CONFRONTING NIGERIA'S SECURITY CHALLENGES THROUGH INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY: WAY FORWARD TO TERRORISM

[1]**Yakubu Yunusa Sulaiman**, [2]**Mohd Auwal Umar** and [3]**Abdulkadir Shehu Bari**
[1,2,3]Department of Computer Science,
Audu Bako College of Agriculture,
Dambatta, Kano State-Nigeria.
Corresponding author: yakubuy10@gmail.com

Abstract:

The Nigerian security issues are getting more disgusting despite the government effort and security agencies to end the menace. This is due to the emergence of Boko Haram violence, cattle rustlers, herdsmen, Niger delta terrors, cases of kidnapping and other criminal offences across the nation. The security challenges in Nigeria need to be revived & employ the international standard by making use of modern technology like information and communication technology (ICT) in order to fight against insecurity by tracking, detecting, and disseminate information about the terrorist groups. Therefore, this research paper aimed to outline some of the ICT facilities applicable to Nigerian situation in managing insecurity based on the country's technological status and international support if the need arise. It will also study how to train and improve the national security agencies (police, soldiers and navy e.t.c.) on the use of ICT in their operation, which may include surveillance cameras, social media platform, telecommunication system and other ICT technology for data collection and analyzing.

Keywords: Information and communication Technology (ICT), Nigeria's security, Terrorism.

1.0 Introduction:

A national security is an important factor in achieving environmental conduciveness in order to protect and maintain socio-economic development and sustainability. Security is defined as the degree of resistance to or protection from harm; it applies to any valuable assets being it a person(s), community, nation, or an organization [5] and properties. Security has a direct proportion to freedom, as it was said by [9] no freedom without security. While, the inability to provide the expected protection to citizens and their properties is termed as insecurity/insurgency/or terrorism. The issue of insecurity had been a global concern long time ago including Nigeria, for instance during 2nd world war which lasted from 1939 to 1945, the largest insurgency in history, involving every part of the world. This is why the United Nations was formed to ensure global peace and security building.

The challenges of insecurity in Nigeria is now getting more disturbing and becoming a destructive factor to the nation millennium development goal & sustainability and 2020 mission, because of increasing number of terroristic activities across the country; ranging from Niger Delta Militant to Boko Haram, herdsmen to cattle rustlers, kidnapping to abduction [7] e.t.c. however, the need of modern technology as second option to counter-measure Nigeria's insecurity is a welcome development, because, security personnel (police, armed forces navies and others) were already in place and they are the first option in fighting against insurgency in majority of the nation [4]. This modern technology is considered to be information and communication technology (ICT).

The term ICT is basically information handling tools that refers to technological devices and resources used to collect, communicate, disseminate, store and manage information, [6] which encompasses, radio, television, mobile phones, hardware & software, computer network and satellite system. The impact of ICT in everyday activities has shown a remarkable development in politics, education, health and all other socio-economic factors in Nigeria and this indicated the ability of ICT to respond to natural and human-caused disaster like the current insurgency in the country [8]. Although, ICT cannot completely guarantee national security so does security agencies, but can greatly support to fight against threats. With the aid of modern ICT facilities such as biometric data collection, Close Circuit Television (CCTV) such as surveillance cameras, National Security Information Center (NSIC) and many facilities to be discussed in the subsequent section below. For example, in 2011 Osama Bin Laden was located and captured in Abbobatabad-Pakistan using satellite surveillance. Henceforth, the deployed ICT tools were used recently in Nigeria to detect suspected Offa bank robbery in the 5th April, 2018-Kwara State (Vanguard News, April, 2018).

2.0 Insurgency in Nigeria:

In recent years to date, Nigeria is experiencing serious security challenges more especially in North East and some part of North West (Boko Haram-BH), South-South and South West (Niger Delta Militant), North Central (Herdsmen) and cattle rustlers in Zamfara State and kidnapping in most of the country's major cities. There are great loss of life and properties

with unestimated number of injuries among the citizens [2]. In the case of BH in the North East there were about 70% of the population who were killed, injured and displaced from 2009 to 2017, but in 2018 the attacks reduced to 17%. For herdsmen, there were more than 1,425 loss of life as at 2017. In the case of Niger Delta militant, the threats count more than 100s of lives and massive pipeline vandalization and abduction of citizens and foreign investors, even though there is less oil threats in 2017/2018, as illustrated in the figure below;
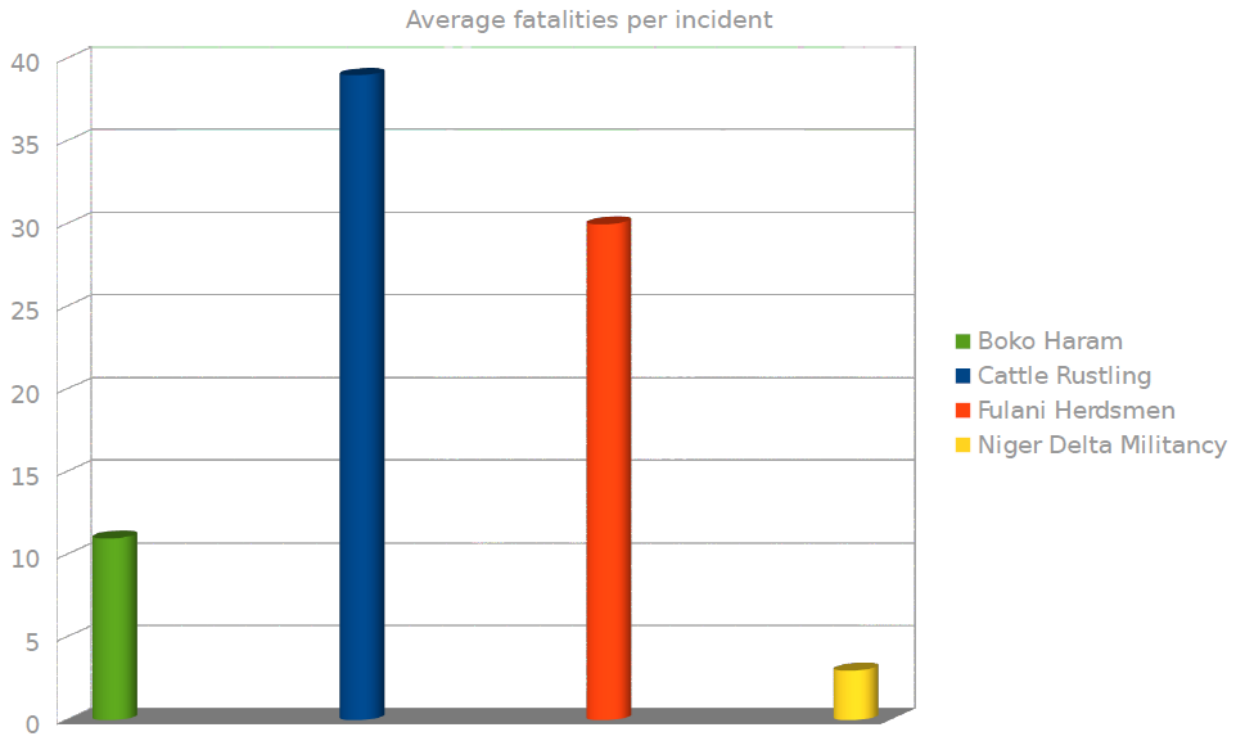

Figure 1: threats by type-[2]

The current insecurity threatening the nation is cattle rustlers in Zamfara, as stated by state lawmaker Alhaji Sanusi Rikiji, "*on Saturday in Gusau that from 2011 to date, 1,321 people were killed, 1,881 persons injured, and 185 cars and motorcycles were lost as a result of bandit attacks in the state. Rikiji, who is the Chairman of the state government Damage, Assessment and Relief Committee, said that more than 10,000 cattle were lost to rustlers and 2,688 hectares of farm lands and 10,000 houses were destroyed within the period under review"* (Nigerian Expression, Feb. 2018). Therefore, the fight against insurgency in Nigeria require additional sophisticated counting mechanisms like ICT facilities, due to the emergence of new threats despite federal effort and security agencies and support from international bodies.

2.1 ICTs Related tools as Counter-Measure to Insecurity in Nigeria:

Prior to traditional means of fighting Nigeria's insurgency, ICT has brought the use of modern technology in combating criminalities beyond information dissemination [6], but involved detection, analyzing and identification of citizens' activities, interaction and movement with aid of different ICT facilities. Nigeria has shown its readiness in tackling insurgency with ICT based on the recent introduction of ICT tools in carrying out national duties such as Automated Fingerprint Information System (AFIS) during Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) examination registration and electronic election process, mobile banking system and global system for mobile communication in almost all parts of the country [5]. Because, ICT-based system can pose threats to the affected society by sending images, videos to the designated databases in order to report any suspected criminal activities for taking early possible measure [3] as explained below;

I-   Close Circuit Television (CCTV): CCTV cameras are now used widely in developed (United Kingdom and United States e.t.c.) and underdeveloped nations like Nigeria to detect criminal and terrorist activities. They are deployed not only in government offices but even in private and individual premises to watch crime execution [1, & 6]. Other related surveillance mechanisms [5] are the wireless technology Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) that can be used to develop the access control system and Geographical Positioning System (GPS) determine precise location of a vehicle, person and other assets that can be used in carrying out criminal attacks. The recorded data location is either stored within the tracking unit or sent to a designated database for review [2].

II-   Automated Personal Data Bank (APDB): This is the use of dedicative devices and databases to collect and store the detected data and personal information about citizens and immigrants [3] that can allow the security system to track individual information including suspected terrorist groups. The APDB records can contain digital images, fingerprint, insurance details and vehicle registration in order to assist in monitoring citizens' activities by governments' security departments and agencies like Department of State Security Service (DSSS) and Security Intelligence Department (SID). Therefore, the Nigerian Immigration Service and Nigerian Custom Service Commission are expected to be vigilant in their duty while the federal government should ensure their training, equipping them with ICT tools.

III- Social Networking Platform: The availability of social devices across the cloud computing network and increase in internet subscription by society and citizens especially by the youths [1], information can shared easily and disseminated even to the analog citizens. Although, the terrorist groups can same time spread threats over the internet but the data can be analyze and verified to ensure its integrity and confidentiality data analyst owned by government, as such ICT benefits is much more than its disadvantages in tackling insecurity.

IV-   Detecting Devices (DD): DD are of two types; one to detect the presence of explosive object in person or vehicle. Nigeria are currently using handheld detecting machine in public gathering like market, schools and worshipping

places, but there is need to provide the improved detecting devices which can be placed in door site as in banks and gate site within public premises and other sensitive and security cautious centers [6]. Other types are used to detect information from a device circuit like Subscriber Identity Module (SIM) card; a removable circuit board found in modern cellular phone that carries the network information and can automatically send and store the data being communicated to the network owner data centers and regulatory bodies like Nigerian Communication Commission (NCC) and NITDA, so that security agencies can trace citizens information based on suspected attacks.

3.0 Conclusion:

The growing rate of insecurity in Nigeria is disgusting and worrisome to the extent that lives and properties are destroyed and displaced across the country's geo-political zones with different types of attacks and other criminal activities such Boko Haram, Niger Delta Avengers, Headsmen and cattle rustlers making the nation citizens frightening despite the number of security agencies available in the country and international support. This is why, this research paper proposed the use of various ICT tools to fight against the insurgency with the aid of mobile phones, CCTV, DD, biometric data mining, although some of the devices accepted while others were rejected as described by different authors. For example, based on research conducted by [1] as shown in figure 2, below; the respondents suggests the use of CCTV and GPS mostly in combating terrorism, and is an indication of citizens understanding of ICT impacts and disadvantage of human force alone. While according to the second graph, the respondents suggest mobile phones and satellite imagery as ICT tools in tackling insecurity [10].
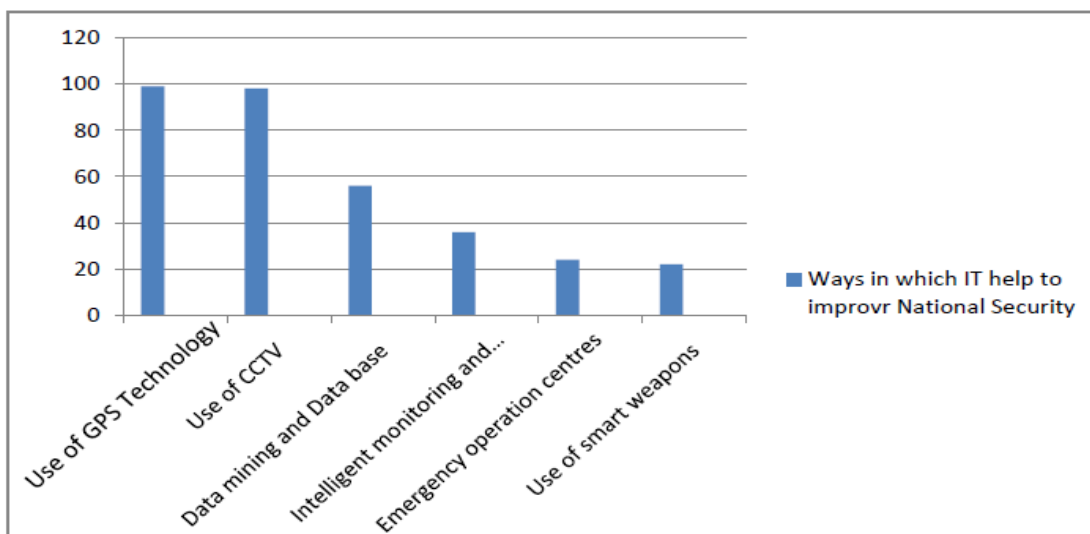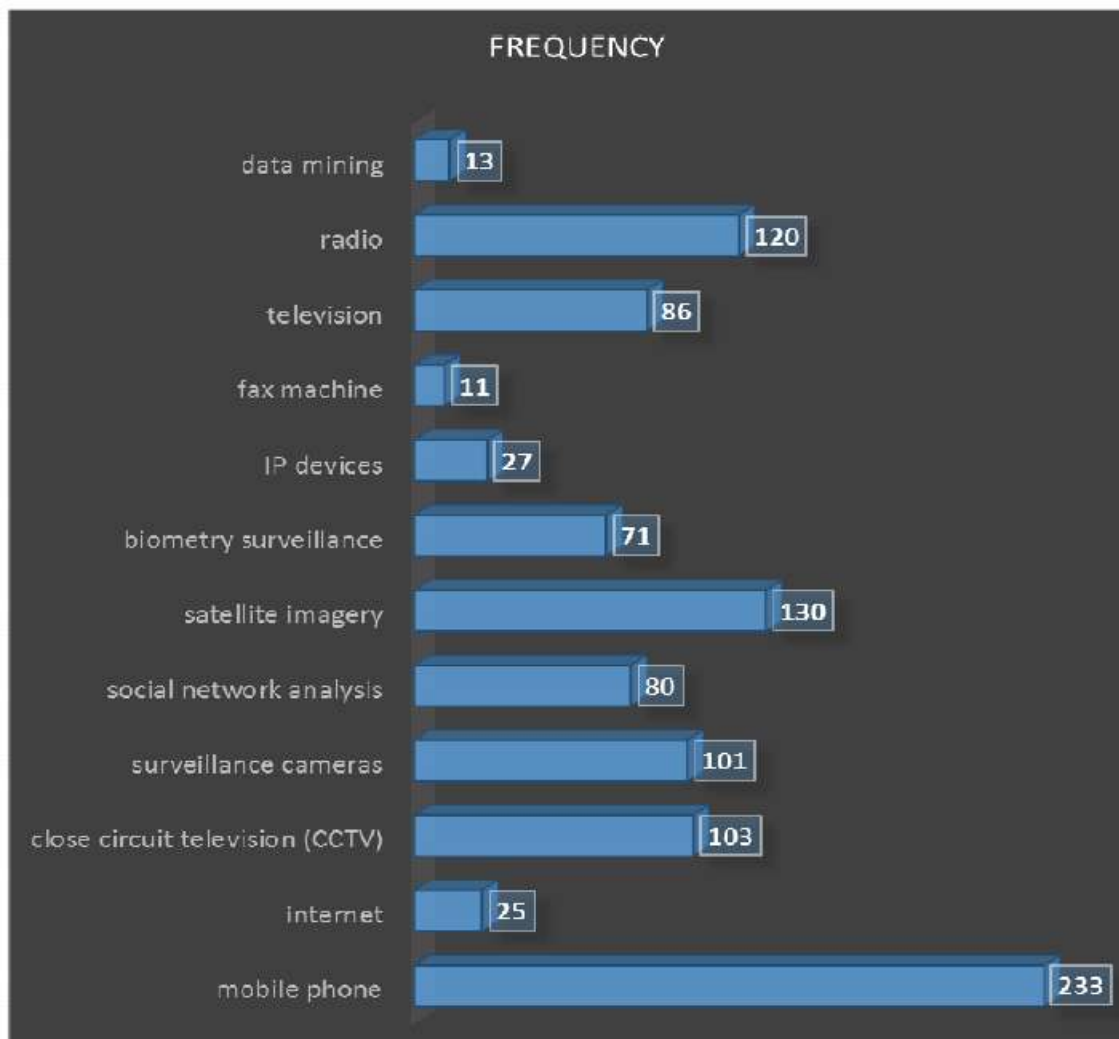

Figure 2: ICT tools in Combating Insurgency-[1]

Figure 3: ICT tools in fighting insecurity-[10]

4.0 Recommendations:

The important of ICT in human development cannot be overemphasized in all socio-economic sectors including fight against insurgency, despite its challenges in the country due to natural and artificial factors. Therefore, this paper recommends the following possible strategies in combating Nigerian insecurity using ICT facilities;

    I-   The federal government should ensure proper implementation of ICT tools in all its agencies, department and parastatals; more especially in the security headquarters and campuses, custom service commission, immigration service offices and others.

    II-   The Nigerian government should train its personnel on ICT knowledge in all sectors and agencies to ensure maximum utilization of the ICT facilities, as it was

done in 2016 where youths were trained by government in collaboration with Huawei IT company.

III-   The inclusion of ICT course in all Nigerian institutions of learning should be monitored to ensure practical teaching of the course at all level, so that every graduate can be able to operate the peripherals.

IV-   The Nigerian ICT regulatory bodies (NCC and NITDA) should ensure proper implementation of ICT policy for development and security consciousness.

V-   The IT companies, NCC & NITDA and the government should collaborate to ensure confidential data collection about ICT facilities and who is using it, to enable operators to have predictable profile about users on their networks.

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