



The Implication of Coronavirus on Human and National Security in Nigeria

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Abstract

The reconceptualization of security at the end of the Cold War in the 1980s, expanding it to encompass human security and, indeed, health security, emerged as a result of multiple interconnected factors. These factors challenged the state-centric notion of conventional security to enable a broader, comprehensive concept of security to emerge. This was because the challenges posed by pandemics such as acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), Lassa fever, tuberculosis, Ebola, and, recently, coronavirus globally have been conceptualized as threats to human and national securities. This paper aims to highlight the negative implications of the coronavirus on human and national security in Nigeria, as well as its growing effects on economic, social, and diplomatic relationships among countries globally. The emergence of the coronavirus in 2019 in China once again moved health from the periphery to core status in the nation's foreign policy. It argues that the menace has expanded the frontier and paradigm of security to include humanitarian, environmental, economic, gender, health,



food securities, etc. It concludes that there is the need to rejig security architecture not only in Nigeria but globally to respond to the complexity and interrelatedness of both old and new security threats.

Keywords: Human Security, National Security, Coronavirus, Pandemic, Epidemic.

Introduction

The end of the Cold War and the increasing pace of globalization have given rise to fundamental changes in many of the paradigms employed in security studies. Among the various ideas, human security has been on the front burner globally. The United Nations has embraced it, and many nations have made it the focal point in their foreign policy formulations. Beginning in the 1990s, the concept of human security has begun to visibly influence and challenge global politics, institutions, and governance. Many nations have rejigged their security architecture to accommodate the wider horizon of security as it concerns human beings. Security is a human condition, and to view it in terms of securing the territories and their apparatus rather than the people whose security is at stake is not only odd but nonsensical (Hough, 2004).

As pointed out by Ullman (1983), security threats have drastically and over a relatively brief span degraded the quality of life of inhabitants of a state or community and also threatened significantly to narrow the range of policy choices available to a government of a state or to private, non-governmental entities (persons, groups, corporations) within the state. The realists rejected the expansion of the notion of security, fearing that unbundling the scope of security from the military operations posed a threat to the protection of lives. This hard stance by the realists was rejected by the proponents of comprehensive security, who questioned the usefulness of the military to damage the environment and cause the outbreak of deadly diseases or even serious economic threat (Walt, 1991).

Similarly, it is not clear how conventional security can help stop the spread of HIV/AIDS or epidemics such as polio or Lassa fever that are sweeping across Africa and other parts of the world. As noted by Baylis et al. (2002), a non-conventional threat



to security clearly exists, but it is difficult to discern how military formation, strategy, or even strategists can respond constructively to these issues.

The UNDP report on human security in 1994 argued that the scope of global security should be expanded to include threats in seven areas such as economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community, and political securities. Since then, human security has been receiving attention from key global development institutions, such as the World Bank, nations, and institutions. Tadjbakhsh (2007), however, traced the evolution of human security in international organizations, concluding that the concept has been manipulated and transformed considerably since 1994 to fit the interest of organizations and the people alike.

Alluding to the above, the Copenhagen School of Security embraced the concept of human security by arguing that rather than the state or sub-state groups, the referent object of security should be the people of which institutions or groups are comprised. This assertion by the school has widened the scope of security in two ways.

- i. They facilitated the consideration of non-military issues, even if they have no military dimension, as they represent ‘existential threats.
- ii. The approach also partially deepened the meaning of security by arguing that issues can be considered security matters even if they are not threatening states (national interest).

Unarguably, diseases have long been the biggest threat to all mankind, and despite the unrelenting advances in medical sciences, they are set to continue to be in the foreseeable future. The Black Death of the Fourteenth Century claimed more lives in five years than military conflict before or since, while the great influenza epidemic of 1918-20 killed far more than the great wars it closely followed. The plague of Justinian, which started in sixth-century Constantinople and then spread through the Mediterranean, was a classic “national security” issue. It precipitated the fall of the Byzantine Roman Empire. Disease is an enemy of humanity that can probably never entirely be defeated. Despite the advances in scientific and medical research, it has constituted not only a threat to national but also global security. The threat posed by diseases like HIV/AIDS, Ebola, polio, Lassa fever, and coronavirus is a serious



security challenge globally. This is evidenced in responses by the World Health Organization (WHO) and nations of the world (McNeil, 1989).

Historical Evolution of Pandemics

Pandemics have afflicted civilizations throughout history, with the earliest outbreak occurring in 430 BC, during the Peloponnesian War. Many of these pandemics have had significant impacts on human society, from killing a large percentage of the global population to causing humans to ponder larger questions about life. Below are some of the most momentous pandemics that altered the course of human history, including coronavirus, which was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) on 11th March, 2020.

The Plague of Justinian (541–750 AD)

The reign of Justinian I, the emperor of the Byzantine Empire in the sixth century, was disrupted by the outbreak of the bubonic plague. Now known as the Plague of Justinian. This epidemic is thought to have killed between 30 million and 50 million people, perhaps equal to as much as half of the world population at the time. This pandemic contributed to the collapse of the Great Roman Empire, thereby setting the tone for the beginning of the Dark Ages then (Rojen, 2007).

The Black Death (1347–1351)

Between 1347 and 1351, bubonic plague (a disease caused by bacterium and the inflammatory swelling of the lymph gland) spread throughout Europe, killing approximately 25 million. Following this pandemic, it took the European population 200 years to return to the level before 1347. It was projected to have killed greater numbers of Asians, especially Chinese, where it was thought to have originated. A notable result of this pandemic (Black Death) was the beginning of the decline of serfdom. As many died during the pandemic, the standard of living of those who survived the plague increased drastically. Workers had more job opportunities, and social mobility increased (Snowden, 2019).

Smallpox, 15th–17th Centuries

When the Europeans immigrated to the American continents in 1642, they went with a lot of diseases. One of these was smallpox, a contagious disease that killed around



30 percent of those infected. During the period, smallpox claimed the lives of approximately 20 million people, close to 90 percent of the population in the Americas. The pandemic helped the Europeans colonize and develop the newly vacated areas, thereby forever altering the histories of the Americas, their European conquerors, and the global economy. The exploitation of the wealth of the "New World" in the form of silver and gold from Latin America, for example, led to massive inflation within the far-flung Spanish Empire. This made the great economic thinker John Maynard Keynes write in 1930 that this massive inflation, or "price revolution," was a crucial turning point in the development of modern capitalism (Snowden, 2019).

Spanish Flu, or H1N1 (1918–1919)

The Spanish flu, also known as the Spanish influenza, was a pandemic that occurred during the First World War. It affected around 500 million people, or a third of the world population at that time. The pandemic was responsible for the killing of over 50 million people globally. At the time of its outbreak, the First World War was coming to an end, and the public health authorities had no protocol in place to deal with the pandemic. Years later, research into understanding how the pandemic happened and how it could have been prevented led to the improvement in public health. This in turn helped to lessen the impact of similar outbreaks of flu-like viruses afterward (Kilbourne, 2003).

HIV/AIDS (1981–Present)

The first known case of HIV/AIDS was reported in 1981, but the disease has continued to kill people till the present. Since 1981, over 75 million people have been infected with HIV, and approximately 32 million people have died from the disease. As a sexually transmitted disease for which there is no cure, HIV/AIDS is a persistent epidemic that continues to infect millions of people every year. Despite the lack of a cure for AIDS, antiretroviral therapy medications can control HIV and slow its progress drastically, allowing someone infected to live for a long time. The negative influence of HIV/AIDS on the global economy is still being studied, particularly in Africa. Africa has the largest percentage of HIV/AIDS cases in the world. Apart from sex, the other mode of transmission is through transfusion of contaminated blood, infected object and mother-to-child transmission. Some of the symptoms are high



fever, muscle pain, and diarrhea. This symptom weakens the immune system (United National Institutes of Health).

SARS (2002–2003)

SARS, or Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome, is an illness caused by one of the seven coronaviruses that can affect humans. Following its outbreak in 2003 in Guangdong, China, where it originated from, it became a global pandemic. It spread to over 26 countries, infecting over 8,000 people and killing over 774 of them. However, the SARS pandemic was limited due to intense public health responses by global health authorities. Measures to contain it include quarantining the affected area and isolating infected individuals. Scientists studying the new 2017 coronavirus have found that its genetic makeup is 86 percent identical to the SARS virus. SARS symptoms are dry cough, headache, and body pains and can be transmitted through droplets and discharge from sneezes and coughs.

Ebola (2014–2016)

Ebola is a pandemic in parts of Africa. It is a severe viral disease whose symptoms include fever, pain, and dehydration. The virus was detected in 1976 in Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo, producing 157 and 280 deaths, respectively. Bats are known to transmit the disease. The 2014 eruption, however, marked the largest outbreak of Ebola to date. It began in Guinea and spread to neighboring Sierra Leone. Nigeria and Senegal experienced cases transmitted during air travel and road travel, respectively. By 2016, when the World Health Organization (WHO) officially declared the end of the pandemic, there were at least 28,000 verified cases, and the number of deaths was put at more than 11,000. Meanwhile, there is no known cure for the Ebola virus to date (WHO Fact Sheet on Ebola).

Coronavirus or Covid-19 (2019 – Present)

The outbreak of the novel coronavirus has revealed vulnerabilities in the global community's response to the outbreak of viruses. The virus, which started in Wuhan, China, in December 2019, was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) on 11 March, 2020. As of January 2021, the World Health Organization (WHO) had declared the outbreak a pandemic on 11 March 2020. Confirmed cases



worldwide surpassed 95 million, with more than 2 million deaths (www.coronavirusjhu.edu). Like the SARS influenza, its symptoms are cold, cough, sneeze, and high fever, and the mode of transmission is through droplets discharged from sneezes, coughs, and fever. This is why it is recommended that everybody should wear a face mask and cough. Wash hands regularly, wear a face mask, and keep social distancing. Vaccines for the treatment of the virus are currently being regularly tested in the advanced medical laboratories globally, where they will be produced. With the second wave currently going on, which is more severe or dangerous than when it first started, government and medical researchers should redouble their effort to combat the spike in the virus.

Conceptual Clarifications

Human Security

Human security is an emerging paradigm for understanding global vulnerabilities. Proponents challenged the traditional notion of national security through the military by arguing that the proper referent for security should be human. Human security advocates a people-centered and multidisciplinary understanding of security, which involves a great deal of research in development studies, international relations and strategic studies, and human rights. The United Nations Development Reports of 1994 are arguably considered a milestone innovation in the field of human security. It argued that ensuring freedom from want and freedom from fear for all individuals globally is the best way to tackle global insecurity.

Meanwhile, the emergence of human security discourse was the product of a convergence of factors after the end of the Cold War. This concept challenged the state's conventional forces on security and enabled a broader, more comprehensive security to emerge. The end of the Cold War brought about an increasing number of internal violent conflicts in Africa, Asia, and Europe (the Balkans). This led to national and international security mechanisms struggling to address the post-Cold War security landscape, especially in Africa, where the emergence of complex new threats included diseases such as HIV/AIDS, polio, and Lassa fever, along with the challenges posed by climate change. It re-engineered a sense of commitment in international institutions, and states began to reorganize to address these problems in an integrated



way. The precursor to this idea was the United Nations Charter, the UN Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, and its associated covenants of 1966 and other conventions related to crimes such as genocide and the rights of particular groups (women, racial groups, and refugees) (Huntington, 1997).

Health Security

As a concept, health security encompasses activities and measures across sovereign boundaries that mitigate public health incidents to ensure the health of the populations. It is an evolving paradigm within the fields of international relations and security studies. Health security experts posit that it is the responsibility of the government to cater to the health and wellbeing of its populations. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), health security goes beyond “activities required to minimize the danger and impacts of acute public health events that endanger the collective health of the populations living across geographical regions and boundaries.” Health security activities are both proactive and reactive to minimize danger in public health in nations and the globe (www.who.net).

Pandemics, epidemics, and other health emergencies and weak systems not only cost lives but also pose some of the greatest risks to the global economy and national security. The 1918 Spanish Influenza and the security implication of major epidemics during and after World War II led to the establishment of the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1948 (Elbe, 2018). Not all health issues are considered security threats. Health security focuses on pandemics, epidemics, and the spread of infectious diseases. Infectious diseases are the most significant threat to public health. The emergence of new and reoccurring infectious diseases such as SARS and flu, or influenza, posed considerable threats to the global population. Diseases have the capacity to cause high levels of morbidity and mortality and societal fear and to disrupt and provoke economic shocks. (www.who.net).

National Security

National security has been defined as the ability of a state or states to cater for the protection and defense of its citizenry. Makinda (1998) sees security from the angle of comprehensiveness, a deviation from the realists’ concept of military defense in



national security. According to Imobigbe (1881), defense has to do with the sum total of military resources of a country. Security in this context is defined simply as freedom from danger or a relative form of aggression and unwarranted violation. To be secure depends on the strength of the country's defense system.

Another aspect of national security is internal/personnel security. Often times, it has been used interchangeably, as it covers the whole spectrum of freedom from danger, threat, and anxiety to that of sovereignty, which is the ability of a nation to protect its values from internal and external threats. Meanwhile, the concept of national security still remains ambiguous, having evolved from the narrow definitions that emphasized freedom from external, military threats and political coercion. Lippman (1943) maintained that "a nation has security when it does not have to sacrifice its legitimate interests to avoid war and is able, if challenged, to maintain them by war."

Perhaps the most comprehensive definition of national security is that of Paleri, who sees national security as a measurable state of the capability of a nation to overcome the multidimensional threats to the apparent well-being of its people and its survival as a nation at any given time by balancing all instruments of state policy through governance. This can also be extended to global security by variables external to it (Paleri, 2008).

The concept of national security was first developed in the United States after the Second World War. From the initial focus on the military might, it has touched a broad range of other evolving gamuts of non-military or economic security of a nation and the values espoused by the national security. Accordingly, to ensure a well-balanced national security, a nation needs to possess economic, human, health, and environmental securities, etc. Security threats involve not only conventional foes but also others such as terrorists, militants, pandemics and diseases, and national disasters.

Potential causes of national insecurity include actions by other states such as military or cyberattacks, violent non-state actors (e.g., terrorist attacks and organized criminal activities such as narcotic cartels), and also the effects of natural disasters (flooding and earthquakes). Systemic drivers of insecurity, which may be transnational, include climatic change, economic inequality and marginalization, political exclusion, and



militarization. These dimensions correlate closely with elements of national security, which are economic, energy, physical, human, environmental, food, health, and political securities (Ripsman and Paul, 2010).

Methodology

This paper adopts a narrative and descriptive approach to data analysis in order to examine the implications of the novel coronavirus for human and national security in Nigeria, as well as its expanding effects on economic, social, and diplomatic relations among countries. The study traces the origin and global spread of the disease, highlighting the controversies surrounding its management by major world powers and the position of the World Health Organization. Furthermore, the paper critically interrogates the concept of security and argues for its reconceptualization to incorporate human and health security dimensions, not only in Nigeria but globally. The analysis is based on secondary sources, including relevant reports, books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and credible online materials.

Theoretical Framework

This paper shall explore the implication of the novel coronavirus on human and national security in Nigeria using the theories of planned behavior and the protection motivation paradigm. The essence of these two theories is to understand the actions taken by individuals and governments to mitigate the devastating effects of the virus. This is particularly important given the lack of readily available vaccines and the need for additional measures to alleviate the impact of this deadly virus.

The Theory of Planned Behavior

The theory states that there are three core components that shape an individual's behaviors and intentions. These behaviors are attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. In turn, behavioral intention is assured to be the most proximal determinant of human social behavior. (Icek, 198). As an offshoot of the reasoned action theory, it means that if people evaluate a suggested behavior as positive (attitude) and if they think that they are significant and that people or others want them to perform the behavior (i.e., subjective norm), this results in a higher intention (motivation) and they are more likely to do so. A high correlation of attitudes and



subjective norms to behavioral intention, and subsequently to behavior, has been confirmed.

Protection Motivation Theory

This theory was originally developed to contain the threat of fear. The theory states that people protect themselves based on four factors:

- i. The perceived severity of a threatening event.
- ii. The perceived probability of the occurrence or vulnerability.
- iii. The efficacy of the recommended preventive behaviour.
- iv. The perceived self-efficacy.

The theory stems from both a threat appraisal and a coping appraisal. The threat appraisal evaluates the severity of the current situation, while the coping appraisal focuses on how individuals manage or respond to it (Rogers, 1975).

The combination of these theories addresses the psychological concern regarding the fear associated with the unknown, such as the coronavirus, and explores how this fear motivates individuals to implement measures to mitigate the severe impacts of the virus. Examples of this can be seen in people and governments coming up with such measures as face masks, social distancing, staying at home, lockdown, and even inhaling steam as prescribed by medical experts. These measures have gone a long way in mitigating the spread of the disease.

Military Security

Military security is the earliest traditional method of national security and is focused on the conventional aspect of security. This implies the capability of a nation to depend on itself and defend against or deter any external aggression. Military security implies the capability of a nation to enforce its political choices by the use of military force to defend the nation's territory.

Economic Security

Economic security refers to a nation's capacity to sustain and grow its economy in ways that support and reinforce other dimensions of national security. A country's economic strength largely determines its defense capability, as a stable and robust



economy provides the resources necessary for maintaining an effective security system. Consequently, nations with strong and vibrant economies, such as the United States, Russia, China, the United Kingdom, Britain, and many others, tend to possess well-developed security infrastructures. These countries have adopted strategic approaches to economic development by effectively harnessing domestic resources and strengthening internal markets. In contrast, developing nations such as Nigeria often struggle to implement similar strategies due to structural economic weaknesses, high unemployment rates, underemployment, and low wages (www.who.net).

Food Security

Food security is the measure of the availability of food, the quality of the food to enhance excellent health, and the people's ability to access it. According to the United Nations Committee on World Food Security, food security is defined as "the means through which all people at all times have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life. " The availability of food irrespective of class, gender, or region is what constitutes food security (www.fao.org).

Beyond the elements of national security mentioned above, there are the human, health, political, and environmental securities. Human security enhances all other forms of security, including conventional security, which aims to protect citizens within a specific geographical area. Ultimately, it is the people who constitute the population of every nation.

Pandemic and Epidemic

The word "pandemic" comes from the Greek word "pandemos," meaning "all the people or population." The word "pandemic," from its etymology, is used to mean a disease or diseases that affect all or nearly all the people. Following from the above, a pandemic can be defined as "an epidemic occurring worldwide, or over a very wide area, crossing international boundaries, and usually affecting a large number of people." Following from this, it can be deduced that pandemics occur mostly in temperate regions and have the capacity to cross international boundaries and affect a large number of people. On the other hand, an epidemic is an infectious disease that



spreads quickly to more people than would be expected in a locality. However, a pandemic affects more people and takes more lives than an epidemic (Dashi, 2011).

Threats to National Security and How Government Can Protect Its Citizens

Every nation faces threats, and these threats can be social, such as aggression from neighboring countries, infiltration from terrorist groups, or global economic trends that compromise the nation's welfare. Also, threats can be natural, such as hurricanes or vicious viral pandemics. The essence of national security is to identify these potential dangers and come up with the right responses. It is anything that threatens the physical well-being of the population or jeopardizes the stability of a nation's economy or institutions. National security threats can be further broken down into groups such as hostile government, terrorism, arms proliferation, cybercrime, and natural disasters and diseases. For the purpose of this paper, let's look at pandemic threats.

Pandemic Threats

The novel coronavirus pandemic is an example of a national and international threat to national security. While the disease affected the global community, countries, depending on their capacity, looked for ways to tackle it. The global health crisis caused by pandemics past and present demonstrates how diseases endanger not only the physical wellness of citizens but also the socio-economic structures of the society.

The pandemic has impacted almost every country in the world. In addition, it has caused deaths in the world and has also caused widespread social and economic havoc globally. Studies show that:

- i. The highly infectious nature of the disease has forced many businesses to close their doors, either temporarily or permanently. It has resulted in significant loss in revenue.
- ii. As businesses have closed or limited their services, they have laid off staff or reduced work hours. In Nigeria, for example, according to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), the unemployment rate rose from 23% in the third quarter of 2019 to 27% in the second quarter of 2020 due to the pandemic, and also underemployment was 29% in the period under review, higher than 20% in 2018.



When combined, 52% of the labor force were either without a job or working below their potentials.

- iii. The pandemic also impacted industries at disproportionate levels, e.g., the travel and hospitality industries.
- iv. The accumulative impact of loss of revenues and rising unemployment plunged many nations into a continuous fall in the stock market globally (N.B.S., 2020).

The emergence of the coronavirus pandemic is a reminder that disease is always a threat to national security. Some of the ways government can curtail the spread of the disease are:

- i. Train medical personnel and set up high-tech medical laboratories for research and innovations that can lead to the discovery of vaccines for its treatment.
- ii. More awareness of communication can also help in the areas of hand washing, social distancing, and wearing of face masks so as to stay safe from the virus.
- iii. Economic intervention: Government can also help in this direction by helping citizens and businesses with economic stimulus, palliatives, and food to those that are hard hit by the lockdown.
- iv. Emergency management: this is needed by the citizens to ensure public awareness.

A Brief History of Coronavirus

The novel coronavirus pandemic, also known as covid-19, was a pandemic caused by the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus (SARS-COV-2). It was first discovered in December 2019 in Wuhan, China. The World Health Organization declared the outbreak a public health emergency of international concern in January 2020 and a pandemic in March 2020. As of 19 January 2021, over 97,508,004 cases were confirmed globally, with more than 2,096,220 deaths (www.iafc.org).

According to Tyrrell and Bynoe (1996), human coronavirus was first discovered in 1965. This was found in a human embryo obtained from the respiratory tract of an adult with a common cold. In the 1960s, researchers found a group of similar human and animal viruses called coronavirus. Seven variants of coronavirus can affect humans. There is one that causes SARS, which emerged in southern China in 2002 and



quickly spread to 28 countries. It infected more than 8,000 people by July 2003, causing 774 deaths. A small outbreak in 2004 involved four more cases. This coronavirus causes fever, headache, and respiratory problems such as cough and shortness of breath. Another variant, the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), started in Saudi Arabia in 2012 and affected nearly 2,500 people in the Middle East. This virus is less contagious than SARS but is more deadly, killing 858. It has the same respiratory symptoms but can also cause kidney failure (Khan, 2005).

Background

Many early cases were attributed to the people who visited the human wholesale market in Wuhan, China. The virus that causes the new outbreak is known as severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The virus is closely related to the bat coronaviruses, pangolin coronaviruses, and SARS-2. Scientific consensus is that Covid-19 likely originated from a bat or a pangolin (www.who.int).

Coronavirus Pandemic by Country and Territory

According to the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, as of 19 January 2021, the total number of confirmed coronavirus cases worldwide had reached 97,508,004, with over 2,096,220 deaths reported across continents, as shown below:

Nigeria

Coronavirus cases in Nigeria as of 18 January, 2021, stood at 112,004. As of the same date, there were a total of 1,449 deaths, with 90,000 recoveries in total. Nigeria is the sixth-ranked country with registered cases in Africa (www.ncdc.ng.gov).

Africa: Over 3,263,605 cases, with 5 countries reporting most cases, these are South Africa with over 1,337,926, Morocco with over 459,671, Tunisia with over 181,885, Egypt with over 156,397, and Ethiopia with over 131,195. Africa has over 78,894 deaths.

Asia: Over 19,076,296 cases, with India being the most affected country. Asia has over 324,294 deaths.



America: Over 42,257,586 cases, with most reported cases in the United States of America has over 23,938,288 and Brazil over 8,511,770. America has over 969,992 deaths.

Europe: Over 29,927 cases, with the most reported countries being Russia (over 3,591,066), the United Kingdom (over 3,395,595), France (over 2,910,989), Italy (over 2,381,277), and Spain (over 2,336,461). Europe has over 562,325 deaths.

Oceania: Over 56,822 cases, with the most reported countries being Australia (over 28,708) and French Polynesia (over 17,635). Oceania has over 1,201 deaths (www.ecdc.europa.eu).

The Implication on Human and National Security

The effects of the coronavirus outbreak were highly visible on both human and national security across the globe, largely intensified by the forces of globalization. One of the most alarming aspects of the pandemic was the rapid mode of transmission of the virus. In response to growing national security concerns, many countries implemented preventive measures such as restrictions on movement within and across borders, as well as mandatory 14-day quarantine protocols. Some nations went further by imposing flight bans on selected countries in an effort to curb the spread of the virus.

Human and Nigeria's National Security

The outbreak, which started as a health threat, quickly metamorphosed into a security threat across the country, and this had a direct relationship with the economy and, to a large extent, national security. It is a known fact that whenever the economy of any nation suffers, there is a direct consequence on the security (especially human security). The monumental effects of coronavirus on Nigeria's national security were seen everywhere in the country. This was seen in business closures, whether in the public or private sector. This led to serious security challenges as terrorists, insurgents, bandits, and kidnappers were on the prowl since the government's or security agencies' attention had been distracted. Even the security operatives were victims of the disease.

In an effort to curtail the spread of the virus, the Nigerian government joined the global community to impose both local and international travel restrictions, social distancing, lockdown, and shutdown of businesses, including closing of schools and markets. All



these measures had some devastating effects on the country's national security as various forms of human security were threatened, thereby leading to poverty, unemployment, and deprivation. This affected food security, breeding hunger and lack of access to food. Health security was threatened by infectious diseases, inadequate health care or health facilities, and unsafe environments. National security goes beyond protection from physical harm. It implies protection through other means, such as vital economic and political interests.

There were also interstate travel restrictions, self-isolation, and the closure of schools, public places, and institutions, except medical and other essential service providers, thus leaving public and private businesses to their fate with attendant consequences. Even the medical and essential service providers were affected by the disease. The restrictions affected the economy as prices of goods kept surging while production was drastically reduced. As government attention was focused on curtailing the spread of the virus, insecurity worsened. People no longer see the reasons to live or what to live for. The doctrine of existentialism, which held sway after the First World War as a result of massive death occasioned by the Spanish influenza of 1918, was experienced globally due to the devastating effects of the disease.

At the regional and continental level, the pandemic created an atmosphere of panic, which resulted in a pandemonium in the socio-political and economic structure of states within the region (West Africa and Africa as a whole). West Africa and some regions in Africa are no strangers to deadly epidemics, having battled the Ebola outbreak in 2014.

The UNDP definition of human security has provided safety for people against diseases, hunger, oppression, and other chronic threats, as well as protection from sudden and harmful disruption in the pattern of human daily life. The emergence of the novel coronavirus reveals that humanity is in danger, and considering cross-border crimes that have been threatening peace and security in Nigeria and Africa, the world may never have peace unless there is comprehensive security. The spread of the deadly coronavirus pandemic added to the many forces that ECOWAS and the African Union (AU) reckoned with in their quest to ensure regional and continental peace.



Conclusion

The novel coronavirus pandemic posed serious challenges to human and national security in Nigeria and the world at large. Despite the fact that Africa was less hit by the pandemic compared to other parts of the world, Africa is not better off due to the dependent nature of its economy. To curb the impact of the disease, there should be the institutionalization of an early warning system in all parts of Nigeria and Africa. This early warning mechanism will serve as a proactive measure to help the citizens to be abreast of all the information concerning diseases. Governments should engage actively in science diplomacy in order to collaborate with local and global health agencies to fight the diseases. To succeed in this, the government should build more laboratories and select some of our universities as centers for training and research in science, technology, and innovation. Besides, countries should rejig their security architectures to accommodate human security in the face of devastating health threats like the coronavirus pandemic.

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