

GLOBALIZATION, INSURGENCY AND HYSTERESIS IN THE WEST AFRICAN SUB-REGION

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Abstract

For almost a decade now, the West African sub-region has been under intensive insurgency scourge. The scourge of insurgency has become persistent, perennial and unabated in Mali, Niger and Nigeria. Against this background, the objective of the paper is to examine the relationship between globalization, hysteresis and insurgency in the West African sub-region. The study adopts the political economy method to illuminate issues germane to the study. Findings reveal that armed groups have exploited globalization and thus become stronger while states have become disempowered by globalization. In addition, there is a strong relationship between insurgency and hysteresis. The paper recommends that the states should institute good governance across board and collaborate extensively in counter-insurgency measures.

Introduction

Globalization is not essentially a new economic order. Since the days of the mercantilists, globalization has become prominent in economic literature. The Neo-liberal scholars are ardent advocates of globalization and they brought it to the fore in the 90s. Globally, the merits of globalization are well articulated by neo-classical economists. Todaro (2011) opined that the neo-classicals argued that by permitting competitive free markets to flourish, promoting free trade and export expansion, welcoming investors from developed countries, and eliminating the plethora of government regulations and price distribution in factor, product, and financial markets, both economic efficiency and economic growth will be stimulated. On the other side of the coin is the anti-globalization movement whose argument centers on the fact that globalization breeds dependence syndrome, further weakens periphery states thereby exposing them to deeper underdevelopment scenario (Theotonio, 1973). One of the major challenges facing economic growth and

development all over the world is insurgency and terrorism. In an atmosphere where peace is absent and there is constant insurgency and terrorist attacks, there is no way such areas can experience any form of positive growth. However, as attractive as globalization is, it has negative consequences. Abdulahi (2013) averred that as the effects of globalization are felt, extremist groups in the Sahel are feeding on unresolved local grievances tainted with banditry, human and drug trafficking.

The world is shackled by legion of insurgency going on. The Middle East has become a veritable region where insurgency and terrorist attacks are rampant. The Western world is not spared as far as insurgency and terrorist attacks are concerned. Al-Qaeda attack of 9/11 in America is still fresh in global memory. In the same vein, Africa has not escaped the incidence of insurgency. Kenya, Egypt, Somalia, Mali, Nigeria and Cameroon have all tasted the bitter experience of insurgency in one form or the other. Against this background, the main objective of this

paper is to examine the relationship between globalization, insurgency and hysteresis in the West African region. In order to realize the objective of this paper, three cross-cutting but interrelated policy questions were raised: How has globalization exacerbated the incidence of insurgency in the West Africa Sub-region? What are the ways in which armed groups have exploited the adoption of globalization policies across the West Africa region? How can globalization induced insurgency in the region be reduced?

In addressing these questions, we propose an analytical framework that allows for having a birds' eye view of the interaction between globalization, hysteresis and insurgency in the West African sub-region. Following this introductory section, section 2 provides conceptual clarifications and theoretical framework while section 3 is an overview of the links between globalization, insurgency and hysteresis. In section 4, we provide the dynamics of insurgency in the West African sub-region. Section 5 contains combating globalization induced insurgency in the West African sub-region while section 6 concludes the paper.

Conceptual Clarifications and theoretical Framework

In this section, we shall attempt to operationalize the concepts associated with this paper in order to illuminate the issues sufficiently for the purpose of clarity and lucidity.

Abolurin (2010) perceives insurgency as asymmetric, low intensity, or guerrilla conflicts. The author defines insurgency as an organized rebellion aimed at overthrowing a constituted government through the use of subversion and armed conflicts. Insurgencies are complex, dynamic and

adaptive. They have the capacity to shift rapidly, split, retreat and reorganize. In addition, insurgency can also be viewed as a political movement or group that seeks to overthrow a governing authority. According to (Keegan, 1994), Insurgencies are not new, however, (Anderson, 2006) asserts that what is new in the last century are three primary changes that have occurred in the dynamics of insurgencies. These changes are the increased use of modern and efficient communication gadgets which have increased the reach and speed of news and the propaganda from both insurgents and counter-insurgents.

Abolurin (2015) posits that the availability of weapons facilitating asymmetric warfare has increased enormously due to the following; (i) The growth of overseas communities willing to support insurgency movement in their motherland with money; (ii) The emergence of great powers willing to use insurgents to fight proxy wars; (iii) The growth and sale of narcotics as a cash crop to finance weapons procurement by insurgents and (iv) The growth of international commerce and travel in general, which has increased the permeability of national borders to arms smuggling.

Closely associated with insurgency is terrorism, the two are similar but not exactly the same. Terrorism is the use of force to intimidate, harass and cause perpetual fear in the victim. In the Sage Dictionary of Criminology, McLaughlin and Maurice (2009) as cited in Igiebor (2014) defines terrorism as an essentially premeditated political act, with the intention to inflict serious injury on the civilian population and to influence government policy by creating an atmosphere of fear and threats, generally for political, religious

or ideological causes. In the same vein, the United States Department of Defense defines terrorism as the calculated use of unlawful violence or threat of unlawful violence to inculcate fear, intended to cause or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuits of goals that are generally political, religious or ideological. Essentially, terrorism comes in two strands; these are domestic terrorism and transnational terrorism. Domestic terrorism is basically homegrown with consequences for just the host country (though there may be pockets of indirect domino effects to neighboring countries), institutions citizens, properties and policies. The victims and perpetrators of domestic terrorism are from the host country. Transnational terrorism on the other hand involves more than one country. The international dimension can emanate from the victims, targets, institutions, and supporters. A plane hijacking that originates in one country and terminates in another country is an example of transnational terrorism (Adelegan, 2017).

Presently, there are incidences of insurgencies in Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemem, Syria, Mali, and Nigeria.

Hysteresis is a situation which arises when any historical event affects the future of economic path. For instance, the occurrence of insurgencies in the West African Sub-region are historical, political, social as well as economic events that has altered the present economic path and future projection of economic growth and development. Hysteresis is Greek term coined by the Scottish Physician and Engineer, Sir James Elfred, who explained it as the time gap between the action and reaction of any physical instrument or object.

Globalization is fluid and imprecise term conceptually speaking. Hanlon (2009) defines globalization as a sum of techniques, containerized shipping, satellite communications, and networked connectivity or broadly, a process, a transformation, even a revolution. Four variants of globalization are discernable in economic literature which includes: economic, technological, cultural and political globalization. Economic globalization is the most widely acknowledged and accepted version of globalization. Griffin (2004) opines that it encompasses large and rapid change in terms of the flow of trade, investment, finance, capital and labour, all of which have created a truly global integrated economy. The author further avers that in macro-economic theory, greater integration is a positive-sum game, everyone benefits from greater efficiency in resource allocation, rising income, and improve distribution of world income. The basic fact about globalization is that strong states are benefiting more than weak states and this has caused a disparity that further undermines the sovereignty, security and legitimacy of those states on the fringes of the globalization world (Hamlon, 2009).

Technological globalization is all about fundamental changes in communications in addition to technologies in the control of internet, open and free access to knowledge and information. These technological innovations are exploited by armed groups to recruit, mobilize, conduct, broadcast and control operations. Cultural globalization is synonymous with imposition of Western culture especially American culture. Cultural globalization has created awareness on how badly local conditions are and how badly native and local people

live. This has made armed groups to exploit these loopholes to mobilize and recruit. Lastly, political globalization incorporates the impact of the other three variants on the state.

In social science literature, there are legions of theories that explain insurgency. This work is essentially anchored on the instrumental theory of violence. Basically, this theory explains the structural organization of the type of insurgency operational in the West African sub-region. The theory also explains the explanatory variables and the dynamics that inform the reasons why insurgents operate and their methodology of operations. Proponents of this school of thought include Crewshaw (1985); Betts (1982); Mickolus (1976). Instrumental theory of violence is premised on the thought that the act of terrorism is a calculated and deliberate choice by a political actor and that the organization as a unit acts to achieve collective values, which involve radical changes in political and social conditions (Crewshaw, 1985). In other words, the major thrust of this theory is that violence is intentional and deliberate. There are several options available to terrorists and insurgents to carry out their deadly activities. Schelling (1966) suggested that terrorism is a form of violent coercion, a bargaining process based on the power to hurt and intimidate as a substitute for the use of overt military force.

The main focus here is not to destroy the military capacity of the government but to force the government to change its political position.

Terrorist organizations employ surprise attack strategies to compensate for weakness in numbers and destructive capability. Terrorist organizations are

known for conscientious cost benefit analysis before deciding on their missions (Betts, 1982).

Applying the instrumental theory of violence within the context of the West African sub-region's security challenges, the reigning insurgents; the Tuaregs of Mali and Niger and the Boko Haram sect in Nigeria believe that politics in the Sahel has been seized for long by a group of corrupt false Muslims. The war is specifically directed at them and the Federal Republic of Nigeria to create a "pure Islamic state ruled by Sharia law.

Overview of the Links between Globalization, Insurgency and Hysteresis

Hanlon (2019) defined globalization simply as a sum of techniques-containerized shipping, satellite communications, and networked connectivity or more broadly as a process, a transformation, and even a revolution. Analyzing further, the author submitted that globalization brings greater interdependence and propels isolated peoples and regions into modernity with all its attendant benefits. On the flip side of globalization is its power to obliterate traditional cultures, weaken sovereignty and further isolate the haves from the have-nots. It is remarkable to note that armed groups are not new phenomenon, what is new is their ability to exploit the opportunities inherent in a globalized world. Armed groups connected by the instantaneous and virtually untraceable communications technologies stage, found refuge in the weak and ungoverned spaces between states. Globalization provides the market and the means to more goods from previously isolated zones of conflict, vastly increasing the financial strength of armed groups (Griffin, 2004). Networks previously specialized in moving drugs now move

human traffickers and their victims. Such networks also move well-trained operatives who exploit the fluidity of globalization to conduct operations and raise funds. For instance, Osama Bin-laden moved from Saudi Arabia to Sudan and from there to Afghanistan. Sudan and Afghanistan were at war during Osama's nomadic life. This is to illustrate the fact that insurgents are always looking for areas in serious conflicts to hide and operate.

Speed, volume and geographic spread are embedded in globalization and this confers a degree of anonymity on those who participate in the world-wide-web. Insurgents have exploited this to mask their trade of illegal goods, movement of people and evasion of detection (Rotberg, 2004). In the same vein, Doff (2005) averred that the ability to communicate and operate anonymously over great distances has enabled armed groups to create linkages with other similar groups in the context of ideologies, objectives, memberships and operational structures. The sheer connectivity of the globalized world has enabled armed groups to transmit and receive information instantly, recruit internationally while masking their authorship and intentions all within the legitimate global interactions.

In the area of transportation, the sheer magnitude and speed of worldwide transit also enhances the probability of not detecting insurgency operatives. There is apparent lack of domestic capital to procure state of the art technologies to detect illegal cargoes. The scale of goods being moved and the speed at which cargoes are discharged make it easier for armed groups to exploit the process given the constrained capacities of most countries in the West African Sub-region. In addition,

globalization created trade linkages among armed groups. For instance, Farrah (2007) estimated that between 30 to 300 million US dollars was transferred from the Al-Qaeda to the Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone through commodities. Commodities are not just only for profit but also a way to protect and move funds around.

Beside the issues raised in the aforesaid paragraph above, globalization has not led to the demise of the state, rather, it has further undermined weak states in the sub-region. Armed groups need the state, albeit weakened to function and survive. Rotberg (2004) categorized weak states as bad government states and fractured states. The author identifies a hierarchy of political goods, the most important being security, especially human security. The states' prime responsibility is to prevent cross-border infiltrations, eliminate domestic threats, prevent crime, and enable citizens to resolve their differences without recourse to violence. Security is the avenue for the provision of other social goods such as education, public health care, public infrastructures, and effective judicial system. Beyond the issue of bad government states, we still have fractured states that were created during decolonization (Jackson, 1990).

Many of these states, the author termed quasi-states. Quasi states are states granted political independence without any meaningful internal sovereignty.

Armed groups exploit bad government states and fractured states by filling the vacuums created by the incapacity of bad government and fractured states. Neglected areas such as the Sambisa forest initially became a safe haven and sanctuary

for the Boko Haram foot Soldiers in the case of Nigeria. Insurgents can also exploit such safe havens to produce key resources such as drugs that can provide needed funds for operational strikes.

At the center of the linkage between the exploitation of globalization and insurgency is hysteresis. Hysteresis occurs when any historical event affects future economic growth. Definitely there is ample evidence that the impact of exploitation of globalization by insurgents will last for a long time. The decimation of the population will take generations to fill the gaps. In addition, the destruction of properties, fear and uncertainty also take their toll on the economy in the future. It is expedient for us as economic stakeholders to start working out frameworks that will enable us to quantify what has been lost and their overall long term effects. It is important to start working out the long term policies that will prosper the economy in the future.

Dynamics of Insurgency in the West African Sub-Region

In this section, we shall dwell on insurgency in Mali, and how its impact has seeped down to overlapping countries such as Niger, Nigeria and Burkina Faso. Kourouma (2008) cited in Abolurin (2015) expounded that the Tuaregs are nomadic people who live in semi-arid Sahel and arid Sahara in an area that overlaps with Nations of Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Libya and Algeria in North Africa. They are mainly traders, warriors and pastoralists. By virtue of the fact that they are mainly pastoralists, they move constantly in search of pastures and water for their herds. There were severe famines and droughts in the 1970s and 1980s that destroyed part of their natural resources. Mali gained independence in 1960 from France; the

Tuaregs were alienated from the new government. They were opposed to government policies and started attacking government facilities in Northern Mali which is their natural habitat. The droughts of the 1980s sent the Tuaregs to Algeria and Libya. When living conditions became unbearable in Algeria and Libya, the Tuaregs came back to Mali in 1990. When economic conditions became unbearable for them, they rebelled against the government in what is known as the Tuareg insurgency. The Tuaregs were also in collision with Non-Tuaregs in Mali as the latter accused the Tuaregs of wrecking their economic life by constantly attacking trucks conveying their produce to Timbuktu and Agadez. In 1974, the non-Tuaregs formed a political organization called the Ganda Koi which means land owner in Songhai language. Kadiatou (2005) posited that while many Western sources emphasized ancient ethnic hatred as a factor in the conflict, other scholars emphasized economic strife and land access issues.

In recent years, there has been a plethora of political crises in Mali, a coup d'état in March 22, 2012 and re-occurrence of insurgency propelled by the collapse of the Muammar Ghadaffi' regime in Libya with its attendant return of battle hardened Tuaregs and upsurge in weapon and arms flow. According to Alexis and Kelly, (2012) the insurgents took advantage of the power vacuum to seize control of the north, the plundering and islamization agenda prospered. Mali has been transformed into a sanctuary for international terror campaigns with the mission of destroying Africa.

From the foregoing, we can vividly conclude that behind the veil of insurgency are core economic issues tainted with politico-

religious embellishments. In addition, climate change is also a major factor precipitating the emergence of insurgency in Mali, which is also an economic issue.

Geographically, the Sahel stretches from the fringe of northern Nigeria through Chad, Niger, Mali to Mauritania. Abduhali (2013) opined that the fragility in the core Sahel region continues to affect adjacent states revealing the inter-connectedness of domestic and transnational security threats.

In Niger, the insurgent Tuareg group; Movement Nigerien pour la Justice (MJN), is locked in a deadly conflict with government over autonomy, uranium, revenue and broken promises of settlement (Thiele, 2013).

Insurgency in Nigeria centers around the Niger Delta Militia groups in the South-South region and the Boko Haram sect in the North East. At the core of the Niger Delta insurgency are the issues of resource control, fiscal federalism, poverty and underdevelopment, as well as environmental degradation. At the height of the Niger Delta militancy, Nigeria was losing huge revenue as oil production activities were largely crippled, for instance see (Adelegan and Oriawole 2015; Abdulahi 2013). The Federal Government of Nigeria adopted the amnesty programme and for quite some time now, there is relative peace in the area.

The major challenges for the country are the Boko Haram insurgency that is growing in leaps and bounds. The issue has been further compounded by the incursion of herdsmen attack on farmers especially in the North Central geo-political zone. Beyond the political angle is the effect of globalization on the free movement of people, goods and services. Because of

identify homogeneity as well as religious homogeneity, it is easy for people of Niger, Chad and Cameroon to move into and out of Nigeria almost unhindered. The proliferation of arms, drugs and other mercantiles of death flow easily into the country. It is remarkable to note that salafist insurgency in northern Nigeria has roots that dates back to the revolutionary Mahdism of the 19th century which mobilized radical clerics, disgruntled peasants and fugitive slaves in an unsuccessful bid to overthrow the British colonial regime in 1906 and to reinstate pre-colonial Islamic caliphate that ruled the area surrounding Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon (Abimbola & Adesote, 2012). The then colonial government quashed the rebellious mahdism but it re-emerged in 1980 through Maitatsine rebellion which is a precursor to the present Boko Haram insurgency. The Boko Haram insurgency has caused a lot of damage to the Nigerian economy and it may take years to recover from the effects.

Combating Globalization Induced Insurgency in the West African Sub-Region

The incessant and enormity of collateral damage incurred by affected countries in the sub-region called for strategies to combat the scourge. Firstly, the reality on ground is that globalization has enhanced the operational efficiency and lethality of armed groups and grossly undermined state capacity to combat the phenomenon. To this end, weak states, as well as fractured states, are at greater risk. The underlining factors that undermine states' strength should be dealt with decisively. The provision of good governance practice in the spirit of inclusiveness, eradication of underdevelopment tendencies will go a long way to reduce the incidence.

Conscious efforts at mitigating climate change issues should be vigorously pursued by the countries in the sub-region. Combating desertification and improving on land allocation methods should be considered a matter of top priority.

Going by the aforesaid analysis of the origin of Boko Haram insurgency and its impacts on the economy, it is interesting to note that the herdsmen- farmers imbroglio is basically an economic issue of resource allocation (land in this case), exacerbated by climate change parameters.

Now, we can see vividly how globalization has aided insurgency in the West African sub region. Globalization and insurgency in the sub region can be taken as events or disturbances in the affected countries' economies with trickle down effects and persisting for a long time. This rolling down impact is the hysteresis effect.

The natural rate of unemployment in the affected economies gets affected by insurgency induced by globalization (a historical event in this context) and persists for a long time. The long lasting unemployment has caused losses to the affected economics in terms of loss of job skills, unemployed persons then adjust themselves to lower standard of living and remained there without a desire to achieve previous status. The economic cost to the economy is the hysteresis effect, which is evident in all the affected economies in the West African sub-region.

Globalization breeds marginalization of work states, while armed groups profit and are empowered by it; therefore weak states should strive to improve on their global economic interactions by way of moving away from exportation of primary products without added value incentives.

The academia should be put to task by demanding and funding functional researches with collaborative efforts with the armed forces of the affected countries in the sub-region. Comprehensive and far-reaching researches should be conducted to address the root causes of the problem.

The Economic Community of West African countries should collaborate in unity of effort in counter-insurgency joint military expeditions. This should be done in the context of military, intergovernmental, multinational, and non-governmental organizations.

The region's borders needs to be sufficiently patrolled. Border patrol agencies should be equipped with helicopters and functional vehicles to fight hardened criminals and smugglers.

The trafficking in small arms/light weapons should be part of what to check at both the borders as well as in the hinterland.

Finally, the countries in the sub region should advance a decentralized intelligence gathering system that incorporates all stakeholders especially regional.

Conclusion

For almost a decade now, the scourge of insurgency has become persistent, perennial and unabated in Mali, Niger and Nigeria. Across the West African sub-region, there are pockets of instability here and there. This paper sought to examine the relationship between globalization, hysteresis and insurgency in the West African region. The study employed the political economy method and attempted to provide answers to questions posed in the introductory section of the paper. The paper recognized that insurgency has become a long term phenomenon in the region. The governments in the region

should have at the back of their minds that combating insurgency is unlike regular warfare; therefore all hands should be on deck to hit at the core of this scourge. Beyond this, a mutually beneficial collaborative framework is needed to weaken insurgency in the sub-region.

Again, the paper brought to the fore how armed groups have exploited globalization to strengthen their operations and how the weak states in the sub-region are being disempowered by globalization.

Furthermore, running the states on good governance template has become a task that should not be neglected by states in the West African sub-region.

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