Financial Capacity of South Sudan Security Agents in Controlling Banditry along Nimule-Juba Highway

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Abstract
The paper is extracted from a study that sought to examine the financial capacity of South Sudan security agents in controlling banditry along Nimule-Juba Highway. This study was informed by Resource-Based View theory. Both the quantitative and qualitative data was collected, analysed and then interpreted by the researcher and presented as research findings. The study found that a change in financial capacity of South Sudan security agents leads to significant change in control of banditry in South Sudan; the level of funding to the South Sudan Security agents was moderate and hence needs to be enhanced; the levels of remuneration in the South Sudan security agencies are inadequate. The study concluded that financial capacity of South Sudan security agents substantially contributed to control of banditry in South Sudan. Level of funding to the South Sudan Security agents has been moderate. The study recommends that the ministry of finance should ensure adequate budgetary allocation for South Sudan security agents. The government of South Sudan should also ensure that South Sudan security agents are adequately remunerated and their welfare enhanced.It is expected that the research findings will be useful in informing strategies for controlling banditry. The information generated may also be important to policy makers and other relevant stakeholders in Security Sector Reforms (SSR) and crime prevention programming.

Key Words*: Financial Capacity of South Sudan Security Agents, Budgetary allocation, Remuneration, Welfare and Controlling Banditry*

Introduction

Banditry are acts of robbery and violence in areas where the rule of law has broken down (Collins Advanced English Dictionary). In the contemporary world, it covers a range of organized criminal activities including marauding, thievery, gangsterism and extortion among other unconventional practices. Banditry often occurs in rural societies with a weak state, those undergoing social transformation or in the process of integration into a formal state (Blok, 1974). As the state attempts to integrate the rural area into its jurisdictions, law and institutions, it faces resistance from certain groups leading to tensions and conflicts (Blok, 1974). Banditry first emerged in Europe during the 17th and 18th century in form of vagabondism and vagrancy involving theft. This comprised of travelling from one place to another in search of better economic circumstances while committing theft, robbery and burglary in the process (Dean, 2004).

Societal changes of urbanization and modernization impacted on these patterns of crime while the criminal groups and itinerant gangs grew in sophistication (Shelley, 1981). In East and Central Europe, the transition from communism to democracy partly contributed to organized crime, corruption and violence (Siegel, 2006). In Russia, Poland, Bulgaria, Romania and Lithuania, mobile banditry was prevalent while in the Netherlands; organized gangs were driven by poverty, wars and social exclusion. Most itinerant gangs operated in border regions that allowed for smuggling while ethnicity played a role in their activities. Minority groups particularly moved between places to evade discrimination, repression and poverty in the absence of institutional protection (Siegel, 2014).

Around the globe, climate change and cyber-attacks have been identified as the leading threats to national security especially in Japan, the United States (US), Germany and the United Kingdom (UK) where there have been a number of high-profile attacks (Pew Research Center, 2018). In the UK, terrorism, cyber-attacks by hostile actors and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) pose a potential threat to security (Geoffrey, 2019). However, organized crime has been prevalent in modern Europe and the U.S. perpetrated through smuggling and trafficking activities. Caparini (2019) notes that in the Horn of Africa and across countries in the Sahel, organized crime has been characterized by smuggling and trafficking activities while Nigerian criminal groups include well-entrenched mafia-type networks. There is also the emerging cybercrime phenomenon and the existing loose networks connecting external and local groups dealing in contraband (Martinez-Gugerli, 2018).

Kenya and Nigeria have faced Islamic extremists that threatened the foundation of multiple nations including Cameroon, Chad, Niger, the Republic of Benin, Tanzania and Uganda (Dawson & Adeboje, 2018). Banditry incidents have been rampant in Turkana in northern Kenya due to availability of illegal firearms, remoteness, poor infrastructure, weak governance, small police presence and poverty (Mkutu & Wandera, 2013). In the mid-1980s and 1990s, highway robbery became the most lucrative form of crime in northern Cameroon. Bandits ambushed people in car-jackings and robberies along main roads particularly in Waza National Park leading to deaths of many Cameroonians (Pennaz, Ahmadou, Moritz & Scholte, 2018). It has been noted that organized crime emerges in states that have undergone armed conflict as armed groups take advantage of the weakened state and society which poses a risk for reoccurrence of conflict.

States have encountered challenges in dealing with the often rapid and complex organized crime due to limited resources and slow bureaucratic structures and legal regimes. Transboundary nature of the groups, corruption and absence of political will has also impeded efforts against organized crime (Wennmann, 2011). Weaker states, instability, rapid economic growth, demand for consumer goods and exploding populations have also bred opportunities for organized crime. Former combatants in societies emerging from conflict often become involved in organized crime due to poor demobilization, disarmament and reintegration. Failure to assist former combatants to gain livelihood skills and reintegrate to the civilian economy may contribute to crime (Caparini, 2019).

In "recent years, Africa has experienced political uprisings, civil wars, extremism and the battle for natural resources. However, large-scale political violence over control of the state or armed intra-state conflict has declined in frequency and intensity (Soest & De Juan, 2018). Apart from armed conflict, current insecurity is strongly driven by more low-level insurgency including urban riots and new threats to security namely terrorism and violent extremism. At the bottom of these threats are poverty, weak state institutions and weak governance (Soest & De Juan, 2018). Many countries that are engulfed in armed intra-state conflict today have previously experienced phases of instability and violence interrupted by short intervals of relative peace (Soest & De Juan, 2018)".

South "Sudan is one of the world's most fragile states and has been intermittently embroiled in fighting between government and different opposition forces (Glawion, De Vries & Mehler, 2018). In the rural areas of South Sudan, political leaders have manipulated local conflicts to mobilize armed herders for their political movements (Wild, Jok & Patel, 2018). Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M) and Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement-in-Opposition (SPLA/M-IO) leaders including President Salva Kiir and opposition leader Riek Machar have in the past coopted intercommunal violence between pastoralist communities to mobilize military support for their political agendas. The two-pastoralist informal armed groups, Nuer White Army and Dinka *titweng/gelweng* played the most significant role in the conflict since the Second Sudanese Civil War". The proliferation of these informal armed groups poses increasing challenges to security (Wild *et al*, 2018). This study therefore aimed at determining the financial capacity of South Sudan security agents in controlling banditry along Nimule-Juba Highway.

Statement of the Problem

Nimule-Juba highway is the gateway that connects South Sudan and East Africa and being the only tarmac road, trucks and passenger buses prefer to use it. But this road in particular has experienced worst ambushes and banditry attacks compared to other highways across South Sudan. Many lives and properties have been lost during those attacks and food supplies nearly stopped between 2014 and 2019. Banditry has also led to high cost of basic commodities due to lack of access from East Africa and displacements of large populations along the affected corridors. This is despite the presence of military escorts and outposts along the same highway.

As is the case often, insecurity increases income inequality, poverty, unequal distribution of financial resources and negatively impacts on development. The renewed outbreak of violence in Juba after the peace deal which led to the emergence of various armed militia groups and other non-state actors in form of militia groups could be partly to blame. Meanwhile the deaths and economic losses visited upon travelers on the Juba-Nimule highway and other victims in the surrounding areas continue to be ignored. Establishing the financial capacity of the government to prevent banditry attacks on the Nimule-Juba highway may prevent loss of lives and properties. But the financial capacity of the South Sudan security agencies to prevent the banditry attacks has been called to question. There are gaps in knowledge from the limited understanding, evidence and information on how financial capacity of security agents prevents banditry attacks. This study hence sought to bridge these gaps by examining the financial capacity of South Sudan security agents in controlling banditry along Nimule-Juba Highway.

Objective of the Study

The objective of the study was to examine the financial capacity of South Sudan security agents in controlling banditry along Nimule-Juba Highway.

Literature Review

Financial "capacity is an important instrumental activity of daily life that comprises those abilities needed for an individual independently to manage financial affairs in a manner consistent with personal self-interest and values. It generally encompasses specific capacities as testamentary capacity, contractual capacity, and donative capacity. Financial capacity of security agents is defined by budgetary allocation, remuneration and welfare for security agents (Ariel, Bland, & Sutherland, 2017). Across the world, the countries have allocated huge number of financial resources to security sector in an effort to keep the security agents motivated to control crimes. In the United Kingdom, Police forces' ability to provide an efficient and effective service is the defining test of their financial sustainability. The Department's role in ensuring that forces are financially sustainable is complex. Local accountability gives commissioners and chief constables greater control over spending decisions, but consequently, the Department has less oversight over forces' financial sustainability and how the funding it has provided is used (Seneviratne, 2004)".

The cumulative number of "resources devoted to security in Nigeria, remains largely opaque. Statutory allocations to defense, police, civil defense and paramilitary agencies, state security, office of National Security Adviser and for Security Votes in the states are enormous; yet, the security challenge in the nation persists (Abiodun, Asaolu, & Ndubuisi, 2020). This reality simply means that Nigeria is not getting value for the money it continues to invest in the defiance and security sector". According to Coats (2017), the Kenyan government is devoted to supporting the security agents in an effort to control crimes in the country. "National security is among the dockets that will be the biggest spenders in the 2021-2022 budget. The ministry has been allocated Sh294.5 billion, which will be used to support operations of the National Police Service, Defence and National Intelligence Service. Defense will get Sh119.8 billion, National Intelligence Service (NIS) will have Sh42.5 billion and Sh110.6 billion will be allocated to Policing and Prisons services. To enhance the war on crime, the Treasury Cabinet Secretary allocated Sh1.5 billion for the National Communication and Surveillance System and Sh335 million" that will be used to equip the national forensic laboratory based at the Directorate of Criminal Investigations headquarters (Kariuki, 2020).

According to Nunberg (2015), the Government of South Sudan's (GOSS) wage bill is currently too high partly due to the large allocation to security-related employment. The wage bill spending "depicts a 307% percentage increase from 2006 to 2013-14. However, average wages to public employees are low since the wage bill growth does not come from average remuneration increases but from employment growth. There was a 666% rise in government staffing between 2005 and 2014/15 which is largely due to security-related employment. This was through recruitment of armed groups into the armed forces (SPLA) and organised forces. The two groups have taken up over 50% of public agencies employment over the last decade (Nunberg, 2015). Further, GOSS approved budget for the financial year 2014/15 shows that 62% of salary spending is allocated to the armed and organised Forces". The current ratio of 450 police per 100,000 population is also high and unfavorable (Nunberg, 2015).

Rolandsen and Kindersley (2017) state that salary expenditures for the security agencies involved in security "may have been more than $600 million in 2011. This military and paramilitary spending is assumed to have been supplemented by off budget spending on major arms purchases, and by the personal security budgets of the leadership, in response to persistent intra-elite tensions and the continued military tensions with Sudan. President Kiir's own security budget funded the development of his new 'Presidential Guard', based on the Tiger Battalion that he had led in the early war period. The guard is supported by militias from his home region of Warrap, and trained by private international military contractors" (Rolandsen & Kindersley, 2017).

Theoretical Framework

The study was informed by Resource-Based View theory. The Resource-Based View (RBV) was postulated by Edith Penrose's work in 1959. The theory argues that an organization like police force need resources like physical capital resources, human capital resources and organizational capital resources to undertake its mandate (Barney 1991). "These resources are not homogeneous and are limited in mobility. An organization endeavors to translate the resources and capabilities to its strategic advantage as long as they are valuable, rare, and non-imitable and the organization is willing to exploit available opportunities. The Resource Based View emphasizes strategic choice, charging the firm's management with the important tasks of identifying, developing and deploying key resources to maximize returns (Barney, 2001)".

According to Rose, Abdullah and Ismad (2010), "certain types of resources owned and controlled by an organization have the potential and promise to generate competitive advantage and eventually superior firm performance. Organizational resources including all assets, capabilities, organizational processes, firm attributes, information, knowledge, etc. controlled by a firm can enable the firm to conceive and implement strategies that improve its efficiency and effectiveness. He says that all the resources that the firm has access to may not be strategically relevant but only some resources may lead it to implement strategies that reduce its effectiveness and efficiency (Barney, 1991)".

According "to Barney (1991) there are certain conditions that resources must present to enable the firm to sustain its competitive advantage: rareness, value, imperfect imitability and non-substitutability. The resources must have four attributes; they must be valuable, in the sense that the firm exploits opportunities and/or neutralizes threats in its environment; they must be rare among a firm's current and potential competition; they must be imperfectly imitable; and there cannot be strategically equivalent substitutes for this resource". This theory highlights why financial capacity of South Sudan security agents is important in controlling banditry along Nimule-Juba Highway.

Research Methodology

The "study used descriptive research design to study the phenomenon from a large number of cases in order to generalize the results to a larger population (Kothari, 2006)". This "study was conducted at the Ministry of defense and ministry of interior (SSNPS headquarters) in Juba, South Sudan and outposts along the Juba-Nimule highway. The unit of analysis for this study was the capacity of security agencies in South Sudan to

control banditry security threats. The units of observation are SSNPS and SSDF officers". The target population was 300 officials at Ministry of defense (Specifically SSDF) and 1500 officers at ministry of interior (SSNPS headquarters). The simplified formula by (Yamane, 1967) was used to calculate the sample size which was 283 including from ministry of defense (SSDF) and ministry of interior-south sudan national police service (SSNPS).

The "researcher used questionnaires to collect quantitative and qualitative data, thus facilitating the coverage of many respondents in a short period. The "researcher also used an interview guide to collect the more qualitative data from key informants. The collected quantitative "data from the completed questionnaires underwent editing to detect and correct errors and omissions. The data was then put in categories or classes through coding, then tabulated and counted. Descriptive statistical tools such as percentages and frequency distributions were used to analyze quantitative data which was presented in tabular form. The researcher organized and analyzes the data and use SPSS computer package to process the data. The collected qualitative data from the interview guides, was edited and cleaned up. The data was then put in categories, themes or patterns for coding purposes then analyzed by content analysis. The researcher was then interpreted both the quantitative and qualitative data and presents the research findings".

Research Findings and Discussions

The respondents were asked to indicate the level of funding to the South Sudan Security agents and the findings are shown in Table 1. Majority of the respondents indicated that level of funding to the South Sudan Security agents was moderate as shown by 63.9%, was high as shown by 16.3%, was low as shown by 12%, was very as shown by 6.7% and was very low as shown by 1%. This implies that level of funding to the South Sudan Security agents was moderate and hence needs to be enhanced.

Table 1: Level of Funding to the South Sudan Security Agents

	Frequency	Percent
Very Low	2	1.0
Low	25	12.0
Moderate	133	63.9
High	34	16.3
Very High	14	6.7
Total	**208**	**100**

Further, the respondents were asked to indicate whether levels of renumeration in the South Sudan security agencies are adequate and the findings are illustrated in Figure 1. The respondents indicated that the levels of renumeration in the South Sudan security agencies are not adequate as shown by 90% while 10% of the respondents indicated that the levels of renumeration in the South Sudan security agencies are adequate. This is an indication that whether levels of renumeration in the South Sudan security agencies are inadequate and hence the need to increase the renumeration of officers in the South Sudan security agencies.

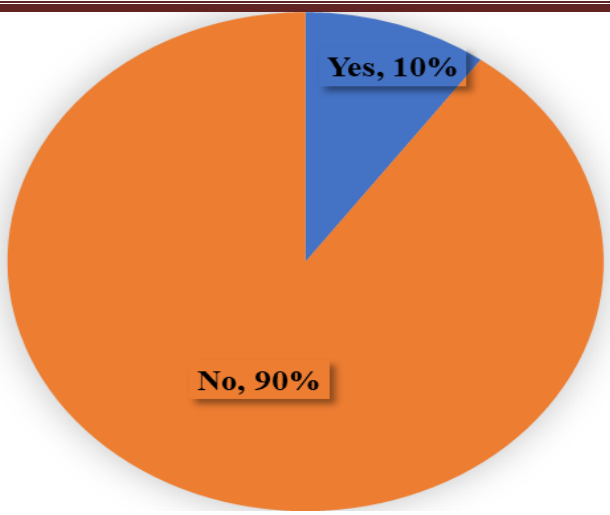

Figure 1: Whether Levels of Renumeration in the South Sudan Security Agencies Are Adequate

Further, the respondents were asked to rate the extent to which various aspects of financial capacity of South Sudan Security agents contribute in controlling Banditry using 1-5 Likert scale where 1 is not at all, 2 is very low, 3 is low, 4 is high and 5 is very high and the findings are shown in Table 2. From the findings, the respondents indicated that adequate budgetary allocation as shown by a mean of 4.481 and adequate remuneration and welfare as shown by a mean of 4.327 have contributed in controlling banditry to a high extent. In addition, the respondents indicated that regularization of remuneration for all forces as illustrated by a mean of 4.063 have contributed in controlling banditry to high extent while increasing transparency over military expenditure as illustrated by a mean of 2.918 have contributed in controlling banditry to a low extent. However, the respondents indicated that introduction of salary payment system linked to biometric data as illustrated by a mean of 2.466 have contributed in controlling banditry to a very low extent.

Table 2: Various Aspects of Financial Capacity of South Sudan Security Agents

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Increasing transparency over military expenditure	2.918	0.747
Regularization of remuneration for all forces	4.063	0.696
Introduction of salary payment system linked to biometric data	2.466	0.748
Adequate budgetary allocation	4.481	0.621
Adequate remuneration and welfare	4.327	0.708

From the interviews, the SSNPS and SSDF said that the importance of the financial capacity of South Sudan security agencies in controlling with banditry included ensuring provision of better remunerations for officers to keep them motivated and to ensure appropriate equipment's like guns are available for the officers controlling banditry. The findings corelate with Rolandsen and Kindersley (2017) who stated that salary expenditures for the security agencies involved in security "may have been more than $600 million in 2011. This military and paramilitary spending is assumed to have been supplemented by off budget spending on major arms purchases, and by the personal security budgets of the leadership, in response to persistent intra-elite tensions and the continued military tensions with Sudan". Burgis (2015) also noted that organized crime may also involve trade in illicit goods or trafficking people, prohibited drugs, weapons and kidnapping or extortion and looting of natural resources. In these conflict-affected environments, organized crime thrives due to weak investigation, enforcement of laws and control of borders, interruption of the legitimate economy and absence of economic opportunities.

Conclusions

The study concluded that financial capacity of South Sudan security agents substantially contributed to control of banditry in South Sudan. Level of funding to the South Sudan Security agents has been moderate. This have made the levels of renumeration in the South Sudan security agencies to be inadequate. Banditry can be highly controlled through adequate budgetary allocation and adequate remuneration and welfare, regularization of remuneration for all forces and also increasing transparency over military expenditure.

Recommendations

The study found that that financial capacity of South Sudan security agents significantly contributed in controlling of banditry in South Sudan. Therefore, the study recommends that the ministry of finance should ensure adequate budgetary allocation for South Sudan security agents. The government of South Sudan should also ensure that South Sudan security agents are adequately remunerated and their welfare enhanced. There is need to increase the salaries of the police officers to improve their living standards. This will keep them motivated to combat and deal with bandits along Nimule-Juba High Way.

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