TRANS-BORDER TRAJECTORIES AND HUMAN SECURITY IN NIGERIA: NORTHEAST AND NORTHWEST IN PERSPECTIVE

JOSHUA OJI ZACHARIAH
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, FEDERAL UNIVERSITY WUKARI, TARABA STATE, NIGERIA
ozachjosh@gmail.com

ELIAS CHUKWUEMEKA NGWU
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, AND PEACE & CONFLICT STUDIES UNIT, SCHOOL OF GENERAL STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA, NSUKKA

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ABSTRACT
The balkanization of Africa into various constituent states by the colonialists is not without obnoxious consequential effects on the continent, namely: improper border demarcation and arbitrary separation of social or ethnic groups. Similarly, the so-called delineated international borders are porous and countries exposed to various forms of human insecurity. However, successive governments have in collaboration with leaders of neighbouring countries and independently adopted different measures to checkmate irregular trans-border movements and related security disquiets but to no avail. Therefore, this article evaluates trans-border trajectories and human security in Nigeria. It particularly looks at the nexus between historical borderland nuances and food insecurity in northeast and northwest Nigeria since 2014. The paper adopted documentary method of data collection which relies on secondary sources such as journal articles, textbooks, conference and seminar papers, newspapers, etc. Analysis was done within the periscope of Lee's migration model using content analysis method. The paper opined that poor consideration of aged-long historical ties among border communities, coupled with borderland nuances between Nigeria and neighbouring countries implicated in the rise of insecurity that has displaced and claimed the lives of thousands of people and valuable property. It further argued that trans-border related insecurity such as banditry, Boko Haram onslaughts impacted negatively on food production, availability, accessibility and stability in the study area. It thus recommends for an all-round development along with formidable modern security in every part of the country, borderland communities' peculiarities and socio-cultural historical ties be given more meaningful consideration in every respect.

INTRODUCTION

The contemporary "independent" states in Africa were *ab-initio* fragmented societies that settled (lived) in clusters of families, clans, communities, kingdoms, emirates, caliphates, etc. with different forms of authority (government) and leadership styles that were fashioned and functioned according to their respective traditions, socio-cultural practices and environments. Their settlements and social interaction was characterized by either, or combination of ethnic and religious affinity while cultural and economic exchanges do not only cut across members of the same settlement, but also of nearby communities, kingdoms or caliphates as the case may be. The present day Nigeria for example is a conglomeration of autonomous communities, kingdoms, empires, emirates, etc. inhabited by people of diverse ethnic groups, religious and cultural compositions that were more or less forced into one country through colonialism. One of the common features of pre-colonial Africa was shifting and indeterminate frontiers for obvious reasons.

However, the arrival of European invaders into the continent, its subsequent partitioning at the Berlin Conference of 1884/5 and colonial scheme undermined most of African heritage. It should be noted that there are some benefits attributed to colonialism in Africa no matter how unintended those gains might be. Yet, there are still more challenges that have been attributed to the indiscriminate and arbitrary boundaries bequeathed to the continent at independence. For instance, apart from political and economic problems of colonialism, tribalism, ethnic wars, etc had also been associated with arbitrary manner that African states were delineated which complicated social relations within and across borders. To this effect, Kissinger (2001: 203) remarked that "in no other continent did national borders emerge so directly and intrinsically from the way the imperial powers delineated their spheres of control."

Thus, replete with conspicuous domestic challenges and contradictions, citizens of especially contiguous borderland engaged in one form of trans-border movement or the other for solution to their internal disorder or in attempt to take economic advantage across their shores. This process in most cases involves both skilled and unskilled labour power. Related studies revealed that while the factors impelling migration have changed in intensity rather than substance, international migration is undertaken to eliminate wages disparities in the sending and receiving countries. According to De Haan (2007), "…the movement of labour would lead to the elimination of disparities and equalization of development." In other words, migration is mutually beneficial, especially to the sending countries. The importance of this assertion is that through this process, particular disparities in wage differentials will be minimized. This perspective of trans-border movement has been criticized in many respects. Other studies linked trans-border movements with search for good governance, expectation of higher incomes and living conditions including better health and education which may be lacking in their respective permanent residence or country of origin. Other factors are socio-cultural, conflict, war, hardship, etc (Nyberg-Sorensen *et al.,* 2002; Olajide, 2013; John, 2019; Thet, n.d.). Nevertheless, cross-border movement around Nigeria's borders with her neighbours has not been without economic and security problems.

Although successive governments have unilaterally and in collaboration with leaders of neighbouring countries made several efforts to mitigate associated challenges. Nigeria in particular has applied kinetic and non-kinetic measures such as unilateral military operations, Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), borderland closure, establishment of Nigeria Border Community Development Agency (NBCDA), etc to address various issues associated with irregular trans-borders movement but to no avail. Armed banditry and kidnapping have been on the increase; despite huge spending on the fight against Boko Haram insurgency, the terrorist group has continued to unleash terror on their victims. Worse still, smuggling of contraband articles including Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), irregular cross-border activities had not been put to an end. Similarly, extant literature revealed that Nigerian governments had recorded some achievements in the campaign against these vices but such success are often short-lived (Babatola, 2015; Olisah *et al.,* 2022). In fact, recent happenings have prompted scholars, analysts to describe the nation's economy as hash and bleak on the people while the security of lives and property is said to be fragile. Certainly, there are so many questions that readily come to mind. However, the broad objective of this paper is to evaluate trans-border trajectories and human

security in Nigeria. Specifically, it focuses on the nexus between borderland alongside historical nuances and food insecurity in northeast and northwest Nigeria since 2014. The paper is organized in the following major headings: Introduction, theoretical lens of the study, methods of data collection and analysis, findings and analysis, conclusion and recommendations, respectively.

Operationalization of Key Terms

Trans-border trajectory in this study encompasses processes, movements, entry-exit routes, economic, socio-cultural ties and activities spanning beyond geographic areas of a nation's sphere of control. Such territorial space are replete with complex characteristics such as sharing borderland beyond the delimited boundaries with contiguous countries, their social and economic life being impacted directly, notably due to their proximity, socio-cultural groups and activities exist on both sides of border communities, etc. (Adejuyigbe, 1989: 27-36). It is associated with conventional and unconventional, spontaneous and complex patterns of migration (movement) of people between two or more geo-political entities.

Human security is an all-encompassing condition in which people and communities live in freedom, peace and safety; participating fully in the governance of their country, enjoying the protection of fundamental rights, having access to resources and basic necessities of life, and inhabiting an environment which is not detrimental to their present and future health and economic wellbeing (Hussein, Gnisci & Wanjiru, 2004). It is a shift and broader perspective of state-centric notion of security. It is people and community oriented. According to Tadjbakhsh (2013: 44), "once the referent object and subject of security is moved down to individuals, the notion of 'safety' then broadens to a condition beyond mere existence to life worth living; hence, well-being and dignity of human beings." Thus, human security covers three broad components – i.e. freedom from (a) fear, (b) want, and (a) indignity. Freedom from fear encompasses such conditions that allow individuals and groups protection from direct threats to their safety; that is, direct or intended violence. Freedom from want entails protection of basic needs, quality of life, livelihoods and enhanced human welfare, while freedom from indignity is a condition in which individuals or groups are assured of the protection of their fundamental rights, free to make choices (political, social), take advantage of opportunities in everyday life.

Therefore, human security is characteristically people-centered, multi-sectoral, comprehensive, context-specific and prevention oriented. It considers a broad range of conditions which threaten survival, livelihood and dignity of *man*. It identifies the threshold below which human life is threatened. It focuses on various aspects of insecurities and their causes. In specific terms, the measurable perspectives of human security or insecurity are as noted in Tables 1 and 2 (Hussein *et al.,* 2004; Tadjbakhsh, 2013; UNTFHS, 2009, 2016).

Table 1: Parameters of human security

S/N	Variables of Human Security	Indicators
1.	Food security	Food is readily available for all people at all times – i.e. it is regularly produced & available, directly & economically accessible, stable, physically & bio-nutritiously utilized, etc
2.	Economic security	Assured basic income, access to employment, economic resources and opportunities, etc
3.	Health security	Free from deadly diseases. Availability of good medical facilities, accessible and affordable healthcare for the citizenry
4.	Environmental security	Conducive environment which is spared from desertification, indiscriminate deforestation, degradation and other environmental threats that endanger people's lives or means of survival
5.	Personal security	Free from all forms of physical violence including human trafficking, child labour, terrorism
6.	Community security	Social cohesion and harmony. Free from tension or fear emanating from ethnic, religious and other social groups like family, community, organisation, political party, etc.

7.	Political security	Assured human rights protection, justice & freedom of expression, inclusion in governance, etc

Table 2: Human insecurity

S/N	Human Insecurity Variables	Indicators
1.	Food insecurity	Hunger, famine, sudden rise in food prices, lack of, or low food supply, inaccessible, etc.
2.	Economic insecurity	Poverty, unemployment, dearth or lack of access to credit and other economic opportunities
3.	Health insecurity	Deadly diseases such as Ebola, COVID-19 pandemic; unsafe food, malnutrition, lack of access to basic healthcare, poor or lack of healthcare facilities
4.	Environmental insecurity	Environmental degradation, resource depletion, natural disasters, pollution, etc.
5.	Personal insecurity	Physical violence in all its forms; e.g. terrorism, human trafficking, child labour, kidnapping, threat to oneself e.g. suicide, drug abuse, etc.
6.	Community insecurity	Domestic violence, ethnic, religious and other identity-based tension, conflict, war, due to competition over limited opportunities and resources
7.	Political insecurity	Political repression, human rights violation, injustice, lack of constitutionalism & rule of law, all forms of exclusion in governance

Deducing from the above therefore, it follows that a shift on the indicators of human security (Table 1) enthrones a corresponding state of insecurity to the human person (Table 2). However, this study focuses on food insecurity in Nigeria that was occasioned by trans-border irregular movements and human threatening activities.

Theoretical Lens of the Study

Lee's Migration Model

This paper adopted the axiomatic explication of Everett Spurgeon Lee's (1966: 47-57) migration model which is known as "A Theory of Migration" or Push and Pull migration theory. The theory, as further explained in Kainth (2009: 82-116) holds that there are numerous factors associated with the decision to migrate or not from one place to another. It further argued that in each area, there are factors which push or repel people away, while on the other side there are factors which pull or attract people into it. These factors have been encapsulated in the following four broad perspectives:

- ⇒ Factors associated with the area of origin;
- ⇒ Factors associated with the area of destination;
- ⇒ Intervening obstacles, and
- ⇒ Personal factors.

It is very important to note that there are significant differences between the factors associated with the area of origin (the sending country) and those of prospective destination. Trans-border movement may take place after both of these factors had been weighed. According to the theory, a person relatively has a better and more realistic knowledge about the place of *Origin* than that of *Destination* which is somewhat superficial and inexact (Olisah, Solomon & Zachariah, 2022). The scholars further noted that factors related to *Intervening obstacles* have to be overcome before migration takes place. These include proximity between the two places, accessibility which relates to topography or physical barriers, transportation, migration laws, socio-cultural factors etc. Last but not the least, *Personal factors* are of utmost importance because instead of the actual factors associated with the place of origin and destination, the person's perception influences his decision to embark on trans-border movement or not; be it illegal or legal, voluntary or involuntary.

In other words, push factors exist at the point of origin and force people to leave for other places with seemingly solution to such factors as non-availability or inadequate economic opportunities, increasing rate of poverty, rapid population growth that surpasses available resources, *primitive* or poor living conditions, desertification, famine or drought, fear of political persecution, poor healthcare, hunger, climate change, natural disasters, education, conflict, terrorism, etc. On the other hand, pull factors include job opportunities and better living condition; availability of land for inhabitation and

agriculture; market where specific businesses thrive; political, religious and socio-cultural freedom to cohabit; better education and healthcare systems; better secured environment, etc. Push and pull factors are paired, that is, cross-border movement can occur if the reason for migrating from one's place of origin has perceived solution in the receiving destination. In terms of labour migration for example, the push factors are often characterized by lack of job opportunities, poor welfare, etc in sending areas or countries while the pull factors are job and economic opportunities available, better welfare package in the receiving destinations. For trans-border illegal entry and exit of persons alongside contraband goods, the push and pull factors include market for illicit businesses like narcotics, drugs, agricultural produce, used cloths and footwear, weak migration laws or administration, harboring environment, etc. (Kainth, 2009; Olisah *et al.,* 2022). It is imperative to note that in Africa, conflict and human rights abuses along with poor governance are among the key factors impelling much migration. It is therefore not a coincidence that conflict-ridden countries coupled with various forms of insecurity prevalent in the continent are often faced with severe economic difficulties which often induce both voluntary and involuntary migrations. Apropos this, Richmond (1994) observed that combination of such factors creates difficulties in maintaining a clear distinction between voluntary and forced migration.

The theory as explained in Olisah *et al.* (2022: 71-72) aptly describes why individuals move or migrate from place of origin to another. It is very much applicable to the current study. Practically, the push factors such as bad governance, human rights violation, inequalities, poverty, hash economic conditions, ethno-religious wars, political instability, natural disaster, unemployment or underemployment, etc prevalent in immediate environment often force people out in search of greener pasture elsewhere. Unfortunately, all the push factors are very common in almost every African country including Nigeria and her neighbours. Ironically, despite Nigeria's peculiar challenges, most citizens of especially neighbouring states perceived the country as a better haven in many respects. They viewed it as the United States of America *in* Africa where *milk and honey* seems to be flowing even in the streets of the country and thus some of them (including criminals) aspire to be in Nigeria in order to fulfill their dreams and aspirations. To them, Nigeria offers solution to their problems including illegal economic activities. In other words, Nigeria possesses various indicators of pull factors which attract them into the country. This reflects Lee's assumption on personal factors perspective of migration which states that "the individual's perception influences the actual act of migration." In terms of intervening factors, the porous nature of borders, lack of modern or poor management facilities, lackadaisical attitude, corruption and weak or lack of sincere synergy among related law enforcement agencies coupled with ECOWAS' Protocols and AfCFTA do not only make migration easy for legitimate activity, but also made irregular movements across Nigeria's borders possible.

Methods of Data Collection and Analysis

To achieve the objective of this research work, we adopted historical research design and documentary method of data collection in which secondary sources such as journal articles, textbooks, conference and seminar papers, newspapers, etc. were utilized. Analysis was done within the periscope of Lee's migration model, using content analysis method as explained in Nwanolue and Egbuchulam (2018: 61-80).

Findings and Analysis

Borderland Historical Antecedent and Security Concern in Nigeria

Table 3 shows a list of selected settlements near international land borders between Nigeria and four neighbouring countries. As earlier noted, the demarcation of various states in Africa by its colonizers deliberately or unconsciously did not give considerable attention to ethnic and socio-cultural ties that existed among different groups of people, especially in settlements near the so-called international borders around the continent. Many of them were made to live apart from each other as citizens of different countries irrespective of their pre-historical or natural conditions which they shared even before the advent of European intruders and partitioning of the continent in Berlin between 1884 and 1885. For example, the Yoruba nation of the Old Oyo Empire that spanned through, and widely known to be one of the

largest Yoruba speaking language with high level of trade, military and political influence between mid-seventeenth and late eighteenth centuries in West Africa eventually found themselves in some parts of the present day Benin Republic and the likes (Forde, 1967; Afolayan, 2000). However, most of these people do not only continued with their known socio-cultural heritage, but also maintain economic exchanges with their counterparts near the borders spanning Nigeria-Benin, Nigeria-Cameroon, Nigeria-Chad and Nigeria-Niger Republic (Fig. 1 and Table 3). In fact, Opeyemi Quadri (2021) observed that "only those who are familiar with Katsina and Kano can differentiate between citizens of Niger Republic and those from Kano/Katsina" because of the proximity, economic ties and socio-cultural heritage they shared. This is also applicable to various people, communities and of course States in Nigeria that share land border closely with Benin Republic, Republics of Cameroon and Chad. Therefore, socio-cultural exchange alongside various kind of legitimate and illegitimate trades in commodity, illicit articles, etc. flow both ways of these countries with resultant effects.

Moreover, as shown in Table 3, so many settlements are littered around borderland straddling Nigeria and neighbouring countries. And due to their shared age-long ethnic affinity, cultural and economic ties, proximity, some of them do not even need airplane or visa, but just bipedal, motorcycle to cross into the opposite country within few minutes or hours. It follows that criminal elements also lean on these trans-border traces to sneak in for their unlawful transactions, to unleash terror and perpetrate evil or criminal activities in the country. Furthermore, these settlements intersect at least 16 states of the federation with four neighbouring countries as noted in Olisah *et al.* (2022: 78); and according to Quadri (2021), there are about 364 approved international border points, out of which 261 (71.70%) are located in the northeast and northwest with only 124 (47.51%) of 261 are manned by border officials. Similarly, Osimen, Anegbode, Akande and Oyewole (2017: 21) noted that there are over 1,978 illegal entry-exit routes around Nigeria's land borders with other countries through which criminal elements engage in human trafficking, smuggle with cars, arms and ammunitions, drugs and other contraband articles. This also may accounts for the inability of the government to end banditry and Boko Haram activity that has claimed over 30,000 lives, displaced millions of people, rendered thousands of them incapacitated and destroyed hundreds of thousands homes and valuable property in especially the northeast and northwestern parts of the country (Al Jazeera, 2021).

For example, the justification for the closure of land borders in 2019 by Nigeria's government revolved around (i) smuggling of agricultural produce and other illegal articles (ii) insecurity (iii) protection and promotion of local contents. In other words, the government closed its international borders with neighbouring countries in 2019 as a swift response to threats on the domestic economy and security, posed by trans-border irregular movements and illicit activities (Olisah *et al.,* 2022). Yet, smuggling, kidnapping, banditry, Boko Haram attacks and killings have not ended. Thus, so long as borderland historical antecedent and related issues remain unaddressed, illegal trans-border movements and related illicit activities will continue to thrive in the country with attendant consequences. This leads us to the next section of the study.

Table 3: Selected settlements near international land borders between Nigeria and other countries

Nigeria's Settlements near Border	Neighbouring Country's Settlements near Border	Neighbouring Country
Babana, Bani, Chikanda, Ebute Igboro, Idigny (Idiyin), Idiroko, Igbokofi, Ijale Ketu, Ilara-Ogudo, Imoto-Imeko Afon, Orieke, Owode Ketu, Samia, Suya, Swate, Yashikera	Adékambi, Basso, Ilara Kanga, Illikimou, Ketu, Kpankou (Panku), Mandécali, Néganzi, Nikki, Pobé, Porto-Novo, Segbana, Waria, etc.	Benin Republic
Backi, Belel, Buli, Dambaru, Danare, Djawe, Esuokon, Gamboru, Gembu, Gilego, Gurin, Hausari, Ikang, Kanyaka, Kirawa, Kojoli, Konkul, Kumshe, Lissam Sambo, Madagali, Maiha, Mbarka Manga, Meinari, Mubi, Musuma, Ngala, Okuri, Pambo, Rann, Sampa, Tapare, Tosso, Wuro Bokka, etc	Abatoum, Abong, Adere, Afade, Balkosa, Banki, Beka, Blame, Bodo, Bri, Bounderi, Dabilda, Demsa, Diba, Dodeo, Esengi, Fotokol, Gelere, Kérawa, Limani, Loua, Mainari, Mbaga, Mbenmong, Mogode, Ndoughoula, Obonye, Salpeo, Tamian, Tchamba, Ziguague, etc.	Cameroon

Baga, Doro Gowon, Bama, Bulalaibe, Kwatar Mali, Ngala, Rann, Saula Limati, Tunukalia, etc.	Bol, Kangalom, Kalom, Tétéoua, Koulfoua, Nguéléa, etc.	Chad
Arege, Babura, Baure, Dankama, Djibia, Dolé, Galadi, Gumsi, Jimojime Sule, Kalmalo, Kamba, Kangiwa, Karagu, Katsina, Kokoba, Kurusalia, Kwalaye, Kwashebawa, Lema, Machina, Mai'Adua, Margawa, Maigatari, Maiyama, Maribara, Meori, Nageda, Njikilamma, Rafin Tsaka, Rogogo, Ruawuri, Tagimba, Tunugara, Zango, etc.	Bakoraouni, Bana, Bangui, Bazaga, Bei Bei, Birni-N'Konni, Bosso, Dan Mairi, Diffa, Doguerawa, Doumbari, Doumega, Dunari, Faya Koura, Gamdou, Gofo, Guéza, Kabobi, Magaria, Mainé-Soroa, Maraka, Miskindi, Nassaraoua, Sabon Birni, Serkin Toudou, Tibiri, Toulatoula, Tsernaoua, Yelou, etc.	Niger Republic

Source: *Compiled by Authors (October, 2023)*



Fig. 1: Political Map of Nigeria showing surrounding countries and communities near borderland
Source: *Nations Online Project*

Impact of trans-border poor management on food security in Nigerians since 2014

The intrinsic nuances of trans-border communities played significant roles in Nigeria's economic and security situations in recent times. Worthy of note is the fact that even though interpersonal interactions around these borderlands had been beneficial to some citizens; it has raised serious security concerns to human existence in Nigeria. According to Quadri (2021), "Nigeria's borders also present challenges. Insecurity, especially from insurgent groups like Boko Haram, affects trade and economic activities in the northeastern borders with Chad and Cameroon." As a matter of fact, the former Nigeria's Chief of Defence Staff, Gen. Lucky Irabor laments that;

> *The penetrability of our vast unmanned land areas – the north-east and north-west zones, particularly Borno, Yobe, Sokoto, Zamfara, Katsina states – with neighbouring countries such as Niger Republic and Chad among others has continued to be a key source of criminality and violent crimes in those parts of the country… Intelligence suggests that violence actors are using some of these normal border points to*

> *move freely from countries into Nigeria to cause mayhem (Quadri, 2021).*

He further noted that some of these security challenges include the infiltration of armed foreign herders into Nigeria through the land border and the smuggling of goods which has affected local production in Nigeria. This may explain why there was increased presence of herders and cases of clashes between them and crop farmers, especially in north-central and the southern parts of the country since 2015. To further buttress this point, Vanguard (2021: 5) reported that the Southern Governors (south-east, south-south and south-west combined) in their meeting lamented about prevalent insecurity in the southern part of the country as thus;

> *The incursion of armed herders, criminals and bandits into the Southern part of the country has presented a severe security challenge such that citizens are not able to live their normal lives, including pursuing various productive activities, leading to a threat to food supply and general security… population growth has put pressure on available land and increased the prospects of conflict between migrating herders and local populations in the South.*

The implication is that despites government's huge spending on security and various claims of successful operations by different security agencies, threat to human and national security remain questionable. The incessant violent attacks, do not only endanger people's livelihood who are mostly farmers, market men and women, but also involved destruction of valuable property including houses, displacement and killing of different nationals living in various international border communities and other locations (Table 4). This has severely affected food production, food availability, food accessibility, etc. which correspondingly lead to scarcity, hike in prices of food that further threaten the lives and living standard of the people, especially in the Northeast and Northwestern parts of the country.

The UN-Committee on World Food Security considered food security as when "all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life without resorting to emergency food supplies, scavenging, stealing, or other coping strategies." On the other hand, food insecurity is a situation in which there is "limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or the inability to acquire nutritious foods in socially acceptable ways" (Bickel *et al.,* 2000:6; IFPRI, 2021 April 28). In other words, food security or food insecurity hinges on issues surrounding production and supply (availability) of food, its stability, how accessible or affordable is it, and balance diet, both in short- and long-term basis; whether or not getting food means giving up other things of importance, etc. There is food security if these issues had been conquered and vice versa. In this study, two broad perspectives of the phenomenon of food security are contextually considered.

Table 4: Selected cases of threat to human lives associated with irregular trans-border movements in northeast & northwest sine 2014

Violent Attacks on Communities/States near International Border		Displaced People	Number of people abducted/ killed (civilians/security men)		Source
Selected communities in Nigeria	Date of Event		Abducted	Killed	
Kawuri (Borno State)	January 26, 2014	Uncountable	Undisclosed	85	RNA (2014, Jan. 28)
Chakawa (Adamawa State)	January 26, 2014	Uncountable		138	Ndahi Marama & Umar Yusuf (2014); Adejoro (2014, Feb); Agada (2014)
Many villages in Adamawa & Borno States	January 27, 2014	Not accounted		61	https://www.en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/2014_in_Nigeria
Konduga (Borno State)	February 11, 2014	Uncountable	Undisclosed	39	Ross, Will (2014)
Izghe (Borno State)	February 15, 2014	Ransacked	Not accounted	121	https://www.en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/2014_in_Nigeria
FGC Buni Yadi (Yobe State)	February 25, 2014	Not accounted		59	Hemba, Joe (2014)
Chibock (Borno State)	April 15, 2014	Undisclosed	Over 250	Unknown	https://www.en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/2014_in_Nigeria
Villages in Gamboru Ngala (Borno State)	May 06, 2014	Over 40,000	Unknown	Over 200	IANS (2014, May 7)
Villages in Gwoza LGA, Borno State	June 02, 2014	Ransacked	Not accounted	Over 300	Umar, Nmodu, Oyoyo, Benjamin, Haruna (2014)
Damasak (Borno State)	November 24, 2014	Over 3,000	Unknown	50	https://www.en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/2014_in_Nigeria
Baga (Borno State)	January 03 – 07, 2015	Uncountable	Over 2000 unaccounted for	At least 150	Baker (2015); Amnesty International (2015, Jan. 15)
Malari (Borno State)	Jan. & Sept., 2015	Unknown	Over 40	At least 20	BBC (2015, Jan. 3); TheGuardian (2015, Sept. 28)
Kwatar Mali & 2 other villages in Borno State	July 27, 2015	Not accounted	Undisclosed	At least 10	Hindustan Times (2015, July 30)
Maiduguri (Borno State)	March, 2015; Oct. 2016	Undisclosed	Not accounted	At least 63	https://www.en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/2016s_in_Nigeria
Madagali (Adamawa State)	January 12, 2016	Undisclosed		At least 7	
Rann (Borno State)	January 17, 2017; And Jan. 2019	Over 30,000	At least 6	Over 200	Haruna (2019); Obiejesi (2019); Al Jazeera (2019, Jan. 29)
GGS Technical College, Dapchi (Yobe State)	February 19, 2018	Not accounted	At least 115	Undisclosed	https://www.en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dapchi_schoolgirls_kidnapping
Bulaburin, Kofa, Dalori 2 (Borno State)	October, 2018	Over 25,000	Unknown	Over 30	Al Jazeera (2018, Nov. 1)
Tunga, Kabaje, Shinkafi and Kanoma (Zamfara State)	May 05, June 06 and June 09, 2019	Uncountable	Not accounted	At least 73	Adeyeye (2019); Premium Times (2019, May 28); The Tide (2019, June 7); Punch (2019, June 16)
Kalhu, Tsage, Geeri, Satiru (Sokoto State)	June 08 – 09, 2019	Undisclosed		43	Al Jazeera (2019, June 9); Punch (2019, June 9)
Gamboru (Borno State)	January 06, 2020	Undisclosed		38	Maina (2020)
Three places in Katsina State	April 18, 2020	Undisclosed		47	https://www.en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_massacres_in_Nigeria
Koshebe (Borno State)	November 28, 2020	Undisclosed		Over 110	TheGuardian (2020, Nov. 29); Deutsche Welle (2020, Dec. 2)
Seven villages in Kebbi State	June 03, 2021	Uncountable	Not accounted	88	The Week (2021, June 6)
About 6 villages in Zurmi LGA of Zamfara state	June 10 – 11, 2021	Undisclosed		At least 53	Al Jazeera (2021, June 12)

FGC Birnin-Yauri (Kebbi State)	June 17, 2021	Undisclosed	At least 70	Undisclosed	Al Jazeera (2022, Jan. 9)
Several villages in Anka & Bukkuyum LGs of Zamfara state	January 04 – 06, 2022	Over 10,000	Not accounted	About 200	Egbas (2022); Al Jazeera (2022, Jan. 9)
Damri, Sabon Garin, Kalahe (Zamfara State)	May 06, 2022	Uncountable	Not accounted	48	France 24 (2022, May 8)

Source: Compiled by Authors (October, 2023)

Food availability and stability: The availability of food for all people depends on many factors such as food production, supply, distribution and exchange (including importation) of food stuffs which further require safe environment, regular harvest, efficient trading, stable market systems, etc (FAO, 1997; Gregory *et al.*, 2005; Godfray *et al.,* 2010). However, threat on any of these perspectives readily metamorphous into the state of food instability – the inability to obtain or access sufficient, quality or nutritious food over time. The phenomenon of food instability manifests itself in three major ways: (a) Chronic or permanent situation which is a long-term persistent inadequate food, (b) Transitory, and (c) Seasonal situations of food insecurity which are conditions of food insufficiency or unavailability during certain periods of time due to various factors associated with *man* and nature (FAO, 1997). The prevalence of these variables increases the susceptibility of people to access food and thus threatens their mutual responsibility to survive.

Relating the current study, the incessant attacks, massive displacement and killing of people as well as merciless destructions of valuable property in many local communities and towns in the Northeast and Northwest Nigeria significantly threatened the availability and stability of food stuffs in these zones with spilling effects on other parts of the country, most especially the neighbouring areas or states. The worse hit states are Borno, Yobe, Adamawa, Zamfara, Katsina, Sokoto, Kebbi. It is very important to note that bulk of the population of Northeast, Northwest, and indeed neighbouring North-central is characterised by crop farming and day-to-day trading. Put differently, the persistent violent attacks, displacement, killing, etc of farming population as well as day-to-day traders by bandits and Boko Haram terrorists in states sharing borders with other African countries (Chad, Niger & Cameroon) drastically affected food production, supply, distribution and exchange in not only directly affected places, but in other areas as well.

The argument here is that security threats arising from border areas had successfully disempowered the urban and rural poor. The livelihood (farming) and normal business activities of the affected people had been disrupted or continue to face security threat and barriers with further implications on prices of goods (food items) in the market as a result of imbalanced supply and demand of already inadequate foodstuffs.

Food accessibility: This, according to Gregory *et al.* (2005) refers to the affordability and allocation of food, as well as the preferences of individuals and households comprising a community or society. It is important to note that in some cases hunger and malnutrition are not the function of lack or scarcity of food in a given society, but food price spikes and level of income (poverty) among members of a particular area. This implies that there may be available food stuff in an area but a sudden and persistent hike in their prices, poverty could limit access to food and so increase the vulnerability of the people to food insecurity. Sometimes, it could be the nature of the environment or prevailing situations of instability and other factors in the area. This further suggests that there are two broad perspectives of food access, namely: direct and economic food access. In any case however, the ability of the people to access or afford sufficient quality food with relative ease or cheaply saves spending on food over other essential materials and services which in turn accelerates good living condition and quality life for both young and old, man and women FAO, 1997; Garrett & Ruel, 1999).

However, studies revealed that victims of violent conflict or terrorist attacks are cutoff from optimal engagement in their hitherto livelihood or economic activities while taking refuge in refugee camps or other places as they sooner or later become *economic distress* on the host communities (Saheed & Egwaikhide, 2012; Zachariah & Olisah, 2020). It further increase or creates pressure and intense demand of food which often come along with great

consequences on food accessibility in neighbouring environments. Between 2014 and now for instance, there is over 900% increase in the price of local rice in neighbouring towns, cities and indeed states near their counterparts that have been plagued by the activities of Boko Haram terrorists and bandits. Prices of other local foodstuffs such as beans (all varieties), yam tubers, locally processed cassava products, maize, millet, animal products, and all other food used for human consumption have also exponentially shoot-up since 2014. This is because apart from population increase and other related variables, there is so much pressure on, and high demand of the available food in surrounding places where trans-border irregularities and related government's policy or response drastically affected stable food production, supply, distribution, exchange, etc.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study on trans-border trajectories and human security in Nigeria, demonstrates how borderland traces and historical ties among international border communities are closely linked with the phenomenon of food insecurity in the northeast and northwest since 2014. Specifically, the study points out that many communities and people in Nigeria, particularly those near international borders share aged-long historical cultural affinity and socioeconomic ties with their counterparts in the opposite neighbouring countries (Niger, Chad, Cameroon and Benin Republics) that were balkanized without genuinely taking into account those historical, and indeed structural and fundamental factors which exist among the people. This, in no small magnitude contributed to the porosity of borderland between contiguous states as typified by Nigeria and her neighbours. It is further linked with more or less free flow of contraband articles as well as illegal movements of people which include Boko Haram terrorists and bandits with consequential effect on the country's security and economic uprightness. Against which the government, in collaboration with its counterparts or single handedly devised various kinetic and non-kinetic measures to combat the menace of cross-border movement on the country.

Furthermore, available data showed that both colonial and post-colonial authorities pay little or no attention to peculiarities of international boundaries and the inhabitants thereof. It is thus the position of this article that almost (if not) all associated challenges of borderland and indeed human insecurity highlighted herein are symptomatic effects of failure or lackadaisical attitudes of colonial and post-colonial (indigenous) authorities toward age-long historical ties and peculiar nature of these areas and people. Hence, the study concludes that there exists a strong connect between borderland nuances and various indices of food insecurity in northeast and northwest Nigeria since 2014. In fact, banditry, Boko Haram onslaughts, smuggling as well as government's abrupt policy on cross-border movements do not only implicated in prevalent food insecurity, but also have significant effects on other aspects of human security in the study area and Nigeria in general.

It is recommended, therefore, that the government should prioritize the development of border communities in every respect without any neglect in providing *formidable modern security* around border areas as in advanced cities of the world. Nigerian government, leaders of neighbouring countries and indeed of other parts of the continent should enthrone good governance in their respective territorial jurisdictions. They should institute and ensure that sustainable development in all its entirety is spread across every part of their respective countries including communities near international border. On a final note, whatever policy or planned programme, security strategy, etc geared towards international borders and communities thereabout should take into account their peculiarities and their economic, socio-cultural historical ties opposite counterparts be given more meaningful consideration in every respect – from planning to implementation stage.

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