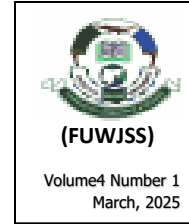


GOVERNANCE AND MEDIA ADVOCACY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY IN NIGERIA



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Abstract

The security of the environment is imperative for sustainable development. Security had gone beyond the protection of lives and properties but it also includes food security and environmental security which all living organisms depend for survival. Environmental insecurity is primarily caused by human activities that have constituted threats to the environment thereby causing food insecurity. This study therefore examines governance and media advocacy for environmental security. Data for the study emerged through secondary sources. Findings established that apart from local legislation on public health laws such as the Public Health Act of 1917, colonial administrators in Nigeria did not prioritize environmental protection rather they were preoccupied with their political and economic interests. The study concludes that the security of the environment is the security of health, food and lives; as the survival of all living organisms solely depends on environmental security. The study recommends good governance for environmental security through media advocacy. And that environmental security should be at the top list of government's agenda for sustainable development.

Keywords: Environmental security, food security, governance, media advocacy

Introduction

The environment is not just the surroundings in which man, animals or plants or living organisms depend upon, but it is also a reflection of our culture, values, beliefs, attitude, level of development and standard of living. We are the environment. Apparently, the concept of security in recent times has gone beyond the protection of lives and properties or the absence of violent or war or stability of a nation and the presence of peace but it now includes food security, health security, educational security, and environmental

security, which is the preservation of the environment and environmental sustainability (Ikeke, 2020).

The relationship between the concepts of the environment and security had been a subject of global discourse in recent decades. Scholars have traced the growth of environmental security to various factors namely: to the growth of environmental consciousness or environmentalism by individuals and international environmental organisations such as the World Wildlife Fund, Friends of the Earth, and Greenpeace which began in the 1960s (Barnett, 2009; Elisha, 2022), and also by international agenda by the end of the Cold War (Collins, 2006; Jonsson, 2009). The concept had been a central theme to measure the content of security among nations.

In Nigeria, during the colonial era, apart from local legislation on public health laws such as the Public Health Act of 1917, environmental security was not an issue of interest (Ogunba, 2016). Takang (2014) noted that environmental meetings were in fact meant to promote trade and enhance the economic growth of their countries. By extension, environmental interest was on the exploration of natural resources without security or protection and preservation of the environment.

Basically, environmental security in Nigeria is traceable to the dumping of toxic waste in 1987 by an Italian company in Koko, Delta State. The toxic waste disaster led to the establishment of Federal Environmental Protection Agency (FEPA) by Decree No.58 of 1988. However, in June 1999, the Federal Government of Nigeria created the Ministry of Environment and, as a result, FEPA's function was absorbed by the new ministry. The establishment of the Federal Ministry of Environment (FME), National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency (NESREA) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and other numerous environmental bodies in Nigeria, were to protect the environment. Public support for environmental security only became serious after the toxic waste incidence. One of the functions of government is to secure and protect the natural environment from harm in order to create a conducive environment for living. This is environmental governance.

Environmental governance as Ikeke (2020) noted, implies the management and use of the resources of nature for the good of humans like the provision of food. According to the United Nations Development Programme (1994), the purpose of environmental security is to protect people from both short and long-term damaging effects of nature, man-made threats on natural environment and deterioration of the ecology (UNDP 1994). Environmental governance is aimed at changing people's attitude and behaviour. This invariably needs the involvement of the mass media. The mass media are important for governance and environmental security. The mass media have always played significant roles in reporting about

governance and environmental issues especially in the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria and in herdsman and farmers clashes. Governance and the media are imperatives for environmental security. The concept of environmental security cannot come to public domain without the media. Media framing of governance for environmental security set the agenda for public discourse.

The many warnings about global warming and climate change are calls for the protection and preservation of the environment or better still environmental security. The media are needed to champion good governance and environmental security. This paper through review of relevant literature materials explores the imperative of media advocacy as channels for good governance and environmental security. This paper aimed at examining the significance of media advocacy for governance and environmental security in Nigeria.

Environmental Security in the Anthropocene Age

Insecurity is a common feature in Nigeria. The unprecedented insecurity situation in Nigeria ranges from militancy in the Niger Delta, to the activities of Fulani herdsman; terrorism by Boko Haram, arm bandits, armed robbery, kidnapping, political/religious crises, to electoral violence, and many others. On a daily basis conflict is reported in the media, and this had hampered sustainable environmental development (Ndubuisi-Okolo & Anigbuogu, 2019; Ikeke, 2020).

Potent threats to Nigerian national security were highlighted by Bala and Ouédraogo (2018) to include terrorism; transnational organized crimes; crude oil theft or illegal bunkering; climate change; communal and ethno-religious conflicts; pastoralists and farmers conflicts; politics and federalism in Nigeria. Others include poor governance; poverty; kidnapping, proliferations of small arms and light weapons; proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; illegal migration; economic challenges; financial crimes; information technology and cyber security; natural, man-made and medical related threats; and environmental security. These security threats as listed above are also potent threats to environmental development. Security problems affect the supplies of food and other resources generated from the environment.

Environmental security is an important part of governance in the society. Elisha (2022) sees environmental security as the state of protection of vital interests of the individual, society, natural environment from threats resulting from anthropogenic and natural impacts on the environment. To him, environmental security includes restoration of the environment damaged by military actions, and amelioration of resource scarcities, environmental degradation, and biological threats that could lead to social disorder and conflict. He further notes that environmental security

encompasses the mitigation and prevention of energy threats, those from nuclear contamination, threats to sources and supply lines, spent fuel, and waste; threats to energy resources; contamination of drinking water and underground water and waters in general, degradation of essential environmental resources; and these directly contribute to political and economic instability. All these are embedded in governance.

There are possible links between environmental change caused by human activities and the threats to security. This is why studies have showed that environmental challenges have implications for security (Obi, 2001; Alumona & Onwuanabile, 2019; Ikeke, 2020), just as violent security or war has implication for the environment. Obi (2001) believes that environmental security concerns itself with ending the threats and problems resulting from human unmanaged interactions with the natural environment. Elisha (2022) categorized environmental security into six interpretative nature. They were as he identifies:

The concept of environmental security therefore, attempts First, environmental security can be seen as being about the impacts of human activities on the environment. Second, environmental security can be seen to be about the impacts of the military-industrial complex, including war, on the environment. Third, environmental change can be seen as a security problem common to all states, therefore requiring collective action. Fourth, environmental change can be seen as a threat to national security. Fifth, environmental change has been identified as a possible cause of violent conflict. Sixth, environmental change can be seen as a risk to human security (p.21).

The last three factors point to environmental change. Environmental changes as Nwankwoala (2015) noted, have to do with changes caused by the variation in the occurrences of some climatic factors; rainfall, temperature, light wind: biotic factors; predators, parasites, soil micro-organism, pest and diseases: and edaphic factors; soil pH, soil texture, soil structure etc. when environmental changes occur as a result of the actions of man and other natural phenomena, lives and properties are adversely affected. Jonsson (2009) opined that environmental change could perhaps undermine national security. To him, environmental changes caused violent conflicts. This explains why environmental changes in the Niger-Delta region and the desertification in the north of Nigeria have for the past few decades resulted to militancy in the oil region and herdsmen attacks in the south. Environmental changes are, above all, driven by human greed.

Environmental challenges and changes forced Fulani herdsmen to migrate to the south in search greener pasture for the animals, which had led to severe clashes between herdsmen and farmers in various parts of Nigeria. Many farmers in the different parts of the south have their farmlands forceful

taken, while many others were kidnapped and killed, and women in their farmlands were raped by the herdsmen. Some farming communities especially in Benue state were burned to ashes. The herders' reasons for their grievances or eco-violence as noted by Ogbette, Attama, and Okoh (2018), were harassment in the host communities, cattle rustling, loss of lives, and denial of access to grazing fields and among others. Odigbo (2019) notes that the intensification and rising cases of the herders-farmers crisis raised issues of conspiracy, poor state attitude and the extent of state preparedness to providing security to the Nigerian people. The author noted poor state attitude in providing security to the Nigerian people. The situation over the years had turned political as some states in the country now had their local or state approved vigilante groups to protect the lives and properties of their people. For example, the Western Nigeria Security Network codenamed *Amotekun* (Leopard or Cheetah) was formed in February 9, 2020 by the south west governors and leaders to protect their people from herdsmen invasion or attack. Many efforts of the federal government of Nigeria to quell this situation are yet to yield the desired results. Pockets of attack on farmers and their farmlands, and houses are still reported in the media. This is why Alumona and Onwuanabile (2019) lament that despite efforts of government, environmental security had remained problematic.

It is clear that environmental scarcity caused by natural and human-induced disasters such as rain and sea floods, untreated industrial wastes, gully erosion in the eastern parts of Nigeria are common environmental occurrences. Also, droughts and unauthorised mining in the north, deforestation in the west and south, and other various environmental degradations in Nigeria are causing not only environmental problems but also environmental migration. For example, droughts leading to desertification in some northern parts of Nigeria forced Fulani herdsmen to migrate to the southern parts of Nigeria for green grass to feed their livestock. Olagunju (2015) noted that one-fifth of Nigeria's landmass is 'desertified'. As Alumona and Onwuanabile (2019) noted, the encroachment of desert on lands no doubt drastically reduces the available land for agriculture and other economic purposes. The reduction in agricultural lands invariably affects food productivity and availability, not just in the affected states but the entire country. Environmental scarcity seems to be counted as responsible for these internal conflicts.

There seems to be a strong link between the environment and security. Given that security is associated with threat or danger, it implies that the environment is under threat or danger. Khagram, Clark and Raad (2003) established that human security is tied to peoples' access to natural resources and to environmental change just as environmental change is directly and indirectly affected by human activities. Invariably, the provision of human

resources and development rests in the security of the environment. The impact of a harmful environment on human lives is closely connected between the environment and human security in the sense that, without a secured environment, human security remains an illusion (Alumona & Onwuanabile, 2019). Ikeke (2020) is of the view that environmental security is closely tied to governance, as environmental security cannot be separated from environmental governance. He based his reason on the fact that a government that does not protect the environment, and manages it in a sustainable manner to meet the needs of present and future generations; and for the wellbeing of the entire ecosystems is failing in a key duty of government. These scholars believe that the extent of internal security arrangement and management determines the extent of environmental security.

The insecurity in the Niger Delta region for instance was a result of the massive negligent of the region by various past governments and the oil multinational companies operating in the region. There have been several years of environmental degradation in the forms of oil spillage on farmlands and rivers, and gas flare, and the entire development of the oil rich region. The many years of negligent resulted to the insecurity situation in the region like destruction of oil facilities, oil theft, pipeline vandalisation and oil bunkering, kidnapping and youth militancy. Of all the problems created by the politics of oil exploitation and the distribution of oil wealth, none has threatened the stability of Nigerian economy as the phenomenon of youth militancy in the Niger Delta (Oshita,; Alumona, & Onuoha, 2019). On this note, bad governance on the parts of the governments could be counted as responsible for environmental security threat.

Environmental Governance and Food Security

Concerns about food security among nations and world leaders as well as international organizations including academic scholars have taken a central stage in global affairs. The concept of food security has been on for about fifty years (Peng & Berry 2019). In the 1970s, food security was seen in terms of availability and stability of the price of basic foodstuffs both at the international and national levels (National Research Council, 2006). Food security in the above definition was seen in terms of availability. However, food security had gone beyond availability but it also includes sustainability at all levels including the environment where food is derived from.

In recent times, food security has taken a multi-dimensional nature due to many socio-economic and political factors namely; climate change causing droughts especially in some parts of Africa, floods and other environmental problems, terrorisms, banditry, Fulani herdsmen and farmers

clashes, and centrally, bad governance. There is also the ethical and human rights dimension of food security as recognized by the UN Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. Right to food is a basic necessity of life. Food rights by the UN point to the availability of nutritional foods and freedom from hunger. However, these rights are not yet globally enjoyed; for instance, Nigeria is one of the food-deficit countries in sub-saharan Africa (Ojo & Adebayo 2012).

The understanding of the World Food Summit in Rome in 1996 on food security was that food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs preferences for an active and healthy life (World Food Summit, 1996). This definition is not widely accepted because it fails to include the dimensions that measured food security. The dimensions are accessibility and availability at all times Reutlinger, 1985 & Idachaba, 2004). Food security is also considered as a pathway from production to processing, distribution and consumption (Berry et al., 2015).

Parameters to measure that food is secured are availability of food; accessibility of households to food; utilization by individual of food; and sustainability or stability of food always (Peng & Berry 2019). Food insecurity, on the other hand, occurs when there are problems or obstructions at any point along the food security pathway or when there are problems from production level to consumption level. Food insecurity also represents lack of access to enough food (Adeoti, 1989). Food insecurity is measured by uncertainty about future food availability and access, insufficiency in the amount and kind of food required for a healthy lifestyle, or the need to use socially unacceptable ways to acquire food (National Research Council, 2006).

The emergence of food insecurity has a social and political construct. Social construct deals with people's or individuals belief system, attitude, behaviour and values towards the maintenance or protection of the environment for agricultural and health purposes where food is produced. The social construct is also derived from a socio-geographic angle, where Fulani herdsmen by their social way of living move from one geographical location to another in search of fresh pastures. These movements are forceful, as many farmlands and farmers in the north east and other regions in Nigeria have been killed and many farms destroyed. This had reduced the supply of food and hike the price of food items.

The political construct central on governance. The major causal factor responsible for food insecurity in Africa and in Nigeria in particular is bad governance. The lack of planned economy for natural disasters management, the uneven distribution of the commonwealth among geo-political boundaries or local states by the central government, and the weak and

corrupt central administrative system had led to the total collapse of the economy which has resulted to high rate of poverty.

Environmental Governance

The task of ensuring environmental security is the responsibility of the state (Alumona & Onwuanabile 2019), which is entrusted to the government. Governance is concerned with making good decisions for the interest of the general public or corporation and implementing the decisions. Izueke (2010) defines governance as the existence of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels. To Ogundiya (2010), governance is the process that is employed to achieve the noble end of the state. In one word, governance remains a state in action (Ogundiya, 2010). Governance, in the context of this paper, is the process of allocating resources, through the instrumentalities of the state for the attainment of public good (Akpoghiran & Okoro, 2015). Environmental security is common or public good.

While governance is associated with decision making for common good, environmental governance as defined by Osawe and Ojeifo (2016), is the socio-political aspect of making participatory decision over the use and management of natural resources. To them, environmental governance is concerned with the political and legal rights, regulations and responsibilities of every member of the society – civil society, private sector and the government. In other words, environmental governance is the process of making decision for the management of the environment for common good. The above authors believe that environmental governance is best implemented at the community-based level. Hence, they advocated for community-based environmental governance. To them, community-based environmental governance constitute different forms and levels of community participation in planning and implementation of decisions concerning the use and management of all forms resources, in both rural and urban environments such as the biodiversity, river system, dry land, coast, oceans and cities. This is because it involves value, norms, and cultural ideals from the community. To Lemos and Agrawa (2006), environmental governance refers to the set of regulatory processes, mechanisms and organisations through which political actors influence environmental actions and outcomes. Environmental concerns for governance at the community-based-level are land degradation/soil deterioration, floods, gully erosion, biodiversity, shortage of drinking water supply. Community participation in environmental governance is recommendable than the institutional framework of the state.

The nexus between environment and governance is a matter of common or public good. Matthai (2010) states that there is a deep link between the

environment and development, as true development can not be achieved outside healthy ecosystems. Ikeke (2020) notes that environmental security should be at the top on the agenda of government

Theoretical Framework

Adopted for this study is the Systemic Theory. Bad governance is largely responsible for a weak political central system in terms of the political will-power for environmental management and social provisions. When the central political system is weak, it affects the sub-systems. As a result of the weak central system, the sub-systems attempt to remedy its problems by migrating to the south for survival. The systemic theory best explains this point. For instance, it is expected that the central political system and the sub-systems are not only interdependence of each other but ensure that both mutually affect and shape each other in environmental inputs and outputs that could modify and shape the environment (Oshita & Ikelegbe, 2019). The strength of the central system over the sub-systems in environmental security lies in the proactive environmental agencies and workable environmental policies created by a responsible, responsive and reliable government. The central system is also responsible for informing, educating and promoting environmental consciousness, values, culture and the provision of environmental security in green pastures and afforestation. This is no doubt environmental governance. Failure of the central political system to do the needful to the sub-systems leads to frustration-aggression, a postulation which explains the wide difference between promise and performance (Akppghiran & Oghwie, 2019). Failure of promises by the central political system or power to provide food security, water security, health security, educational security, social security, and environmental security ignite aggression from members of the sub-systems. Conflict is used to address the failures of the central political system. In line with the above, some scholars posit that state's failures enable the emergence of ungoverned spaces that are conducive atmospheres for the proliferation of conflict (Lenshie et. al. 2020; & Nwozor, et. al.2021).

The failure of the central political system to provide and guarantee environmental security could be said to be one of the reasons for eco-violence, which emanates from environmental scarcity. Homer-Dixon (1999), who propounded environmental scarcity opined that eco-violence was the result of environmental scarcity. Eco-violence to Homer-Dixon, is how the environment affects security. He links environmental scarcity to conflict through what he terms as 'ingenuity gap' (De Soysa, 2002). Apparently the failure of the central political system required to overcome the effects of environmental scarcity. Homer-Dixon leveled eco-violence on the political opportunity structure. Political opportunity structure is a period

of struggle in the political environments that either impede or promote groups engaged in contentious politics (Tarrow, 1998). This description of political opportunity structure implies process that creates political opportunities. Homer-Dixon also postulated that environmental scarcity arose from nine physical trends of global change: human population growth, rising energy consumption, global warming, ozone depletion, cropland scarcity, freshwater depletion, decline of fish stocks, and biodiversity loss, these trends explained how scarcity induced violence. Invariably, eco-violence revolves largely around environmental degradation and environmental scarcity. All these point to the central system theory

It could be taken that eco-violence between herdsmen and farmers in different parts of Nigeria as well as youths militancy in the oil rich south were generated by the weak political structure of the central system.

Research Methodology

The study adopts the qualitative research method based on analytical review of literature. The data were drawn from relevant literature. This paper is exploratory and explanatory in nature as it adopts relevant literature on the subject with the aim of analyzing the relevant literature to achieve the aim of the study.

Media Advocacy, Governance for Environmental Security

Advocacy is social term that is associated with change, or call for change, a social change from something or attitude or practice not likeable or hazardous to a one that is good. While media are about public attention, advocacy deals with change. Then, to use the term 'media advocacy' for this study is to call for public attention to change as regards environmental security caused by environmental changes by human harmful activities and security problems. When harms are done to the environment by violent crisis including war and natural disasters caused by the activities of men, then we experienced food shortage, public health risk, environmental security and other socio-economic problems. The media draw public attentions to these socio-economic and ecological problems, and perhaps, make a public interest and debate from it, which somehow becomes media framing, a term that means news is what the media present as news.

News can be made 'hot' or of a national interest by the media depending on some factors namely (a) syntactical, (b) script, (c) thematic, and (d) rhetorical factors (Pan & Kosicki, 1993). Syntactical factors are the "headline, lead, episodes, background, and closure," which means sequential and stable arrangement of words or phrases into sentences. Script structure provides a description of events and activities in a consistent and stable way. Thematic factors in a story consist of a main theme, subthemes, and

supporting elements. Rhetorical factor is related to journalists' writing style, involving five framing devices such as metaphors, exemplars, catchphrases, depictions, and visual images. In other words, the manner of presentation and frequency of presentation constitute new framing. The way information is presented via news elements can influence the way people perceive the issue (Kim, & Cameron, 2011). News framing turns out to be media advocacy when the very news item interests the larger part of the public.

As a media concept that calls for social change since the late 1980s (Waibord, 2006), studies in media advocacy have largely been concerned with public health, public policy, electoral change, family planning, water development and social causes (Wallack, 1994; Dorfman & Krasnow, 2014; Fayoyin, 2014). Media advocacy had been adopted for community engagement for development (Eze, 2014). Studies on media advocacy have also been on child rights issues (Oyesomi; Oyero; & Okorie, 2014), participatory agriculture (Agba; Abang; & Ugor, 2017), climate change (Okaka & Nagasha, 2017). Dorfman and Krasnow (2014) argued that the target of media advocacy were policymakers to transform the social and natural environment of the target individuals. However, Gibson (2010) argues that media advocacy focused on behaviour not policy. Fayoyin (2014) says media advocacy is part of the broader health promotion and development communication programme intended to shape media coverage and ultimately affect the public agenda. He believes that media advocacy is generally recognised as a strategy to influence public debate by engaging with and putting pressure on the mass media to focus on specific social issues. Likewise, Eze (2014) believes that attitudes, beliefs, norms, and practices are also shaped by media advocacy. Invariably, media advocacy is aimed at changing public thoughts, opinion, perception and attitude towards a desired set objective or cause.

Governance for environmental security can be facilitated by media advocacy. Communication changes attitude and behaviour. Media advocacy is the centred link between governance or what is expected of government and environmental security. The media raise government attention to environmental security. Governance is a process that is concerned about the general wellbeing of the people. Governance has gone beyond the provision of infrastructures but also the provision of well-structured institutions and framework for sustainable development including environmental development. Environmental security should not be a matter of exigency factored by natural and human disasters but as a planned and predetermined programme by government using media advocacy approach to inform and impart environmental consciousness and values.

By regular environmental education or enlightenments, the media are building environmental consciousness and values, which is the starting point

of environmental security. The extent of our consciousness of the environment, the extent we value it. Value is contingent upon norms, beliefs and what is of utmost importance. Environmental consciousness, concern and value lead to environmental security. When individuals are conscious and concerned about the environment, security of the environment or natural resources are guaranteed. The onus of environmental security lies in environmental consciousness, concerns and values. The mass media could promote these environmental social concepts by advocating for environmental change. Environmental social change is all about bringing the needed or expected environmental values or behaviour that will promote and improve our health and environmental standard. Media advocacy on environmental security can help to change people's values and promote environmental values. The bottomline is Responsible Environmental Attitude (REA), which springs from environmental consciousness and values/.

The above discussion on the significance of the media for governance and environmental security calls for environmental advocacy. Environmental advocacy helps different groups and individuals to acquire awareness and be sensitive to environmental issues like environmental security; it helps to acquire a set of values and concern for the environment and the motivation for active participation in environmental improvement and protection programmes; and it enables people to assess government's environmental programmes especially those that affect their immediate environment, health, food, lives and business.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The security of the environment is the security of health, food and lives. The survival of all living organisms solely depends on environmental security. Natural disasters largely caused by human hazardous activities have constituted threats to the environment. Due to global environmental changes and insecurity, environmental security has become national and global concerns. In Nigeria, environmental security still needs deeper efforts by the state and federal governments. Insecurity of the environment leads to many related problems. Though the media are engaged in advocating for environmental security but more is needed. Governance for environmental security can be facilitated by media advocacy. Media advocacy helps different groups and individuals to acquire awareness and be sensitive to environmental issues. As part of environmental governance, government makes known environmental and economic policies, plans and programmes to the people through the mass media. The media in turn inform, educate and set the debate for discussion on environmental security. Government has the responsibility to provide security and protect the lives and properties as well

as to protect, preserve, and manage the environment. Environmental security is part of environmental governance. It is only when effective environmental governance is in place that environmental security can be secured. The paper calls for media advocacy for good governance, which brings about environmental security.

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