poverty and since unemployment always lead to reduction in production it will inevitably creates inflation in the country. Hence, inflation is not left out in the list of the impact of insecurity in Nigeria. Following food price increases, amid shortages caused by prolonged violent attack against

farmers by the various militant groups the Nigeria annual inflation rate which has been on the downward trend and under control since 2012 began to climb after 2015, probably as a result of the general election related violence. It increased for the fifth straight month to 12.13% in June 2015 and by January 2016 has settled in the region of 15.70%, representing about 0.95% increase from February 2015. As farmers are chased out of their farms, so is agricultural product diminishing and by implication increasing the inflation rate on the process. This situation continued upward to 16.50% in 2017.

Figure 6: Nigeria Economic Trajectory 2000 to 2018 (%)

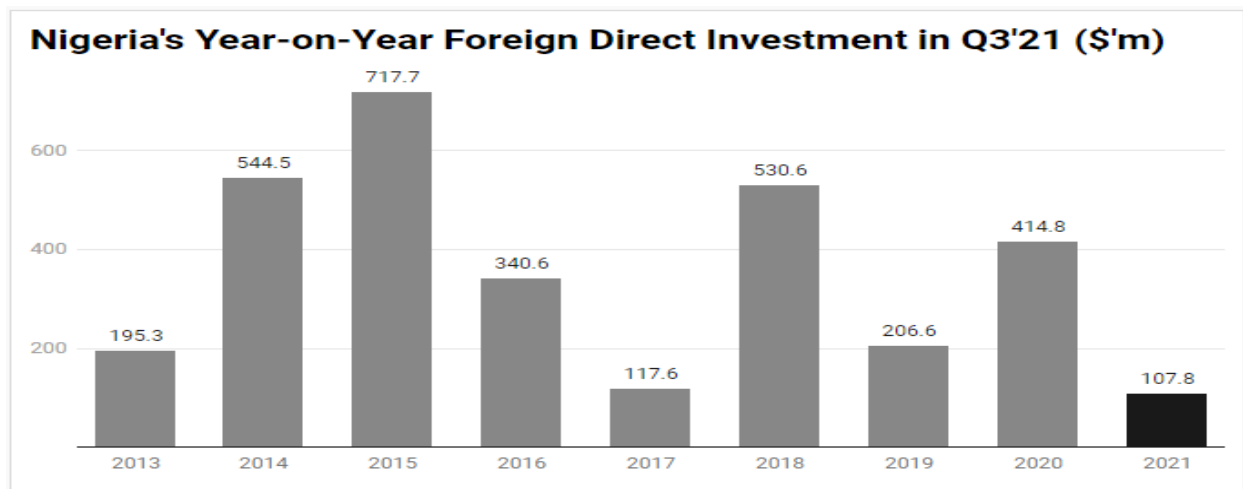
Economic growth in Nigeria



Source: IMF, Nigerian National Statistics Bureau

BBC

However, it returned to 11.40% in 2019 as rural dwellers activated self-help strategy and started defending themselves. According to the data extracted from the NBS, Nigeria Bureau of Statistics we paid a particular attention at the Nigeria's annual inflation rate, based on the percentage average from 2010 to 2019, which indicate that the country experienced the lowest average inflation rate of 8.10% back in 2014, while 2017 recorded the country's highest average inflation rate of 16.50% (see, figure 5). This also indicates that there is a positive relationship between insecurity in Nigeria and the crisis of national development within the past decade. The Annual percentage Nigeria GDP growth rate is not spared from the security implication of small arms proliferation in the Nigeria society as the trend also plummeted as the various attack on the rural dwellers increases (see figure 6) but the historical detail will be a matter for another day

Figure 7:Nigeria Foreign Direct Investment YoY 2013 to 2021

Source: Okafor (2022)

Finally, the Nigeria Foreign Direct Investment FDI, should not be left out in analysis of the victims of violence, associated with small arms proliferation as its situation, within the period under study is not something to be proud of, but that is not unexpected, since unsecured environment is not a fertile ground for investment of any sort. Consequently, the security situation reduced the trend of Nigeria FDI to 26.9% year-on-year in the Q3 of 2021, representing the lowest rate of FDI in Nigeria since the calculation of such data initiated in the country by the National Bureau of Statistics NBS in the Q2 of 2013. Nigeria FDI was at 717.7 million in the Q1 of 2015 before the intensification of the attack on Nigeria by the killer herdsmen and Boko-haram as well as the unknown gunmen, and plummeted to 117.6 million in 2017 as the violence persisted (see figure 7). As the government started considering reshuffling the security chiefs who were under pressure to change their security format the trend began to rise up to 530.6 million in 2018 but that is the highest amount recorded since 2015 since the insecurity have persisted and continued to discourage investors. Nevertheless, 2021 appeared to be the worst year in the period under study with 107.8 million (see figure 7). The implication is that between 414.8 million recorded in the comparable quarter of 2020 by the statistics office on the latest capital importation Nigeria was only able to attract a mere \$107.81 million within the same period in 2021. There was an increase of 38.27% on a quarter-on-quarter basis from the \$74.01 million recorded in the third quarter of 2020 but that is insignificant considering the fact that Nigeria used to be home of investors. There is no doubt that the existing lack of political will to confront the problem of insecurity in Nigeria

have culminated in weak economic development, harsh business environment for those that have no other choice and foreign exchange volatility. However, to bridge the existing infrastructural gap and promote economic diversification in Nigeria a significant inflow of FDI of about 26 to 29% is necessary at least for economic recovery (Nevin's diary, as cited in Okafor, 2022).

Conclusion

In this study we attempt to contribute to the dialectics of illegal democracy and the rise of insecurity in Nigeria, with emphasis on its impact on the national development trajectory. Insecurity is a dynamic phenomenon and a persistent communal problem that is ravaging the country at the moment. Using the time series research design and the theory of failed state we have seen that there is a relationship between illegal democracy and security challenges in Nigeria which linked to the stability, survival, growth and development of the country. We have also seen that illegal democracy promotes the use of political thugs in the electoral process and that the consequences of this political attitude are proliferation of small and light weapons in the country. In the qualitative data collected for this study, it is revealed how the use of small arms have helped the Fulani killer herdsman, Boko-haram and other illegitimate groups in the country wreck havoc in the lives of rural farmers in the northern Nigeria and other parts of the country which abruptly put a stop to their contribution to Nigeria GDP and arrest the rural per capita income. Though, they cannot do that by themselves except with the help of man. And since this type of arms also performs legitimate function its control requires tactical approach. Besides, discourses about small and light weapon always touch on state security and national sovereignty of the state. As a result, in the end, only governments can make and implement agreements on arms transfers and procurement. However, an inclusive and comprehensive response is required to meet the complex challenges of weapons proliferation in Nigeria. Unfortunately an institutionalized mechanism for such function is yet to exist or in the process of formation. However, without viable alternative options for illegal democracy and institutional model for checkmating the activities of these political thugs, bandits, killer herdsman and boko-haram in the country, it is unlikely that development will ever thrive and human rights cannot be sustained.

Consequent upon the above stated fact, this study passionately recommend that the federal government should as matter of urgency seek for an inclusive anti small arms proliferation campaign that are capable of producing results without alienating governments from the citizens

through electoral law review that discourage the use of thugs in election. Whatever strategy is adopted the citizens must not feel threatened in the process of its execution. The study also recommends a two strand approach to the small arms and light weapon proliferation control. First, the operators of the small arms and light weapon conduit into the sub-region, exporting states mainly from Eastern and Central Europe, the brokers, and private military entrepreneurs must be approached for a two way control pact over the regulation of small arms and light weapons to and fro Nigeria. Secondly, the government should try as much as they can to assuage the existing tension while eliminating small arms and light weapons from the society. And finally, should any person or group is found wanting he/she must be treated accordingly irrespective of tribe or religion in order to brighten any hope of achieving liberal democracy, reduction of unemployment rate as well as the poverty trend in the country.

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