

Impact of Social Crises on Economic Development: Theoretical Evidence from Nigeria

**Saheed, Zakaree S.
Egwaikhide, C.I**

Department of Economics and Management Sciences
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Nigerian Defence Academy
Kaduna.

Abstract

Social crisis could be corruption, ethno-religious, war, genocide, or political, which effects are destruction of properties, waste of resources, and hence inefficient utilization of resources. Though Nigeria is blessed with abundant natural and human resources, however, the country has always been in one crisis or the other ranging from corruption, ethnic, and religious to political crises. This paper, therefore, examines the impact of these social crises on effective and efficient utilization of both its natural and human resources towards the development of its economy, using a descriptive analysis approach. Findings indicate that social crises in Nigeria, especially corruption and ethno-religious conflicts have been a clog on the wheels of economic growth and development in Nigeria. Based on these findings, some policy recommendations were offered, which include: the promotion of religion tolerance and peaceful coexistence of the citizens, and monitoring of the activities of its people through the establishment of committee of elders, to quickly intervene and nip in the bud any crisis before it degenerate to a major conflict. The government should employ the rule of engagement in deciding what the citizens want and take steps in meeting their needs, rather than deciding on its own what to provide for the people.

Key Words: Social, Crisis, Growth, Economy, Resources, Tolerance, Corruption and Efficient.

1.0 Introduction

At any moment in time, every society faces constraints imposed either by nature or by man. Some societies are handsomely endowed by nature with fertile land, water and other natural resources, while some received much from previous generations and others are left with over grazed, eroded land, cities leveled with water or polluted environment. The pace of economic growth and development of a country is determined, among other things, by the depth of resources endowment of the country, and proper harness and utilization of these resources. This tends to create disparity in terms of growth between an economy with surplus and the other with limited resources. In some economies, especially in Africa, resources are inefficiently utilized as a result of wastage, due to natural disaster or human factor.

Natural disaster may be the effect of a natural hazard like flood, tornado, hurricane, volcanic eruption, earthquake, or landslide which could lead to financial, environmental or human losses (Wikimedia, 2010). However, some wastage could also result from human factor in form of social crises like corruption, ethno-religious conflicts, war, genocide, political crisis, among others. Post colonial Nigeria is loaded with natural resources ranging from oil and gas, to large forest reserve to mention but a few. Natural resources are important aspects of a nation's power, and Nigeria has a vast amount of these resources, which can make her to be a major force in world affairs if properly explored and utilized.

Table 1. Country Resources in World Rank

Resources	Volume	Rank
Oil-proved reserves	35,880,000,000bbl	10
Natural gas reserve	5,015,000,000,000 cu.m	7
Oil-export	2,203,000bbl/day	9
Natural gas export	29,060,000,000 cu.m	9
Economic aid recipient	USD6,437,000,000	4

Data in table 1 above indicate that out of the 1,299 billion barrel of world oil proved reserve, Nigeria has about 35.88 billion barrel or about 2.7 percent of the world total oil proved reserves, and ranked tenth behind Saudi Arabia, Canada, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, UAE, Venezuela, Russia and Libya. Nigeria has about 2.9 percent of the world total natural gas proved reserves, which amount to 171 trillion cubic metres, and supplies about 3.5 percent of the 63.8 million barrels, and 1.4 percent of the 813.8 billion cubic metres of the world total oil exports and natural gas exports per day respectively.

Further more, Nigeria is ranked fourth in economic aid recipient in the 2008 country ranking, behind Iraq, Greece and Lebanon, with about 6 percent of the total USD106.4 million world total Economic Aid received by countries (Saheed and Alofun, 2010).

However, despite the abundant natural and human resources which could have served as a source of power for international relations, it remain characterized by poverty, corruption, conflicts, hopelessness and under development that have remained a constant even in a 21st century, experiencing huge technological advancements and globalization (NewsAfrica, 2008). Over the years, the case of Nigeria has become very instructive, Nigeria consistently gets mentioned on the wrong side of human development indicators of various international agencies. For instance, Nigeria is almost always ranked low in indexes such as primary enrolments, health cares, poverty reduction, capacity building, water and sanitation. Besides, it has always experienced one social crisis or the other.

Given the foregoing, this paper proposes to critically examine the impact of social crisis on effective utilization of Nigeria potential wealth towards attaining economic growth and development. To this end, the paper is organized into five sections. Following this introduction is section 2, which focuses on some of the social crises that hit Nigeria in recent time. Section 3 discusses the state of Nigerian economy. Section 4 analyses the effect of social crises on the economy, while section 5 summarizes the findings and proffers policy recommendations.

2.0 Sources Social Crises in Nigeria

A number of diverse factors can precipitate social crisis. The following reflects the most frequent sources of social crises in Nigeria.

2.1 Ethnic and Religious Crisis in Nigeria

Ethnicity refers to a social identity formation that rests upon culturally specific practices and a unique set of symbols and cosmology. A belief in common origins and broadly agreed common history provide an inheritance of symbols, heroes, events, values and hierarchies, and conform social identities of both insiders and outsiders (Adeyemi, 2006). Religion on the other hand, is a particular system of belief in and worship of a God or gods. Ethnic and religious intolerance can lead to conflicts which can negatively impact the growth of the economy.

Religious, ethnic and political unrest have triggered series of violence in Nigeria, resulting in lose of lives and properties, and threat to the unity of Nigeria. It is estimated that over hundred thousand Nigerians have lost their lives in ethno-religious crises that have engulfed the country since the enthronement of democracy in 1979. The number of those injured triples the dead, while those displaced are put at millions (Yusuf, 2009).

According to the United Nations Human right Commission (2008) as cited by Saheed and Alofun (2010), since 1999, more than 10,000 Nigerian have been killed in sectarian and communal attacks and reprisals between Muslims and Christians. The most serious of these clashes occurred in Kaduna State (February and May 2000, and November, 2001); Jos, Plateau State (September 2001); Kano State and Yelwa, Plateau State (February – May, 2004); and in Northern and Southeastern Nigeria, in the wake of the controversy over depiction of Prophet Muhammed in Danish press in February 2006, as shown in table 2.1

In the ethno-religious hostilities that broke out on May 1 and 2, 2004 in Shimkar and Yelwa in Plateau State, and spread to the neighbouring communities of Zomo, Dokar, and Lupidi, Laraba and Unguwar Adam, a total of 735 families including 1,543 displaced children lost their homes and took shelter in school compounds, while another 2,770 people took refuge in five camps in Bauchi States. Approximately 2,000 people were reportedly displaced in various parts of Plateau State, while another 8,000 displaced people took refuge in the remains of their burnt houses. 22 out of the 33 people hospitalized in Bauchi were confirmed dead. Between 10 – 12 May, 2004 in the Sharada area of Kano city, according to the Kano State branch of the Nigerian Red Cross Society, about 36 people

were killed and 598 injured, out of which about 500 carried bullet, machetes and arrow wounds. About 17,087 people were internally displaced (Information Bulletin, 2004).

In most of these crises the country suffers huge loses in both materials worth billions of Naira, and human resources. Able bodied workforce that could have contributed to the economic development of Nigeria are wasted in their prime ages, especially the Youth Corps members serving their father land.

Although some analysts are of the opinion that poverty, ignorance, injustice, politics, over zealous religious leaders and fanaticism are some of the factors responsible for the spate of civil disturbances in Nigeria, however, one can not rule out the fact that some of the recurrent political and religious conflicts in Nigeria are fuelled at certain quarters and individuals who benefits at the expense of the state and citizens. According to the Institute of Democracy and Electoral Assistance, cited by Adeyemi (2006), numerous actors have a stake in the promotion of ethno-religious conflicts because the associated arithmetic of numbers underpinning the conflicts translates into jobs, contracts, the creation of local governments and states, as well as representation in the National Assembly.

Table 2.1 Inter-Tribal and Religious Crises in Nigeria

Date	Events	No. of Victims
Sept. '01	Violent clashes between Muslim and Christians in Jos	3, 000 people dead
March '03	Fighting between Itsekiri and Ijaw ethnic group in Niger Delta	200 people killed
Feb. '06	4 days of sectarian violence across Nigeria, particularly in the cities of Onitsha, Maiduguri, Katsina and Bauchi.	150 people killed
July, '07	Violence between Sunni and Shi'a Muslims over the murder of a Sunni cleric in Sokoto	5 people killed
Dec. '07	3 churches burnt in the Northern State of Bauchi	10 people killed
Dec. '08	Violent clashes over disputed election result in Jos	400 people killed
July, '09	2 days battle with radical Islamist in Yobe and Bauchi	150 people killed
Sept. '09	Rioting in the Northern State of Kano	19 people killed
Oct. '10	Bomb blast at the Eagle square in Abuja, during the country's 50 th anniversary	19 people killed
April, '11	Bomb blast at the INEC office in Niger state	13 people killed
April, '11	Post election violence in Kaduna, Bauchi, and some states in the northern part of Nigeria.	9 National Youth Services Corp Members killed

Source: Culled from UNHCR websites, Mail & Guidance on line and Nigerian dailies.

According to Adeleye (2006), between the periods of 1999 – 2002, about forty ethno-religious clashes were recorded in various state of Nigeria. Among these crises are:

- I. May 30 – June 9, 1999: Renewed Warri communal clash in Delta State.
- II. July 18, 1999: Oodua People's Congress and Hausa traders clashed in Sagamu, Ogun State
- III. November 25, 1999: Communal clash in Lagos between Oodua People's Congress and Hausa traders.
- IV. January 25, 2000: Communal clash in Brass Local Government Area, Balyesa State.
- V. January 29-30, 2000: Communal clash in Etsako Local Government Area, Edo State.
- VI. February 2, 2000: Boundary dispute between communities in Akwa Ibom and Cross Rivers State.
- VII. March 16, 2000: Renewed hostilities between the people of Eleme and Okirika in Rivers State.
- VIII. April 8, 2000: Communal clash in Ovia South Local Government, Edo State.
- IX. May 18, 2000: Clash between local farmers and Fulani cattle rearers in Saki, Oyo State.
- X. June 5, 2000: Epoch of the Owo mayhem in Ondo State.
- XI. June 12, 2000: Communal clash between the people of Ikot Offiong and Oku-Iboku of Cross Rivers State.
- XII. July 1, 2000: Communal clash in Ikare Akoko, Ondo State.
- XIII. July 21, 2000: Renewed hostility between the Ijaws and Urhobos in Delta State.
- XIV. August 12, 2000: Communal clash in Bendel Local Government Area of Abia State.
- XV. October 16, 2000: Clash between Igbos and Hausa traders at Alaba Rago market, Lagos State.
- XVI. December 11, 2000: Renewed clashes between Ife and Modakeke in Osun State.
- XVII. March 13, 2001: Renewed communal clashes in Owo, Ondo State.

- XXVIII. May 12, 2001: Communal clash between Odimodu and Ogulagba communities in Delta State.
 XIX. July 12, 2001: Ethnic violence in Nasarawa State.
 XX. February 2, 2002: Oodua People's Congress and Hausa people clashed at Idi Araba, Lagos State.
 XXI. February 26, 2002: Communal clash between Apprapum and Osatura communities in Cross Rivers State.
 XXII. March 10, 2002: Ebira youths revolt on local government creation.
 XXIII. March 30 – April 2, 2002: All Peoples Party intra party clash in Ilorin, Kwara State.
 XXIV. August 31, 2002: Communal clash in Ado Ekiti.
 XXV. September 3, 2002: Renewed communal clashes in Owo, Ondo State.

2.2 Economic Sabotage Activities: Bunkering and Pipeline Vandalization.

The extraction of natural resources such as oil, gas and minerals provide significant revenues for the country, with which the government is expected to improve the lives of its citizens. However, the spate of human and materials losses resulting from illegal bunkering activities and vandalisation of oil and gas pipelines in Nigeria, has become unquantifiable. So many lives and properties have been lost due to the act of vandalism and scooping fuel which have led to fire outbreak in the Niger Delta areas and some Western states of Nigeria (Ephraim, 2010).

According to the report of the special committee on the review of petroleum product supply and distribution, there were seven cases of oil and gas pipeline vandalisation in 1995. It rose to 33 and 34 cases in 1996 and 1997 respectively. In 1998 and 1999, the cases of pipeline vandalism recorded were 57 and 497 respectively. Between the period of 2000 and 2010, a total of 16,083 pipelines breaks were recorded, out of which 398 pipelines breaks representing 2.4 percent were due to ruptures, while about 15, 685 breaks which translate to 97.5 percent of the total number of cases within the period, resulted from the activities of unpatriotic vandals (Bakindo, 2010).

At Ilashe in Oriade Local Council Development Area of Lagos state, the State Environmental and Special Offences Unit uncovered about one hundred (100) illegal oil wells, where illegal bunkers stored petroleum stolen from vandalized petroleum pipeline that passed through their community (Nigerian News Service, 2010).

Table 2.2 Recorded Pipeline Explosions and Vandalization in Nigeria

Date	Events	Victims
Oct. 1998	Pipeline explosion in Jesse, Delta State	1,000 people killed
March, 2000	Explosion in Osisioma LGA, Abia State	50 people killed
10 July, 2000	Pipeline explosion near town of Jesse Village	250 people killed
16 July, 2000	Explosion of rupture pipeline in Warri	100 people died
30 Nov. 2000	A leaking pipeline caught fire near fishing village of Ebute near Lagos	60 people died
June, 2001	Pipeline explosion at Atlas Cove takwa Bay	500 people killed
19 June, 2003	Explosion of a pipeline punctured by thieves in Umuahia, Abia State.	125 people died
17 Sept. 2004	A pipeline punctured by thieves exploded in Lagos state.	50 people died
21 Dec. 2005	Pipeline explosion in Ehor.	5 people died
12 May, 2006	Another oil pipeline punctured by thieves exploded in Lagos state.	150 people killed
26 Dec. 2006	A vandalized oil pipeline exploded in Lagos.	500 people killed

Source: Wikipedia, 2008; Ogbeifun, 2007.

2.3 Corruption

Scholars view corruption from different perceptions. For example, Voskanyan (2000) described corruption as including the use of public office for private gain, especially through bribery and theft of government financial resources.

According to Egwaikhide (2009), the phenomena called corruption manifests in Nigeria in various forms such as political corruption, electoral corruption, bureaucratic corruption, bribery, embezzlement, extortion, fraud, nepotism, favouritism, examination malpractice, impersonation, sex for favour, and other unwholly activities that are a clog on the wheels of economic growth and development.

Bribery has to do with payment in money or kind that is given or demanded in a corrupt relationship. It may also be in form of kickbacks accrueable to government officials when they use their positions and contacts to influence the award of government contracts to undeserved contractors through underhand dealings. In Nigeria, this type of corruption is referred to in the street parlance as *kola*, greasing of palms, dash, *egunje*, *salama*, and so on.

In the case of embezzlement of government funds, public official steals from the public institution in which he/she is employed. This type of corruption is rampant in Nigeria as public office holders consider public treasury as their personal till and make away with large sums of public funds for their private use.

Corruption has been persistent in Nigeria, especially among the public office holders who abuse their positions to enrich themselves and their cronies and this tends to negatively affect economic the pace of economic growth and development. A few high profile corruption cases in Nigeria involving 8 former governors, 4 former ministers and a political chieftain is shown in Table 2.3. In the most recent case of corruption involving a public office holder, an ex-minister was arranged with six companies on 23-count charges of criminal conspiracy, fraudulent award of contracts, money laundering and embezzlement amounting to N75.7 billion by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (The Nation, May 12, 2011).

Transparency International reports from 2002 – 2009 indicated that the corruption perception index which relates to the perception of the degree of corruption as seen by business people and country analysts, rated Nigeria as the second most corrupt country in the world in 2002, 2003 and 2004 with an index of just 1.6, 1.4 and 1.6 respectively. In 2009, Nigerian corruption perception index improved to 2.5 and ranked 113 (in order of least to the most corrupt) out of 180 countries surveyed, as shown in Table 2.4.

Table 2.3 Some High Profile Corruption Cases in Nigeria

Office	Trial Court	Cases Status	Suspect Status
8 former State governors and a Chief of Staff	Fed. High Court, Abuja, Lagos and Maitama	N59.8 billion	All granted bail
3 Former Ministers	FCT High Court, Maitama and Lagos	N6.15 billion	All granted bail
A political Chieftain	Fed. High Court, Lagos	N100 billion	All granted bail
Ex-minister and 6 companies	Fed. High Court, Abuja	N75.7 billion	Remanded, and later granted bail

Source: Culled from EFCC High Profile Cases.

Table 2.4 Worldwide Corruption Index and Ranking of Nigeria, 2002 – 2009

Year	Index (x/10)	Rank	No. of Countries
2002	1.4	101	102
2003	1.4	132	133
2004	1.6	144	145
2005	1.9	152	158
2006	2.2	142	163
2007	2.2	147	179
2008	2.7	121	180
2009	2.5	113	180

Source: culled from Transparency International various reports.

3.1 The State of Nigerian Economy and its Competitiveness Amidst Other Major Economies in Africa.

The Global Competitiveness Index report's competitiveness ranking (CGI), developed for the world economic Forum, is based on 12 pillars of competitiveness landscape in countries around the world at all stages of development. The pillars are institutions, infrastructures, macroeconomic environment, health and primary education, higher education and training, good market efficiency, labour market efficiency, financial market

development, technological readiness, market size, business sophistication, and innovation (World Economic Forum, 2011).

According to the GCI report (2011), Nigeria ranked the least among six (6) major economies in Africa, with a Global Competitiveness Index of just 3.38 behind Uganda (3.51), Ghana (3.56), Botswana (3.69), Egypt (4.00) and South Africa (4.32).

Table 3.1 Global Competitiveness Index of Major African Economies, 2003 – 2010

Year/Nation	Nigeria	Ghana	S. Africa	Botswana	Uganda	Egypt
2003	3.10	3.46	4.37	4.56	3.25	3.84
2004	3.16	3.78	4.53	4.30	3.41	3.88
2005	3.23	3.82	4.31	4.21	3.24	3.96
2006	3.45	NA	4.36	3.79	3.19	4.07
2007	3.69	NA	4.42	3.96	3.33	3.96
2008	3.81	3.62	4.41	4.25	3.35	3.98
2009	3.65	3.45	4.34	4.08	3.53	4.04
2010	3.38	3.56	4.32	3.69	3.51	4.00

Source: World Economic Forum reports

3.2 Human Development Index (HDI)

This section examines human development in Nigeria compare to other major economies in Africa, based on the United Nations Human Development Index (HDI). The HDI measures average achievements in a country in three (3) basic dimensions of human development:

- i. A long and healthy life, as measured by life expectancy at birth.
- ii. Knowledge, as measured by the adult literacy rate and the combined primary, secondary and tertiary gross enrolment ratio.
- iii. A decent standard of living, as measured by the Gross Domestic Product per Capita.

HDI is considered an excellent tool of measuring development, since it covers both economic and social factors. It can have a value of between zero and one. The nearer it is to one, the highest the level of human development.

Based on this, countries and regions are classified into 3 categories:

- a) Low Human Development < 0.499
- b) Medium Human Development = 0.500 to 0.799
- c) High Human Development > 0.800

Table 3.2.HDI Ranking, 2001-2010

Yr/Nation	Nigeria	Ghana	Togo	Equatorial Guinea	South Africa	Libya	Egypt
2001	0.463	0.567	0.501	0.664	0.684	0.783	0.648
2002	0.466	0.568	0.495	0.703	0.666	0.794	0.653
2003	0.453	0.520	0.512	NA	NA	NA	NA
2004	0.448	0.532	0.494	0.653	0.653	0.798	0.702
2005	0.470	0.553	0.512	0.642	0.674	0.818	0.708
2006	0.506	0.518	0.498	0.712	0.680	0.842	0.700
2007	0.511	0.526	0.499	0.719	0.683	0.847	0.703
2009	0.419	0.463	0.425	0.594	0.594	0.749	0.614
2010	0.423	0.467	0.428	0.538	0.597	0.755	0.620

Source: Culled from various UNHDI Reports

According to the United Nation Human Development Index, Nigeria is rated as a low human development country with an index of 0.419 in 2009 and 0.423 in 2010, behind a poor resource country like Togo with human development index of 0.425 and 0.428 in 2009 and 2010 respectively. Within the period of observation (i.e 2001

– 2010), Nigeria twice rose to the rank of medium human development economy with human development index of 0.506 and 0.511 in 2006 and 2007 respectively. By implication, Nigeria performance in terms of health, educational sector and standard of living of the citizens, fell below those of Togo, Ghana, Equatorial Guinea, South Africa, Egypt and Libya, who are not as rich as Nigeria in terms of natural resources.

4.0 Effect of Social Crises on Nigeria's Economy

One of the major implications of persistent conflicts is the insecurity of lives and properties which tends to hinders foreign economic relations to jumpstart the economy (Adeyemi, 2006).

Top in the list of social crises in Nigeria is the problem of corruption, which has negative impact on the economy. According to Tanzi (1995), the widespread of corruption in the investment budget will not only reduce the rate of return on new investment in the country, but will also affect the rate of returns coming into the government purse from its existing infrastructure. For example, due to the high level of corruption, returns from toll collections on major roads in Nigeria were nothing to write home about, not because of few road users, but the diversion of revenue to private pockets, which impeded the availability of funds for the maintainance of these roads. This forms part of the reasons why the toll gates were dismantled by Obasanjo's administration.

Corruption which manifests in form of bribery, big bureaucratic red tape, poor tax, and custom administration reduce not only domestic investment, but also foreign direct investment, which is very crucial in Nigeria's economic development.

Corruption often leads to capital flight, whereby money that could have been used for developmental purposes in the country are illegally transferred into foreign accounts. For instance, capital accumulated by corrupt leaders in Swiss banks and other foreign banks all over the world is a net loss to the country.

Other forms of social crises, like vandalization of infrastructure also negatively impact the economy, leading to great loses by the country. For instance, as a result of oil and gas pipeline vandalization, illegal bunkering and smuggling, the country lost about 397,000 metric tonnes or N10.102 billion worth of petroleum products in 2000, while in 2005, a total of 647,632 metric tonnes or N42,102 billion worth of petroleum products were lost. Between 1999 and 2009, the country has lost over USD10 billion due to pipeline vandalization (Bakindo, 2010).

The advent of illegal bunkering, pipeline vandalization and product theft has also massively impacted on the capacity of Nigeria's oil and gas sector to function optimally. For instance, as a result of incessant attack on the pipelines belonging to the Royal Dutch Shell between 2005 and 2006, the company was forced to shut down for several months, an estimate of 455,000 bpd of its oil production (Energy Information Administration, 2007). In 2002, the NNPC shut its crude pipeline from Escravous terminal to Warri (120,000 bpd) and Kaduna (110,000 bpd). The vandalization of Shell's pipeline in Andoni local government area of Rivers state also forced the company to slash its production by 170,000 bpd in 2006, while another attack on its Bonga deepwater oil field in 2008 also led to the stoppage of output from 200,000 bpd facilities (Shosanya, 2009).

In the same vein, the victims of ethno-religion conflicts are forced to abandon their economic activities to take refuge in refuges camp for a long period before they could find a new condusive place to settle. Moreover, during this period, most of them were denied the opportunity to engage in creative activities or to be optimally engaged in their normal economic activities.

Underutilization of facilities or under capacity production resulting from economic sabotage has forced the government to resort to importation of fuel to meet its energy need. Consequently, in 2001, the NNPC was said to have expended the sum of N91.6 billion on the importation of fuel. By implication, the foreign exchange that could have been used for the purchase of capital goods (equipments or machineries) that are needed for the development of other sectors of the economy are used for petroleum product imports.

Like the case of pipeline vandalization, public and private facilities are usually destroyed during conflicts. The cost of repair of destroyed facilities tends to reduce the amount of funds available to the government for other development purposes (Ogbeifun, 2007).

Social crises also take its tol on the enviroment. For example, vandalization of pipelines tends to worsen the problem of environment degradation and the pollution of waterways. Environmental problems are not confined to their sources. Water and air pollution, for instance, travels far and wide to impact on more than one region. Hence

oil spillages into waterways not only destroy the marine and aquatic lives of the immediate environment, but other regions too. More so, fire disaster caused by vandalization of pipelines, apart from the destruction of forest and farmlands, increases carbon dioxide accumulation in the atmosphere, which could intensify the level of global warming.

One of the keys to economic development of a nation is the quality of human resources. It represents the subject, the object and the process, in building a nation socially, politically and economically (Zainun, 2003). Nigeria is blessed, not only in terms of natural resources, but also human resources. However, crises in Nigeria not only result in material losses, but also human losses. For example, between 1999 and 2009, more than 2,550 people have reportedly died as a result of explosion from oil and gas pipeline vandalization (Shosanya, 2009), while more than 10,000 people have been killed in sectarian and communal attack in Nigeria (Saheed and Alofun, 2010).

As human resources is the engine of economic development, so also is the growth and development of educational sector crucial to human resources training and development, hence every nation is striving to provide the necessary amenities to enhance the standard of education of its citizens. However, the attainment of this vital objective could be hampered by incessant closure of schools and high institutions in conflict prone areas. Conflicts disrupt academic activities in the affected areas, while the education of students whose parents are forced to relocate are seriously affected. Resettlements in new environment may take a lot of time, while time is wasted searching for new schools for the students, which may negatively impact the academic performance of the students.

Overall, consequences of social crises, especially ethnically and religiously inspired violent clashes are threat to security of life and properties, domestic and foreign investments with continuous capital flight, and loss of confidence in the economy (Babangida, 2002). Eventually, this may lead to increase in the level of poverty in the country.

5.0 Conclusion and Policy Recommendation

It has been established that Nigeria is blessed with abundant natural and human resources. However, these resources are wasted through the destruction of lives and properties resulting from ethnic, religion and political crises, economic sabotages via the vandalisation of oil and gases pipelines which are the backbone of the economy. The ethno-religion crisis is made worse by the inability of the religious leaders to control their congregations when it comes to religious sentiment and other volatile issues regarding religion, and the fact that individuals at certain quarters conspire to fuel some of these conflicts for their benefits at the expense of the state. Above all, effective mechanisms that can prevent individuals from manipulating state power to amass wealth are lacking. All these factors have led to the inability of the government to bridge the gap between the abundant resources and what is available to the citizens, and thereby constitute hindrance to the growth and development of Nigerian economy.

In the light of the above, Nigerian government must establish an active conflict management unit, to help provide proper information, identification, interpretation and policy options, from which appropriate responses can be undertaken. This also involves training appropriate staff for these units.

Government should also be sensitive, fair and just in their decision and policies, it is wrong for government to be a conflict generator. Nor should government overheat the polity through hurried rehearsed and unthought-out policy because it suits the interest of a few peoples either in government or who have influence over government. Good governance entails catering for the interests of the majority while protecting the interests of the minority. Public office holders in Nigeria should take notice that leadership is not all about privileges to loot public treasury or push personal interest to the disadvantage of the public, but it is about responsibility, an obligation to demonstrate commitment, integrity, honesty and decency in handling the affairs of heterogeneous group which chose them as leaders.

There is need for the improvement of the economy and management of unemployment if we are to effectively manage social crises.

More so, religion leaders should be aware of their position in the society where they have a great influence over their congregation, and their words are sometimes like a policy to their followers, hence their influence should be

constructive rather than destructive by ensuring that their sermons embrace peaceful coexistence rather than provocative speeches.

This study argues that early warning does not exist yet in Nigeria and that there is need to put one in place. A early warning mechanism or system is not such until it has fed the system and appropriate responses elicited as a result of such warning.

Effort should be intensified by the government and religious/ethnic groups to effectively manage the ethnic and religion difference, and boost the positive potentials and harness the similarities among the various ethnic groups to ensure harmony and foster cooperation among them so as to achieve national integration.

Government should show serious commitment towards eradication of corruption, especially among public office holders, and as well check the activities of petrol smugglers and “black market” operators who encourages bunkering and vandalization of oil pipelines.

To improve human development in Nigeria, the government must pay more attention towards improving the health sector and education standard, since the two sectors have direct impact on the total productivity of the country. An increase in the total productivity will lead to improvement in Nigerian competitiveness globally.

References

- Adeyemi, L.O., (2006). *Ethno-Religious Conflicts and the Travails of National Integration in Nigeria's Fourth Republic*. DAWODU.COM
- Babangida, I.B. (2002). *Ethnic Nationalities and the Nigerian State: The Dynamic and Challenges of Governance in a Plural Nigeria*. Distinguish Annual Lecture, National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, Kuru, Nigeria.
- Barkindo, S. (2010). Daily Independent, February 2, 2010.
- CIA World Factbook, (2008a), *Oil-Proved Reserves (bbl) 2008 Country Ranks*.
(www.photius.com/rankings/economy)
- CIA World Factbook, (2008b). *Oil-Exports (Bbl/day) 2008 Country Ranks*. _____, (2008c). *Natural Gas-Proved Reserve (Cu.M) 2008 Country ranks*. www.photius.com, (2008d). *Natural Gas-Exports (Cu.M) 2008 Country ranks*. www.photius.com/ranking/economy/
- Economic & Financial Crimes Commission. (2008). *High Profile Cases*. EFCC-Highprofile cases.htm
- Egwaikhide, C.I. (2009). *Corruption in Nigeria: The Bone of Economic Growth and Development*. Nigerian Journal of Accounting and Finance, Vol 1, No.1.
- Energy Information Administration, (2007). *Oil and gas Pipelines in Nigeria*. OilGas Article.com
- Ephraim, A. (2010). *Illegal Mining, Pipeline Vandalism and Deaths in Nigeria*. Nigerian Village Square
- Information Bulletin, (2004). *Nigeria: Religious Unrest*. No.1/2004
- Laleye, D. (2010). *Pipeline Vandalism*. Nigerian News Service online
- Ogbeifun, L.B. (2007). *Effects of Petroleum Products Pipelines Vandalism On Society, Employee and Organisational Productivity: The Dilema of Downstream Operation in Nigeria*. www.louisbrownogbeifun.com
- Saheed, Z. and Alofun, G.O. (2010). *Nigeria, Five Decades of Sovereignty: Rich But Poor*. Proceedings of the Fifth International Conference on Development Studies, Vol. 5, No.1
- Shosanya, M. (2009). *The Pains and Loses of Pipeline Vandalism*. Daily Trust: The Online edition
- The Nations, (2011). *Court Remands Ex-Minister*. The Nations Newspaper, May 12, 2011
- Tanzi, V. (1995). *The Economic of Organized Crime*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Transparency International, (2002 – 2009). *World Corruption Perception Index Reports and Ranking of Countries*.
- UNHDP, (2001 – 2010). *United Nations Human Development Reports*. New York
- Voskanyan, F. (2000). *A Study of the Effects of Corruption on Economic and Political Development of Armenia*. Unpublished M.A. Essay, American University of Armenia.
- Wikipedia, (2009). *List of Pipeline Accidents*. In <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/pipeline> accidents.
- World Economic Forum, (2003 – 2010). *Global Competitiveness Reports*.
- Yusuf, U. (2009). *Ethno-Religious Crisis: The North and the Rest of Nigeria*. Vanguard, Aug.8, 2009.