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OIL PIPELINES SECURITY SURVEILLANCE BY THE OODUA PEOPLES' CONGRESS (OPC) IN SOUTHWESTERN NIGERIA DURING THE FOURTH REPUBLIC AND IMPLICATIONS ON NATIONAL SECURITY

Dr. Temitope Francis Abiodun
Department of Peace, Security and Humanitarian Studies
Faculty of Multidisciplinary Studies
University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria

Dr. Olabimpe Olayinka Ojo
Department of Arts Education
School of Multidisciplinary Studies
Bamidele Olumilua University of Education, Science and Technology,
Ikere-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria

Marcus Temitayo Akinlade
Department of Political Science and International Diplomacy
School of Social and Management Sciences
Bamidele Olumilua University of Education, Science and Technology,
Ikere-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria

Abstract

Oil pipelines vandalism has posed serious threat to oil industry in Nigeria, most especially in the South-West region during the Fourth Republic. This, however, resulted into environmental degradation, fire explosions, loss of lives and government revenues. In addressing the menace, the Nigerian government contracted the security of oil pipeline installations in the region to Oodua Peoples' Congress (OPC). Existing studies only focus on militancy and attacks on oil installations in South-South region of the country with inadequate concerns paid to the strategies towards securing them. The study, therefore, examined who in actual sense should be responsible for the pipeline security, challenges faced by the OPC in securing the facilities, collaboration mechanisms with government security agencies and security implications. The study employed a conspiracy theory as the framework while an exploratory research design was adopted. The study was purposively conducted in four states in South-West region of Nigeria: Lagos, Ogun, Oyo and Ondo, pursuant to high-level incidence of oil pipelines vandalism. Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources while data were content analysed. The study revealed that the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) in actual sense, was bestowed with the statutory responsibility for securing the facilities with help or support from the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) and other relevant security agencies, and not the OPC. The study revealed the challenges faced by the OPC members were threats from state security agents, media, sabotage, and corruption in the assignment. Collaboration and partnership between government security agents and the OPC initially resulted in the reduction of vandalism, but lack of trust associated with joint policing led to rivalry and casualties. The study also indicated that the government's policy of partnering with the NSCDC and OPC in the surveillance was initially effective but could not be sustained. The study, however, recommended that government should carry the traditional leaders in the region along for intelligence gathering and cooperation with the security agencies.

Keywords: Oil pipeline vandalism, Security and surveillance, Oodua Peoples' Congress, Southwestern Nigeria

Introduction

Predominantly, pipeline vandalism involves the malicious destruction or defacement of crude oil pipelines in Nigeria. The pipelines are operated under the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC). According to Bala-Gbogbo, (2010) between year 2000 and 2010, over 398 broken pipelines representing 2.5% were recorded due to ruptures, while vandal's interruption accounted for about sixteen thousand (16,300) cracks or damages which actually represents about 97.5 % of the entire quantity of pipeline's damages in Nigeria. It is worthy of mention that oil installations are national assets which usually become soft targets for vandals with the intent to sabotage the government for attention or theft of product to make money. The problem of pipelines vandalism is not new in Nigeria; focussing on the 21st century, record shows that the first experienced point along Niger river passes through Ondo, Imo, Bayelsa, Rivers, Akwa Ibom, Abia, Cross River and Delta states whereof community are mainly peasant farmers (Legit.ng 2017).

Impacts of the menace are usually felt on Nigeria's national income and economy, the environmental degradation, fire explosion as a result of oil pipeline disaster, media political propaganda against pipeline protection, corruption and conspiracy among government officials. Pursuant to this, former president Goodluck Jonathan (2010 to 2015) in 2013 awarded security contracts of the country's waterways and surveillance of national infrastructure like the oil and gas pipeline. The Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND) was awarded the contract to watch over the country's coastline and fight against piracy while Oodua Peoples' Congress (OPC) got awarded with N4billion Naira contract for the surveillance of the oil and gas pipeline installations in Southwestern Nigeria (People's Daily, March 24, 2015). Statutorily, the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, (NSCDC) has the mandate of protecting essential infrastructures and state's assets through the NSCDC Act 2 of 2003 as amended Act 6 of 4 June 2007 Laws of Federal Republic Nigeria, (LFN).

The approval of OPC involvement is expected that government security agents will maintain status-quo despite the fact that they are not always on the same page. This move which was perceived to instigate partnership in securing the national assets of oil pipelines supposed to be noble but dangerous at the same time. This kind of arrangement has never been experienced on such sensitive security assignment to secure national critical infrastructure of oil pipeline installations before in Nigeria. The following questions were raised during the course of field survey, to guide the collection of data for this study: Who should actually be responsible for oil pipeline installations' protection in Southwestern Nigeria? What are the OPC's challenges over the protection of oil pipeline installations in Southwestern Nigeria? How has collaboration and partnership between government security agencies and OPC impacted on the protection of oil pipeline installations in Southwestern Nigeria? What are the implications on national security?

Conceptual Clarification

Security

The concern for the security of a state is undeniably as old as the nation itself (Brown, 1982). Over the years, the concern for national security has led to the development of remarkable military and para-military machineries. Weapons have reached unprecedented levels in size, number and destructive capacity; have increasingly reached a significant part of national resources with both human and material resources devoted to the military sector. In the past, the word security was described to be a ‘‘proviso that is attained when designated

information, materials, personnel activities and facilities are guarded or protected against being spied at, sabotage, subversion and terrorist activities as well as against loss or unauthorised disclosure" (Raymond, 2007:2). This applies when considering oil pipeline vandalism as a threat to the nation economy through terrorist act.

A diverse parts of the global world are currently bedeviled with various forms of security challenges that intimidate peace and stability (Abolurin, 2012). However, Nwolise (2014) explains that security indicates protection, safety of men, groups, nationals and the entire world from all forms of harm. The foregoing means that as soon as people are not being threatened by crime, they are safe. Anything that exposes man to danger is making him to experience insecurity. According to Craighead (2003), security can refer to the provisions of personal services in the protection of people, information and assets for personal safety and as well, community security (cited in Brooks, 2010: 226). Security is also seen as definite liberty from shortage or want, with precautions taken to guarantee against theft, and espionages (Collins English Dictionary and Thesaurus, 1992).

Fischer and Green (2004) uphold that security refers to a stable, moderately conventional environment whereby an individual or group of people may follow its ends without interruption or harm devoid of phobia of such disorder or injuries. Pogoson (2013) explains that "security in the Nigeria state becomes often threatened by frightening instruments that flow from the flaws of the state and its powerlessness to effect total management of the territory." This indicates that as a state lacks the competence to man her territory, there would definitely be an amplified rate of criminality and insecurity across the state until workable strategies are put in place in containing such arising threats. Outstandingly, resolving such problem requires that security sector in the state strengthens its competence towards regulating the flow of small arms and light weapons.

Concept of Vandalism

Vandalism is a concept that is applicable to this study mainly because it occurs before stakeholders begin to start the protection that affected oil pipelines. Vandalism is a criminal act of damaging or defacing the property of others or culture jamming on smuggling; an example of vandalism includes destruction of graffiti art, billboard and possibly crop circles (Gadekar, Dhakne, and Chavan, 2013). Vandalism occurs when people destroy or spoil with impunity, those things that ought to be preserved (Adukwu-Bolujoko, 2011). Vandalism is a situation where youths or people deliberately carry out acts which pave way for the destruction, defacement or damaging of public infrastructure. In fact vandalism is an act of hooliganism against the state and demands timely intervention by policy makers because it undermines the actualisation of sustainable development.

Vandalism is caused by vandals who are According to Okere (2011), seen as "people that deliberately destroy or disfigure natural or manmade work". Pipeline vandalism, refers to the wilful destructive act of damaging petroleum pipeline installations aimed at crude oil and related petroleum products theft. Pipeline vandalism includes acts of illegal bunkering, destruction of oil pipeline installations to tap fuel, dippering fuel from blown oil pipes and premeditated operation of oil bombings (Onuoha, 2007). Oil pipeline vandalism in Nigeria could be considered as sabotage which is principal offence under the Petroleum Act and Criminal Justice Decree of 1975 (Miscellaneous Provision) (Phil-Eze, cited in Onuoha, 2007). Pipeline vandalism linked with explosion has generated severe danger to ecosystem, oil spillages, ecological contamination, farmland's damage, loss of lives and property within the pipeline host communities called pipeline right of way.

Records have shown that over 2,258 pipeline vandalism incidents were recorded between 2003 and early 2005 with areas of repeated pipeline breakages within the same range of time. This massive level of vandalism was reduced to unnoticeable figure in year 2006 due to the new operational strategies adopted by the leadership of NSCDC, and its vow to stamp out vandals in Nigeria society. Within this period of time, over 150 vandals has been discovered, put under arrest, got investigated and finally handed over to relevant security agencies for more investigation and trial (Progress Report of NSCDC, 2020).

Former Nigeria Petroleum Minister of State, Ibe Kachikwu revealed the country had a record of over 3,000 pipeline vandalism in year 2010 and 2015; up to 644 million litres of petroleum products in the country costing N51.28 billion losses in the year 2015. It was gathered that from January to June, 109 million litres of petroleum products and 560,010 barrels of crude oil got declared as a loss in 1,620 cases of vandalism. Also, 850 million standard cubic feet of gas production was lost from the chaos and electricity outage experience from 2,700MW to 3,000MW (Daily Post, 2016). In fact, incessant vandalism of gas pipeline installations is responsible for the drop of 2,800 megawatts in the power sector.

Table 1: Vandalised-Prone Areas in the Southwestern Nigeria

State	**Vandalism Prone Areas**
Ogun	Abujana, Shagamu, Ojere, Ogunmakin, Isa Idun in Obafemi OwodeLGA
Lagos	Amuwo-Odofin, Ilado- Odo Village,
Oyo	Iresa Area
Ondo	Akotogbo Beach in Irele LGA and Agbabu-Okitipupa
Osun	Osun rivers

Source: The Defender, Vol.1

Causes of Oil Pipeline Vandalism in Nigeria

Widespread Poverty and Ignorance: Onuoha (2007) reveals that poverty can be used as a consequence to vandalism in the areas terms of ambiguity of oil pipeline blast, which pointed to the fact that the poor are hardest hit in the case of oil pipeline blast in the country. He argued further that the rich vandal's are backing these threats to human's life security and are concealed as well as the material circumstances of the victims with advanced technologies that need to be deployed in monitoring the nefarious acts.

Faulty and corrosive pipelines: There are easily accessible pipelines that usually run through sum slums and informal settlements in burgeoning cities, are tempting to these desperately underprivileged communities that have no electricity supply and must rely on oil

lamps for lightening and power (Vidal, 2011). The outdated pipelines are known to have been laid for long above it expiring date. Possible faulty unrepaired pipelines for long are contributory to its vulnerability to vandalism.

Unfulfilled expectations and promises: The Federal Government and oil producing companies were hopefully expected that they would build the Niger Delta by providing social facilities like employment, healthcare services, road networks, electric power, youth empowerment programmes, and community growth.

Environmental degradation of the hosting communities: After more than three decades of oil pilferage in the region in 1990s, militia groupings started protesting against residents' displacement, environmental degradation and damages to the eco-system of their communities. This damage of the eco-system on the farmlands, water bodies in the terrain without sufficient and suitable clean-ups results to low economic activities and access to clean water in most of the host communities remain the contributory factors to vandalism.

Corrupt leadership and bureaucracy: "Special rewards" of oil resources usually go to affiliates of political elites, these special rewards were perpetrated through briberies of Federal, State, local communities and clan leaders causing an unequal distribution of oil wealth resources amongst certain well privileged 1% of Nigerians.

Greed and youthful exuberance: Some die-hard young individuals are of the delusion to get-rich-quick syndrome through the scheme. This comes into play when affluent overlord criminals interfere on these youth minds by deception through provision of tools for breaking oil pipeline for their own selfish interests and in turn provide cash rewards to promote vandalism of the pipelines. Inordinate ambition to amass wealth also sets in for the youth by looking at these overlords as role model.

Scarcity of petroleum products: Nigeria continues to experience artificial scarcity of petroleum product due to vandalism of pipeline installations and the criminals are allowed to smile to the bank. Scarcity of oil products will definitely influence the living standards of the people in various ways. This includes increase cost of transportation; social unrest; faulty electric power; high cost of food items; fuel adulteration and low standard of living.

Poor policing and protection of oil pipelines: The world regards Nigeria as an oil state, an instance of oil-dependent economy with oil wealth and petroleum resources that represent over 75 percent of Nigeria's foreign exchange earnings, therefore, justifies the stronghold of the country's economy (Okoli and Chukwuma 2016).

Oil black market Flourishing: The former political sabotage of the Niger Delta non state armed men have changed to an organized crime of recent who now vandalise for the purpose of oil theft in order to enrich their pockets. They organize oil theft through paying some group to break into the pipelines and scoop thousands liters of it in gallons.

Implications of Oil Pipeline Vandalism in Nigeria

The impacts of oil pipeline vandalism in the country are enunciated as follows:

Huge economic losses: Nigeria economy will continue to be in shambles if pipeline installations are not given adequate and required protection against vandalism. It was discovered that several barrel of oil on daily basis were lost without remorse from the vandals

who translate to the fact that Nigeria economy will continue to surfer. Prince Haruna M from PPMC could recall that NNPC lost to pipeline vandals over ₦165 Billion between 2009 and 2012 due to theft of the petroleum product from installations.

Pollution: There is problem of pollution, the existing water bodies become easily polluted, air is polluted, and there exist chemical, soil and land pollution, and there are unsustainable agricultural practices; fish farming, bio-diversity depletions, habitat and ecological system losses and high rate of insecurity which result in a great damage to the agricultural farmlands in the regions as a result of oil pipelines vandalism.

Fire outbreaks and explosion: The negativity impacted from vandalism of pipeline installations in the country is enormous. This can result into enormous fire disasters at large scale to wipe out cash crops like; cocoa, palm trees, coffee, rubbers, among others, all these crops could have been easily harvested and sold for income. This is an attack on human security in all sense.

Scarcity and shortage of petroleum products: Fuel is being used everywhere for all sorts of activities ranging from productions, mobility of man, cooking, electricity, supply and sources of foreign exchange. Business activities in the country are usually brought to a halt when there is no fuel, long queue of vehicles in the filling stations, Commuters get stranded in the various bus stops with no hope of motor coming to take them to their various destinations and prices of item get sky-rocketed beyond the reach of the buyers.

Decrease in electricity supply: Pursuant to continual pipeline vandalism, power or electricity supply or availability is subjected to elements of chance and with undesired consequences that negatively affect power generation. In addition, gas pipeline vandalism is a serious threat to steady electricity generation and energy in the power sector in the country.

Measures Adopted in Curbing Vandalism

The security agencies in Nigeria, most especially the personnel of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, (NSCDC) usually respond to the problems of pipeline vandalism using some approaches - preventive diplomacy, use of force and the human security dimension (Abolurin, 2008).

Preventive Diplomacy: It entails application of physical security by posting the Corps for surveillance and presence towards making sure that oil pipelines are not destroyed. Men and officers are deployed to the various rural communities for patrols in monitoring all the areas where oil pipelines pass through or are laid and patrol the pipelines on regular basis.

Use of Force: This strategy is applicable where there are indications of oil pipeline installations' vandalism and suspects are being detected. As a result of this, arrests are made with minimum force and prosecuted.

Human Security Dimensions: In case there are of fire outbreaks during oil pipelines' vandalism, the security agents engage in disaster management in order to rescue and get a relief for the victims. As such, many have been saved by the quick intervention of the Corps members during cases of infernos resulting from pipeline vandalism.

Table 2: Incidence of Pipeline Explosions in Southwestern Nigeria (2006 to 2016)

MONTH/YEAR	**LOCATION**	**STATE**	**IMPACT**
May, 2006	Inagbe Creek	Lagos	over 200 people reported dead
December 2009	Arepo	Ogun	Reported death and environmental destruction
December, 2010	Idu, near Ijegun	Lagos	Reported death and environmental destruction
January, 2013	Arepo	Ogun	Reported death and environmental destruction
June, 2013	Ijeododo in Ojo Local Government	Lagos	Reported death and environmental destruction
June, 2014	Takwa Bay Beach	Lagos	Hundreds of people were killed

Source: Pilot study, 2016

Overview of the Oodua Peoples' Congress' (OPC) in Nigeria

The emergence of the OPC often linked with the 1993 Nigeria's presidential election that was annulled by the former military president, General Ibrahim Babangida. After the Nigeria military government's long transition programme, Chief Moshood Abiola, the acclaimed winner of the election in 1993, was prevented from assuming the office and he was later incarcerated in 1994. The annulment of the election let the Yoruba people to protest against Abacha military government then; united under different umbrella organisations such as the Campaign for Democracy (CD) and the National Democratic Coalition (NADECO).

In July 1994, shortly after Chief Abiola's arrest, the Oodua Liberation Front (OLF) got inaugurated and followed in September, 1994 by the Oodua Youth Movement (OYM) with a range of other ethno-nationalist groupings, many of which brought to mind the name of the mythical founder of human civilisation in Yoruba land, Oduduwa or Oodua. The OPC's official fundamental objectives are set out in its constitution. The OPC's aims are:

a) Identifying the historical and cultural origin of the people in view of bringing alive the past glory and posterity.

b) Mobilise and educate the Oduduwa descendants for better enlightenment as mention in above immediate paragraph.

c) Integrating into a collective platform the inspirations and aspirations of all the descendants of Oduduwa values as one Oodua entity.

d) Monitoring Oduduwa descendants diversified interest with adequate struggle for the protection of these interests.

e) Pursing the progress of Oodua civilization by protecting and promoting our values and the intergenerational transmission of same (Human Rights Watch 2003).

The OPC is a non-state armed group that is very lively in the Southwestern region of Nigeria with the sole mantra 'protecting the interests of the Yoruba ethnic group'. At formation stage, the group recognized in 1994 with the aim of surmounting, what it alleged as the political marginalisation of the Yoruba race in Nigerian politics (Nolte, 2007). It was in the light of the trend of event then that the OPC also established by Dr. Frederick Fasheun with the intention of having a socio-cultural organisation that intended to re-centre the Yoruba nation through historical and cultural research to violent confrontations with members of other ethnic groups, and more recently, vigilante works and crime fighting.

Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, (NNPC)

The Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation got set up on 1st April, 1977 by the Federal Government of Nigeria to regulate and participate in the nation's petroleum industry. NNPC came up as a merger of the Nigerian National Oil Corporation NNOC and the Federal Ministry of Mines and Steel. NNPC legally was mandated to manages the joint venture between the Nigerian federal government and a number of foreign multinational corporations, which include Royal Dutch Shell, Agip, ExxonMobil, Total S.A, Chevron, and Texaco (now merged with Chevron). Through collaboration with all these companies, the Nigerian government conducts petroleum exploration and production. The NNPC was authorized with operational interests in refining, petrochemicals and products transportation as well as marketing. However, between 1978 and 1989, NNPC was able to construct refineries in Warri, Kaduna and Port Harcourt and took over the 35,000-barrel Shell Refinery established in Port Harcourt in 1965 (NNPC Report, 2018).

It is important to note that, NNPC was commercialized into twelve strategic business units, covering the entire spectrum of oil industry operations: exploration and production, gas development, refining, distribution, petrochemicals, engineering, and commercial investments in 1988. The subsidiary companies are the followings:

- Nigerian Petroleum Development Company (NPDC)
- Nigerian Gas Company (NGC)
- Products and Pipelines Marketing Company (PPMC)
- Integrated Data Services Limited (IDSL)
- National Engineering and Technical Company Limited (NETCO)
- Hydrocarbon Services Nigeria Limited (HYSON)
- Warri Refinery and Petrochemical Co. Limited (WRPC)
- Kaduna Refinery and Petrochemical Co. Limited (KRPC)
- Port Harcourt Refining Co. Limited (PHRC)
- NNPC Retail
- Duke Oil
- Department of Petroleum Resources

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored in theoretical framework of Conspiracy where individuals or group like the militias conspire in taking advantage of security lapses to operate and create anarchy by vandalising the oil pipelines.

Conspiracy Theory

The theory that adequately explains the phenomenon of politics of oil pipelines surveillance and protection in the South-West, Nigeria clearly identifies with the conspiracy theory. This theory depicts more insights into the conducts of people that usually aim at or target public facilities for various reasons related to their intentions in undermining the interests of the state. Conspiracy theory also attributes unusual powers to certain agents – meant to "plan, control others, maintain secrets and a outstanding attributes of conspiracy theories include resistance to corrections, through direct denials or counter speech by government officials" (Sunstein and Vermeule, 2008). It is, therefore, remarkable that pursuant to the operational strategies of the various perpetrators, the theory is directly linked with the queer ladder theory, explaining the phenomenon of an organised crime which is observed as an influential behaviour and a means to an end (Mallory, 2007). Such aims are not only criminal as they sometimes involve agitation and group interest.

Hodapp and Von Kannon in their submission (2008) argue that conspiracy theory provides the thought that people are likely to act clandestinely with the sole objective attaining powers, influence, as well as other gains. A number of these gains may be economic ones accrued from the act a particular gang of individuals poses a threat to public peace. Pursuant to this, there are times when the militias conspire to take advantage of the existing security failures to operate, launch their attacks, and also create anarchy by damaging some critical infrastructure. The relevance of this theory is that the people that vandalise public infrastructure conspire with organised groups to carry out their nefarious activities.

Research Methodology

The study adopted an exploratory research design as the researchers did not easily or adequately find an adequate past data on the problem. Exploratory design can be employed to create a perception on the best way to proceed and the best methodology to be employed that could effectively gather information about the problem. Employing the services of the alleged group like OPC to protect the oil pipelines against vandalism and there is little earlier similar situation to be referred for forecasting of result. The purpose is to obtain experience on outcome inquiry when research problems are at preliminary stage of investigation.

The study area was the Southwestern Nigeria, specifically the states that have accessible network of pipelines installations to vandals. However, the southwest states include Lagos, Oyo, Ondo, Ekiti, Osun and Ogun State. This study concentrates only on pipeline vandalised prone areas of the Southwestern Nigeria which consist of Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, and Ondo states excluding Osun and Ekiti States that cannot be easily accessed by vandals since the majority of pipeline in Osun are off shore inside Osun river and that of Ondo is in a rocky terrain. The people identified as the stakeholders are: Oodua Peoples' Congress (OPC), Community Leaders around Oil Pipeline Right of Way (ROW), NNPC Officials represented by the (DPR), Security Agencies that includes, NSCDC and NPF, Youth Leaders and Women group community living along areas oil pipelines are laid or pass through. The secondary source of data collections were from already current and active literature such as books, newspapers,

journals source, magazines and internet. The researchers, however, decided to employ and sought documents under statutory authorities through a formal application.

Research Findings and Discussion

The result of the analysis of the responses from the Key Informant Interviews KII, conducted with the officials of Department of Petroleum Resources DPR, a subsidiary under the National Petroleum Resources, Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources, the Nigeria Police Force, Ministry of Police Affairs and Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, Ministry of Interior. An In-depth Interview IDI with the founder, coordinator and Zonal coordinators of Oodua Peoples' Congress, also conducted was the Focus Group discussions (FGDs) with community Youths and women group living along the Right of Way (ROW).

Research Question One: Which security organisation in actual sense should be responsible for oil pipeline installations protection or surveillance in Southwestern Nigeria?

NSCDC, Police, Navy, Air force and other security agencies were discovered from the study to be responsible in Southwestern Nigeria for oil pipeline protection. Oil theft, illegal bunkering and oil pipeline vandalism can be reduced drastically by the agency of government mentioned above except the Nigerian Army that can only interject when this trend become escalated. In one development the Ogun State Police PPRO reported that the command arrested the suspected killers of the police when the vandalisation of oil pipelines took place in Arepo and Abule Oba area in Ogun State, Nigeria. The government has encouraged a joint task force initiative and has approved the participation of private companies to be involved in the protection of oil pipelines in order to gives support where necessary for the sole purpose of national security network, considering the local content approach.

Research Question Two: What are the OPC's challenges over the protection of oil pipeline installations in Southwestern Nigeria are?

The OPC's main challenge in the protection of oil pipeline installations in Southwestern Nigeria is the distribution from the contract to shareholders and the lack of adequate required human capital resources. There are serious reportage of disagreement and quarrel over monetary resources among the OPC. The OPC count the issue of intimidating threats from legally constituted security agents of the government as most challenging. NPF, NSCDC, Nigeria Navy, Nigeria Air-force and Nigeria Army are among the agents that sometimes even threatened to shoot them at sight or arranged and chased them away from the oil pipeline site they wish to protect.

Findings also revealed another challenge which involved: nepotism, segregation, god-fatherism, conspiracy, corruption and compromise on the part of Nigerian government. These problems never allowed vandals to be brought to book or succinctly say they will always escape justice. There are instances when government officials will claim and prevailed on vandal's arrested case for release as an "Order from Above". It is an understatement to assume that these criminal elements use godfathers or ethnic affiliation with certain influential powerful political leaders that can intimidate the officials.

Research Question Three: In way ways has the collaboration and partnership between government security agencies and OPC impacted on the protection of oil pipeline installations in Southwestern Nigeria?

Findings have shown that the Nigeria government actually awarded oil pipelines protection to OPC on 15 March, 2015 through the NNPC for just three months. This precedent was laid down as a basis for collaboration and partnership on Nigeria oil pipelines installations protection.

Findings as well, pointed to collaboration and partnership in order to strengthen oil pipeline protection in the southwestern Nigeria. This collaboration became necessary due the shortage of manpower of the security agencies and lack of enough understanding of the local terrain in the hinterland where the pipeline passed through.

Research Question Four: Can we interrogate the implications on national security?

The national coordinator of OPC further insinuate that circumstances around each community known as the environment and surveillance along oil pipeline installations calls for multi-disciplinary techniques which may be difficult for a single agent of the government to achieve easily. Joint efforts of and partnership of both public institution and private organization are recommended for the efficiency and effectiveness of the assignment on protection of the pipeline installation in southwestern Nigeria. It is therefore in his opinion to insist on joint task force within the security agents while the use of private security companies to complement the efforts of the security agents for sake of the policy on partnership.

The respondent insisted that there was a need for public institution to partner and collaborate with private group in order to complement the conventional security agencies which effort are not enough and manpower are not sufficient for the public good and magnitude of national security. Another respondent generally observed that, Nigeria National Petroleum Company lost heavy money through pipelines vandalism in recent times during this Buhari administration because of the stoppage of OPC pipelines protection contract.

Conclusion

The government's foray into OPC partnering statutorily mandated security agency in the protection of oil pipeline installation was ineffective and not sustained. The conspiracy between communities, few security agents as government officials, with vandals that resulted into compromise of oil facility could be surmounted through partnering with traditional leaders for information gathering and collaboration within the security architecture in Southwestern Nigeria where mutual trust, synergy and cooperation are commanded.

Recommendations

The followings are hereby recommended by the study:

1. Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps can be encouraged to update its security intelligence, technologies in fighting vandalism with the use of helicopters, drones and fighter jets for aerial surveillance and in protecting the oil pipeline installations.

2. The need for constitutional back-up for OPC is paramount to promote community mobilisation and training on intelligence information gathering if at all it is necessary to use them.

3. A constitutional amendment required to incorporate partnership and collaboration in security related matters such as border management or control and oil pipelines surveillance in Nigeria.

4. The government is advised to incorporate in her national security architecture policy plan on availability of sophisticated weapons when the need arises to fight organised crimes by security agents on oil pipeline installations vandalism in the country.

Contributions to knowledge

Given the limitations of this study, the following are the contributions to knowledge as it marks a new departure from traditional approach to a foreign approach in securing Nigeria oil pipelines installations against vandalism. Thus far, state apparatus were constitutionally empowered to protect and secure oil pipelines. The motive of non-state militia group like the OPC is a new experiment in security architecture that is not sufficiently covered in studies, especially in Nigeria. The work will contribute to studies on Southwest region particularly the management of security matters by stakeholders and enhancement of our understanding on partnership and collaboration.

Nigerian government took the needful initiative and motivated private sector on partnership with other security agents to take responsibility in the protection of oil pipeline installations against vandals and made it harder for any intension of terrorist to enlarge damages on which effective response depends on other elements destroy many in the cities. The right combination of private organization strategic moves and that of public is expected to provide reliable and resilience services in a long term plan.

In Nigeria, some of the studies rather examined how militia groups usually capitalise on poor infrastructure to perpetrate crime, unleash terror on the people and vandalise oil facilities, as well as the involvement of militias in ethnic conflicts. The study reveals the implications of engaging militarized OPC by the security sector and the country in general. The study will also impact on policy makers who may wish to come up with solution to turn a perceived enemy to friend.

Limitations of the study

This research has limitations associated with it in the following areas: This study narrowed down its focus on Nigeria Police Force, and Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps hence could not capture other security agencies like the Nigerian Army, Nigerian Navy, Air force, State Security Service, Nigerian Immigration Service, Nigerian Correctional Service and the Nigerian Customs Service in protection of oil pipeline installations in Southwestern Nigeria. This is because it may be practically impossible to study all such agencies in a single research due to bureaucratic secrecy tendencies within those security services.

More so, they are more prominent in external protections for the country rather than internal one except when NSCDC and police are overwhelmed and need quick intervention of the military, therefore, limits the extent of generalisation of the results. However, it provides a reasonable pointer to the actual roles, strategies and challenges of security agencies in the protection of oil pipeline installations in Southwestern Nigeria.

Agenda for Further Research

There is the need to undergo further study on the contribution of other legally constituted private security involved in pipeline installations' protection most especially in the Niger Delta region. Besides, mobilisation in the use of local charms by traditional vigilantes (local security guards) as a means in protecting critical infrastructure and national assets needs to be adequately studied for possibility of being regulated and for positive impact on national security.

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