INSECURITY AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF SOUTHERN TARABA, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Insecurity in Southern Taraba from Boko Haram insurgency, kidnapping for ransom, farmers/herdsmen conflicts to cattle rustling, ethnic crises, militia groups, armed robbery, cultism, amongst others have grown worst. Thus, it is unclear whether the socio-economic development of the area is affected as a result of incessant insecurity. This study was determined to assess the devastation of insecurity on the socio-economic development of Southern Taraba. The study adopted Robert Park's conflict theory. A sample of 400 respondents was drawn from a population of 1,071,500 people across Southern Taraba using cluster, purposive and simple random sampling techniques. Instruments used for data collection were questionnaire and key informant interview. Data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics. Findings identified loss of lives and destruction of property, increased poverty, increase in crime rate, decline in economic activities, family instability, hunger and malnutrition and closure of schools as the socio-economic effects of insecurity felt by the people of Southern Taraba. The study therefore recommended that, the Taraba State Emergency Management Agency should provide relief materials and shelter to those affected by crises resulting to extreme poverty and displacement from their ancestral homes, amongst others.

Keywords: Effects, Insecurity, Socio-economic Development, Southern Taraba

Introduction

As a general term, insecurity refers to a state of being subject to fear, threat, danger, molestation, intimidation, harassment, to mention but a few, in all aspects. It is however the responsibility of government at all levels to provide adequate security to her citizens. In Nigeria for instance, Section 14 (2) (b) of the 1999 Constitution states clearly that, "the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of the government". This attests to the fact that man's need of security cannot be treated with levity. Despite these constitutional rights, insecurity is still a social problem as every continent of the world is struggling with the scourge.

Nigeria has witnessed an unprecedented level of insecurity occasioned by Boko Haram, banditry, kidnapping, Fulani-Herders-Farmers clashes, etc. These security threats have seriously jeopardized national security. For example, Boko Haram ("western education is sacrilege") in Nigeria abducted more than 200 schoolgirls and has driven tens of thousands of people from their homes into IDP

camps in the northeast as its capture and hold on territories. To ameliorate the incidence of insecurity in the country, the federal government has embarked on the criminalization of terrorism by passing the Anti-Terrorism Act in 2011, fundamental surveillance as well as investigation and prosecution of criminal offenders, heightening of physical security measures around the country aimed at deterring or disrupting potential attacks, strengthening of security agencies through the provision of security facilities (Duerksen, 2021; Ya'u Madobi, 2022). In addition, Nigeria has consistently ranked low in the Global Peace Index (GPI, 2012), signifying a worsened state of insecurity in the country. The insecurity in Nigeria has birthed an estimated 1.2 million IDPs (United Nations, 2022). Also, Ewepu (2021) reported that at least 1,603 persons lost their lives to mass atrocities across the country from January to March, 2021. This situation has remained unabated.

In order to combat the increasing wave of insecurity, the Nigerian government has also not relented in the fight against insecurity in the country. Adesina (2018) noted among other several efforts that in February, 2018, the Nigerian Army commenced Exercise 'Ayem Akpatuma' covering Benue, Taraba, Kogi, Nasarawa, Kaduna and Niger States, in order to tackle the causes of kidnappings, herdsmen/farmers' clashes, among others. In May 2018, then Inspector-General of Police Ibrahim Idris ordered the deployment of 200 policemen and 10 patrol vehicles to Birnin Gwari (Kaduna-Zamfara axis) to tackle armed banditry in the area. Over 68 Civil Society Organisations in their efforts to end insecurity in the country has called on the former President, Mohammadu Buhari to take immediate steps to provide political and moral leadership for the security crisis and ensure governmental actions are humane in tandem with Section 17 (2) (c) of the Constitution (Olumide, 2021).

Despite these security measures taken to address the daunting insecurity challenges, the society is still bedeviled with it. In Nigeria today, loss of lives and properties in the hands of insurgents are no longer news because we have lost count with the numbers of deaths. With the combined efforts of agitation for regional secession, religious extremism cum insurgency and herder/farmers clashes, the Nigeria society has been soaked with blood of defenseless civilians massacred in their homes. Unfortunately, the huge national budget committed to this menace in response to recommendations of many studies towards tackling state insecurity in Nigeria that include increment of defense allocation, regional and international assistance, the result has been disappointing. The case of Taraba State especially Southern Taraba is not different as there is continuous destruction of lives and properties without sustained efforts. This has therefore affected the socio-economic development of the area. Thus, this study is positioned to assessed insecurity as a catalyst to socio-economic development of Southern Taraba, Nigeria.

Conceptual discussion

Insecurity

Insecurity is conceived as "the absence of resistance to or protection from harm, peaceful co-existence and development at large" (Obarisiagbon & Akintoye, 2019, p.44). Accordingly, insecurity is simply understood as the opposite of security which tends to affect human life and existence. As a general term, it refers to a state of being subject to fear, threat, danger, molestation, intimidation, harassment, to mention but a few, in all aspects.

The word 'insecurity' has multitude of connotations. According to Ndubuisi-Okolo and Anigbuogu (2019), it signifies danger; hazard; uncertainty; lack of protection and lack of safety. The authors further define insecurity as the state of fear or anxiety stemming from a concrete or alleged lack of protection. Though Ndubuisi-Okolo and Anigbuogu (2019) efforts at conceptualizing insecurity are commendable, it is pertinent to note that even security personnel and/or gadgets that offer protection to lives, properties, and image/reputation also sometimes constitute security threat to the very lives and/or things that they are assigned to protect. A few examples of highly protected persons that were victims of their own protection suffice here. Jose Santos Guardiola, the then president of Honduras, Abdurashid Ali, then the president of Somalia, Laurent Kabila, then the president of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Indira Gandhi, then the Prime Minister of India. All these leaders were killed by their own bodyguards. This is a clear indication that insecurity is beyond the absence of concrete or alleged lack of protection as posited by the authors. Insecurity is refers to lack or inadequate freedom from danger. This implies that insecurity is an absence of peace, order and security. Ndubuisi-Okolo and Anigbuogu (2019) further perceived insecurity from two standpoints. Firstly, insecurity is the state of being open or subject to danger or threat of danger, where danger is the condition of being susceptible to harm or injury. Secondly, insecurity is the state of being exposed to risk or anxiety, where anxiety is a vague unpleasant emotion that is experienced in anticipation of some misfortune. As regards the first aspect of the conception of insecurity, the assassinations of the Presidents and Prime Minister outlined above shows that even the highly protected persons who are perceived as not being likely to be affected by insecurity or threat of it sometimes also fall victim of it. The attack on the convey of then the Governor of Benue State, Gorge Akume near Nasarawa-Eggon in Nasarawa State on 3rd March 2004 which claimed the lives of his friend and security guard as recollected by Ojeifo et al. (2004) further explains this. The then Police Public Relations Officer, Jimoh Moshood was quoted to have said that, a Nigerian Governor has about 221 policemen in his security detail (Obiejesi, 2018). This entails that governors are the most protected people in Nigeria. However, they are not inviolable to insecurity. Duru (2021) also recalled that Governor Samuel Ortom of Benue State was also attacked on Saturday, 20 March, 2021 in his farm at Tyo-Mu along Makurdi-Gboko road. The Governor's claim that he ran a distance of one and a half kilometer to escape the assailants further elucidate the inviolability of highly protected persons to

insecurity. The second aspect of the definition of insecurity however underscores a major point that majority of those affected by insecurity are not only uncertain or unaware of what would happen but they are also vulnerable to the threats and dangers when they occur. People engaged in business activity, either directly or indirectly, to satisfy unlimited human wants.

Socio-Economic Development

Socioeconomic development is the progressive reinforcement of a socioeconomic organization's quantitative and qualitative dimensions towards a higher level of efficiency, well-being, justice, and democracy at all levels.

Socio-economic development is the process of social and economic development in a society. Its purpose is to maintain the social and material well-being of the nation and its people with the aim of achieving the highest possible level of human development.

In the economics study of the public sector, economic and social development is the process by which the economic well-being and quality of life of a nation, region, local community, or an individual are improved according to targeted goals and objectives.

The term has been used frequently in the 20th and 21st centuries, but the concept has existed in the West for far longer. "Modernization", "Westernization", and especially "industrialization" are other terms often used while discussing economic development. Historically, economic development policies focused on industrialization and infrastructure; since the 1960s, it has increasingly focused on poverty reduction.

Whereas economic development is a policy intervention aiming to improve the well-being of people, economic growth is a phenomenon of market productivity and increases in GDP; economist Amartya Sen describes economic growth as but "one aspect of the process of economic development".

The precise definition of economic development has been contested: while economists in the 20th century viewed development primarily in terms of economic growth, sociologists instead emphasized broader processes of change and modernization.Development and urban studies scholar Karl Seidman summarizes economic development as "a process of creating and utilizing physical, human, financial, and social assets to generate improved and broadly shared economic well-being and quality of life for a community or region".Daphne Greenwood and Richard Holt distinguish economic development from economic growth on the basis that economic development is a "broadly based and sustainable increase in the overall standard of living for individuals within a community", and measures of growth such as per capita income do not necessarily correlate with improvements in quality of life.The United Nations Development Programme in 1997 defined development as increasing people‟s choices. Choices depend on the people in question and their nation. The UNDP indicates four chief factors in development, especially human development, which are empowerment, equity, productivity, and sustainability.

Mansell and Wehn state that economic development has been understood by non-practitioners since the World War II to involve economic growth, namely the increases in per capita income, and (if currently absent) the attainment of a standard of living equivalent to that of industrialized countries.Economic development can also be considered as a static theory that documents the state of an economy at a certain place. According to Schumpeter and Backhaus (2003), the changes in this equilibrium state documented in economic theory can only be caused by intervening factors coming from the outside

Methodology

This study adopted descriptive research design. This type of design that aims to obtain information to systematically describe insecurity and coping strategies among people in Southern Taraba. The study setting is Southern Taraba. It is one of the political divisions of Taraba State. The local government areas that constitute this zone are Donga, Ibi, Takum, Ussa and Wukari Local Government Areas. The choice of this setting is made out of the fact that it has been the predominant insecurity or crises prone area in Taraba State. The population of this study comprised of residents of Southern Taraba. According to population project as at 21st March, 2022 released by the National Population Commission (NPC), Southern Taraba has population figures of 1,071,500 people, distributed across the affected local government areas as follows: Donga = 209,400, Takum = 211,700, Ibi = 132,600, Ussa = 143,000 and Wukari =374,800 people. Thus, the sample of 400 respondents was determined using Taro Yamane formula for sample size determination (Yamane, 1967).

This study adopted cluster, purposive and simple random sampling techniques to select the desired number of respondents. Cluster sampling was used to group Southern Taraba along with the already existing local government areas such as Donga, Ibi, Takum, Ussa and Wukari Local Government Areas. Purposive sampling was used to select headquarters of the five (5) sampled local government areas such as Donga, Ibi, Takum, Lissam and Wukari. Simple random sampling was then used to select 80 respondents from each of the five (5) local government headquarters, thus bringing the number of sampled respondents to 400. Two methods of data collection such as the questionnaire and key informant interview were used in this study. Questionnaire was administered on community members, while Key informant interview was conducted with community leaders such as village head, woman leader, youth leader, students, farmers and lecturers. Data collected from the field was analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Theoretical Framework

The study has pitched-tent with Robert Park's conflict theory to explain socio-economic effects of insecurity in Southern Taraba. Park used the relationship between human beings and their environment (i.e. ecology) to explain development/change. He regarded this relationship as a struggle that results in a dynamic process such as conflict and accommodation. Human beings

continuously engage in a struggle for existence, with competition as a fundamental process. The struggle leads to what he called "a natural order". This refers to distribution of individuals and groups to different territories that provides interdependence. The competition results in ecological processes of dominance and succession. According to Ikwuba (2015), the competition is for social resources which lead to a particular sequence of social processes of competition, conflict, accommodation and assimilation. By this, she meant that, when people compete for existence, it leads to conflict (caused by dissatisfaction, unrest and social protests), efforts to accommodate the situation and absorb the conflict. This leads to social change and the social system consists of its ecological foundation upon which it's economic, political and moral orders are based.

Most areas in Nigeria and specifically Southern Taraba have been greatly affected by insecurity. People who originally are occupants of these areas have relocated to other places not to be continually endangered by these repeated occurrences of insecurity incidences. Most people now live in internally displaced persons camps spread across the area and others have move to a bit safer place either in rented apartments or given shelter with extended family relations. This act of insecurity as it has killed and displaced many people has affected the eco-system in terms of development or drastic change negatively. Insecurity in Southern Taraba has resulted to loss of lives and destruction of poverty, there is increase crime rate, which has further affected economic activities due to closure of national and local markets in the area. There is also general poverty, since the people cannot do anything meaningful to sustain them. Families have been dislodged and has affected family unity and progress, amongst other socio-economic consequences of insecurity in the area.

Data Presentation, Results and Discussion
Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency (N=348)	Percentage (%=100)
Gender	Female	119	34
	Male	229	66
Age category	18-30	161	46
	31-45	133	38
	46 and above	54	16
Marital status	Single	130	37
	Married	183	53
	Divorced/Separated	7	2
	Widow/Widower	28	8
Education	Non formal	27	8
	Primary	204	59
	Secondary	22	6
	Tertiary	95	27
Occupation	Farming	209	60
	Civil service	38	11

	Schooling	80	23
	Fishing	8	2
	Others	13	4
Income	100,000	241	69
	100,0,00- 500,000	77	22
	Above 500,000	30	9
Tribe	Jukun	149	43
	Tiv	37	11
	Kuteb	118	34
	Fulani/Hausa	19	5
	Others	25	7
Religion	Christianity	285	82
	Islam	43	12
	Traditional religion	7	2
	None	13	4

*Source: **Field Survey, 2023.***

The data in Table 1 shows the different socio-demographic characteristic of the respondents covered in the study. The respondents were drawn from five local government areas in Southern part of Taraba State. Males constituted 66% (229) of the respondents while females were 34% (119). This implies that men were more ready to discuss about insecurity issues and also adopt ways to cope in an event such situation arise. The age distribution of the respondents showed that the age range between 18-30 years constituted 46% (161), those from ages 31 to 45 were 38% (133), while 16% (54) had ages from 46 and above. This is an indication that youths are the custodian of their various communities especially defending it from external attacks and also by deploying ways to cope in the aftermath of insecurity. In terms of marital status, 53% (183) of respondents were married while single constituted 38% (130). Others were widow/widower and divorced/separated represented by 8% (28) and 2% (7) of the respondents respectively. This shows that married people have more responsibilities to carter for hence their resolve to avoid unnecessary movement or travels to cope amidst insecurity in the area.

Table 1 above shows that, 59% (204) of the respondents had primary education, 27% (95) had tertiary education, while 8% (28) had no formal education. This implies that the little level of literacy acquired by the people is of immense importance in terms of adopting a strategy to cope with insecurity. Farming was the dominant occupation among the respondents with 60% (209), 23% (80) were students, 11% (38) engaged in civil service, other occupations constituted 4% (13), while 2% (8) were fishermen. This signifies that crises or insecurity affects agriculture activities. In terms of income, majority (69%) of the respondents earned less than N100, 000 per annum followed by 22% who earned between N100, 000 and N500, 000 per annum. Most (43%) of the respondents were from Jukun tribe, 34% were Kuteb and 11% were Tiv. Many (82%) of the

respondents were Christians while 12% were Muslims. The more presence of Christians in the study shows their belief that God will intercede in crises situation through prayers which they adopt as a coping strategy.

Socio-economic Effects of Insecurity on the People of Southern Taraba

Table 1: Effects of insecurity suffered by people of Southern Taraba

Effects of insecurity	Frequency (N=348)	Percentage (%=100)
Loss of lives and destruction of property	340	98
Increase in crime rate	325	93.4
Decline in economic activities	321	92.2
Increased poverty	336	97
Closure of schools	157	45.1
Hunger and malnutrition	190	55
Family instability	212	61

Source: **Field Survey, 2023.**

Table 2 above presents a multiple-choice data on effects of insecurity suffered by people of Southern Taraba. Hierarchically, loss of lives and destruction of properties was ranked as the predominant security effect in the study area. This data was attested by 98% (340) of the respondents. It can be assumed from the above data that insecurity is a catalyst that aimed towards destruction of both lives and destruction. A critical observation of the situation of Southern Taraba proves that many lives and properties have been lost and a large number of citizens rendered homeless. Families have lost their loved ones. Many women have become widows. Children have become orphans with no hope of the future. This has implications for national development. Similarly, Obi (2015) observed that insecurity and terrorism has been a major challenge to the Nigerian government in time past and recent. The activities of the Islamic sect (Boko Haram) had led to loss of lives and property in the country especially in the Northern part of Nigeria. Some of these activities include bombing, suicide bomb attacks, sporadic shooting of unarmed and innocent citizens, burning of police stations, churches, kidnapping of school girls and women, etc.

According to 97% (336) of the respondents, they were in a penurious state due to the effects of insecurity in the study area. According to one of the key informants:

> …insecurity in the area has affected us in such a manner that we can't afford daily meal; it is difficult to feed ourselves, we no longer go to our farms as we used to, because we are afraid we will be killed by our opponents, it is very unsafe for us, atimes even in our homes we are attack, life has become generally challenging for us, it is from the farms that we make money to solve most of our problems, but it is difficult to do that at the moment, most of our children have stopped going to school because we can't afford their school tuition, we can't access good medical care, infact this situation has taken us far backward, we wonder when it will come to an end… (A Female Key Informant, Woman Leader, Takum LGA, Taraba State, 2023).

In another interview, a key informant noted:

> …in a state of conflicts, civilians are always at the receiving end; some (mostly children and the elderly) die because of malnutrition, the conflict or war situation does not warrant them to carry out any normal activity; they mostly can't look out for their daily bread, certainly because of fear of been attack, so life generally in this kind of situation is terrifying, you will see most of the children are out-of-school, there is no any serious business going on, most of the houses are been destroyed by the conflicts, the people are deserted, there is also inadequate provision of food because the people can't afford to risk their lives on the farms, you know in Taraba State generally, most of the people residing here are farmers… (A Male Key Informant, Youth Leader, Ibi LGA, Taraba State, 2023).

From the above results, it can be deduced that Taraba State, particularly Southern Taraba is one of the top crops producing states in North-East Nigeria. However, it suffices to state that, it is constrained to produce more food because of the ravaging insecurity situation in the area, just like its sister states within the geopolitical enclave and any other agricultural state that is faced with such similar situation. Whenever people are restrained of certain things, they do in order to survive, they become impoverished. This kind of condition affects most aspects of life, since the particular source of dependence is affected, they therefore rely on aids from government and private individuals and organisations, which cannot completely satisfy their wants. Thus, it is not a hyperbole to state that poverty most times arise from conflicts or war situations. That of Southern Taraba will be more devastating because it has not attained development; talk more of technologically advanced countries that have suffered the effects of conflicts or wars and were requesting for external supports in order not to be completely wiped out due to starvation. Boma (2021) opines that the issue of insecurity in Nigeria has invincible social sponsors like poverty and unemployment; these contributes to frustration and anger that can result to one taking to armed robbery, kidnapping or pitching tent with agitators calling for dissolution of the nation under the guise of revolutionaries thereby creating more panic in the society.

Increase in crime was recorded as another insecurity effect in the study area as stated by 93.4% (325) of the respondents. In affirmative, one of the key informants in an interview noted:

> …there is high wave of insecurity in Taraba State, but most especially in Southern Taraba where issue of ethnic clashes between different ethnic groups such as Jukun, Tiv, Kuteb, Fulani/Hausa, Ichen, Angas, Kanuri, Bassa Nge, amongst others are prominent. It is these ethnic differences that has given rise to most other crimes such as kidnapping, cultism, banditry, herders-farmers' clashes, undiscerning killings, unlawful road blockades, armed robbery, in fact, almost all other crimes that are prevalent and emerging in Southern Taraba is as a result of ethnic conflicts, which is mostly tied to land, political leadership and chieftaincy affairs… (A Male Key Informant, Lecturer with Federal University Wukari, Wukari, Taraba State, 2023).

The data indicates that decline in economic activities was affected by insecurity in the study area. This data was responded by 92.2% (321) of the respondents. From the above data it can be inferred

that there are no longer serious business activities going on in most local markets in Southern Taraba. This is because the farmers who are supposed to bring their produces to the market for sale and the buyers who travel from far and near to buy these products are terrified to attend these markets due to incidences of kidnapping and armed robbery in the area. This has reduced the revenue base of the local and state governments of Taraba State and farmers' profits as well. In a similar incidence, Obi (2015) investigated empirically the challenges of insecurity and terrorism on national development in Nigeria. Using ordinary least square method of analysis, the result showed that terrorism and insecurity impacts negatively on economic development.

According to the data, 61% (212) of the respondents indicated that insecurity in the area also affected family stability. One of the key informants while noting the catastrophe that befall his family during the Fulani-Jukun crisis in Ibi stated:

> …it happened that night that I lost five of my family members, we all slept and never knew something of that nature was ever going to happen to us in such a manner, suddenly we heard gunshots, and people started shouting, 'Fulani', 'Fulani'…, everybody ran for his safety, it was after we noticed tranquil that we returned home at about 5am, then we saw dead bodies, among which was five of my relatives, my father, my mother and three of my siblings were all shot dead. This has brought a lot of setbacks to our family because we depended on our parents who provided most of our needs of us, now we have to struggle to make earns meet… (A Male Key Informant, Farmer, Ibi LGA, Taraba State, 2023).

From the above data, it can be construed that insecurity disrupt family relations. Through family tie, certain progresses and development are achieved, that is to say when the family is bond together in unity and there is no such flareup of crises or conflicts, it can achieve a lot in common, but with situations of continuous conflicts, it will become unstable and as such the progress and development of the family will not be attainable. Apart from Southern Taraba where insecurity is famous, family instability is also common in most crises' prone zones such as North-East Nigeria, and communities within North-Central zone that are on borderlines. On a global scheme, the conflicts or war between Russia and Ukraine, and Israel and Palestine which both are ongoing have had their fair share of family instability. Thus, this act of insecurity disconnects family and disrupt the bond. The above finding is in agreement with Egbebo (2021) who in his paper on the impact of insecurity in Nigeria on families noted that the family which is the primary cell of every society has always provided safe haven for its members. The family makes it possible to form close bonds and emotional relationships amongst siblings and their parents. But when these members are emotionally and physically traumatised as a result of insecurity, the impact is tremendous. Life and properties are been lost, and members are rendered homeless.

Hunger and malnutrition were also identified by 55% (190) of the respondents as effect of insecurity in Southern Taraba. It can be inferred from the above data that hunger and malnutrition are a consequence of insecurity or conflicts. Whenever an area or a society is faced with crises, it become difficult for it to produce food to feed its populace and also involve in other developmental

projects. It mostly depends on donations from national and transnational donor agencies and in most cases these interventions are not adequate for the people. This result to solemn hunger and consequently malnutrition with generally children at the receiving end. There are reports all over the globe on hunger and malnutrition among children in war zones. In North-Eastern Nigeria for instance, the Boko Haram insurgency has caused deaths of many children who were not properly fed; they developed complications due to inadequate food intake and died thereafter. This finding agrees with Iacoella and Tirivayi (2020) who carried out a study on child nutrition during conflict and displacement, using evidence from areas affected by the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria. The study found out that displacement was associated with a 57% increase in the likelihood of acute malnutrition and the effects were notable among infants and in areas with a greater incidence of conflict. They concluded that conflict-induced displacement is associated with poor child nutritional status.

Another effect of insecurity experienced by people of Southern Taraba was closure of schools. This data was attested by 45.1% (157) of the respondents. In their separate interviews, one of the key informants stated:

> …since the start of the crises over chieftaincy stood in Takum, I have withdrawn all my children from school within Kuteb territory because of fear of being harmed or killed, I have enrolled them in Takum here where I feel security is a bit resolved at the moment… though, the school fee is higher than the former school, but the security of my children is what is important to me at the moment… (A Male Key Informant, Farmer, Takum LGA, Taraba State, 2023).

In a related statement, another key informant noted:

> …before the communal clashes between Tiv and Jukun deepens, both of our children were attending schools together, we even intermarry with each other, we share a lot of things in common, but at the hit of the clashes, the two ethnic groups have cutoff completely from each other, because in the course of these clashes, a lot of people on both divides were killed, houses were destroyed and burnt, farm produce harvested and even those yet to be harvested were destroyed, so that mutual relationship is no longer there, there is completely fear of the unforeseen, so community schools meant for each of the ethnic group are only attended by members of such ethnic group, some of the schools that have proximity with the other have been closed or destroyed, this is the situation we are facing… (A Male Key Informant, Village Head, Wukari LGA, Taraba State, 2023).

From the above data, it can be deduced that closure of schools due to heightened insecurity in Southern Taraba has brought untold hardship on the affected communities. This further signifies that the quality of education in the area has dropped to the minimum, which is a serious developmental consequence for Southern Taraba and by extension Taraba State and Nigeria at large. A society without full access to quality education is that which is likely to go into extinction. With this insecurity situation in the area unabated, there is every likelihood that it will be undeveloped except workable measurable are put in place without further delay to deter the

situation. That is to show the importance of education to the society. Societies with high rates of education completion have lower crime, better overall health and civic involvement. However, lack of access to education is considered the root of poverty. Not getting an education can leads to a cycle of poverty. However, access to education can mean getting out of that cycle. Sparvell (2022) while reporting the findings published by UNESCO on the importance of education to sustainable development cited a study conducted in Ethiopia. In the study, it was revealed that rural households where the head of the family had completed primary education were 16% less likely to be chronically poor. This means education reduces the chances of poverty being transmitted between generations, but children from poorer homes are four times more likely to be out of school than those who come from more affluent families and where insecurity is significantly apparent.

Conclusion

Based on the results and discussion, the study concludes that loss of lives and destruction of property, increased poverty, increase in crime rate, decline in economic activities, family instability, hunger and malnutrition and closure of schools were the socio-economic effects felt by the people of Southern Taraba as a result of incessant insecurity.

Recommendations

The study recommends as follows:

   i.   The Taraba State Emergency Management Agency should provide relief materials and shelter to those affected by crises resulting to extreme poverty and displacement from their ancestral homes.
   ii. Communities should organised themselves into vigilante groups in order to monitor unlawful activities in their respective areas. However, their operations should be supervised by the Police to check excesses.
   iii. The people are encouraged to report unscrupulous activities deprived of rancour to security agencies in order to curtail insecurity in Southern Taraba.

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