

## Intelligence Gathering and Policy Formulation for Addressing Security Threats in Nigeria

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### Abstract

Intelligence has been discussed by many scholars across the globe. But no doubt, there is no universal acceptable definition of intelligence. It is germane to explicate intelligence as the result of information that has been collated, evaluated and interpreted. More so, intelligence is the information that have been processed and originated to be truth and accurate about an object, subject, or group of people. Without accurate and timely intelligence there would not be a functional government or sustainable nationhood. This paper focuses on how government could improve on policy formulations through prompt and accurate intelligence from intelligence community (IC) to frustrate, submerge the activities of hostile intelligence service (HIS) cum local perpetrators of crime. The population of the study comprised of the Nigeria Intelligence Community (IC) which are Department of State Services (DSS), Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) and National Intelligence Agency (NIA). The sample technique adopted was purposive sampling considering the experiences and knowledge of the participants involved in the study, the data collection were both primary and secondary. The primary data was anchored on qualitative research method (in-depth interviews). While the secondary data was relied on textbooks, journals, theses, internet sources, et cetera. The study was affixed on triarchic theory of intelligence to explored the relationship between the policy makers and intelligence community to produce a better policy for the masses. The study comes to conclusion that timely and accurate intelligence must be gathered by the IC and promptly utilized by the PM to form a policy that will curtail any security threats. The study was conducted in Abuja being the Federal Capital Territory, epicentre of intelligence community and seat of power.

**Keywords:** Intelligence Community, Intelligence Gathering, Policy Formulation, Security Threats, Nigeria.

### Introduction

The menace of insecurity will continue to persist if the government fails to adopt timely and accurate intelligence to forestall the activities of hostile intelligence service (HIS), moles and local perpetrators of crime. It is pertinent to note that, intelligence and good policy

formulations have been great weapon of government to stabilize the nationhood (Adegoke, 2017). More so, there are various types of intelligence gathering such as human intelligence (HUMINT), signal intelligence (SIGINT), imagery and reconnaissance intelligence (IMINT), measurement and signature intelligence (MASINT), open-source intelligence (OSINT) and geospatial intelligence (GEOINT) (Lowenthal, 2004). More importantly, intelligence operation is divided into two which are covert and overt techniques (Ashaolu, 2017). The covert intelligence operation is gathered through clandestine methods such as infiltration and penetration, decoy, bugging, surreptitious access, eavesdropping, air imagery and many more. While the overt intelligence operation is collected from open source such as internet, books, scholarly journals, prisoner of war, refugee, media, casual source, witting and unwitting source et cetera (Bodunde, Ayefa & Balogun, 2018). It is factual to note that both covert and overt techniques of gathering intelligence are germane for government in formulation of good policy that will secure the state against any form of threats cause by man or natural made (Onuoha, 2018) . It is statutory duties of intelligence community (IC) to procure accurate and timely intelligence which the policymakers will make use of it for good policy formulations to aids all and sundry. The government in formulation of good policy will boost social-economic of state, enhance their political will, citizenry loyalty will increase, and the administration (authority) will win the heart and minds of the masses (Adegoke, 2017).

Siegel, 2006 posits that intelligence gathering is an irreplaceable asset which nationhood can be in possession and timely utilization of such. It aids government in taking rational decisions in both formulations of foreign and domestic policies (Barkindo, 2018). The intelligence community performs their core responsibilities in order to avert strategic surprise to provide long term proficiency, to support the policy process and to maintain the secrecy of information, needs and method. Doing this will definitely enhance good policy formulation by the government and hence, it will contribute immensely to the development of the state (Thurston, 2017). It is ascertaining that prompt and accurate intelligence and proper usage of such to formulate good policy by the government will enhance the social-economic of state and equally reduce crimes activities to certain level (Akinbi, 2015).

Figure 1.a



**Source:** Authors' 2024

*IC means Intelligence Community which comprises of Department of State Services, Defence Intelligence Agency and National Intelligence Agency. PM means Policymaker which includes The Executive and The Legislature.*

### Research Objectives

- i. To analyze the intelligence gathering play in shaping effective security policies in Nigeria.

- ii. To evaluate the institutional challenges within Nigeria's intelligence agencies, impact the formulation and implementation of security policies aimed at countering insecurity.
- iii. To explore prompt intelligence gathering to curb menace in the Nigerian State.

**Research Questions**

- i. What role does intelligence gathering play in shaping effective security policies in Nigeria?
- ii. How do institutional challenges within Nigeria's intelligence agencies impact the formulation and implementation of security policies aimed at countering insecurity?
- iii. How can prompt intelligence gathering be adopted to curb menace in the Nigerian State?

**Examining the Relationship between Policy Makers (PM) and Intelligence Community (IC) to Produce Actionable Intelligence**

It is pertinent to note the synergy between the policymakers and intelligence community. The duo are two sides of a coin which cannot be separated, the outcome of a policy depends on the end result disseminated by the intelligence community. More so, there are some salient factors and concerns required by the PM from the IC these are substantive and bureaucratic supports (Lowenthal, 2014). The PM will be keen to gathered aids and uncompromised supports from the IC. No doubt, getting this support will enhance their performance and in policy formulation to the masses. The PM as an authority will equally really on the reliable information cum intelligence on new developments and on matter which remains ambiguous to them. Getting reliable, accurate and timely intelligence will go a long way in aiding their policy. The PM will be willing to know and have intelligence on edge regards the policy deliberations (Onuoha, 2014). On the other part, the IC must think outside the box in gathering and keeping abreast timely and accurate intelligence that will assist the PM in good governance and policy formulation which is the bedrock of a good nationhood.

However, it is crucial to note that most of the PM failed to make efficient and proper use of competences of the IC, depend on analysts to think up the questions they should want to answer. Rather, the PM should rely on valued and laborious press, academic publications think tank are very useful tools for them to follow the contemporary state of piece and build broad knowledge (Siegel, 2006). The IC must always be proactive and intelligence driven in their dealings with PM. This will enhance good working relationship and it will build trust and timely response between the duo. The IC must equally do their best to forestall PM needs and modify their products consequently. The IC must fill the gap in discharging their statutory duties to the PM. On this premise, the 'Healthy Habits' of proper intelligence consumption into the PM routine is very important. It is expected by the PM to redirected on the strategic, understanding the intelligence analyst, deep dives on specific issues, loop

analysts (sharing your unique insights and experience as a PM with analysts) (Thurston, 2017).

Agbibo (2018) posits that the relationship between the IC and PM must be interdependent one in which a lapses or failure on one part will result on failure on the entire system. It is germane to note that poor intelligence gathering will amounted to a failed policy decision by the PM. In some instance, the PM swing in their responsibility due to lack of political will and politically motivated. Sometime they may ignore accurate and timely intelligence given to them by the IC due to the above-mentioned factors. So therefore, it must be view that true failure is not of poor intelligence gathered but the PM biased, bureaucratic, structure and information processing faults et cetera.

Akinbi (2015) suggests that intelligence is the output or an end product of processed information that are use timely and collated. On this premise, intelligence works best in two ways which are 'analytically' and 'operationally'. The existence of intelligence agencies is to avoid strategic surprise from any quarters either from internal or external perpetrators of nefarious crimes against the state, to avail long time expertise, maintain the secrecy of information, needs and methods. When the IC are up and doing in their core responsibilities the PM no doubt, will be able to come out will good policy formulations that will assist all and sundry (Lowenthal, 2014).

#### **Policy versus Intelligence: The two side of a coin that are inseparable**

According to Adegoke (2017) the difference between the 'policy' and the 'intelligence' in a democratic state. These two words determine the security architecture cum safety of the citizenry. The policy is the end product from the policymakers and government while intelligence is the end product of raw information that has been be collated, evaluated, and interpreted. The outcomes of both policy and intelligence are determining factors to the well-being, social-economic, emotional stability of the entire populace in the state. No doubt, any lapses in the policy and intelligence will have adversely effect on the governance, economy and well-being of the populace. Ashaolu, 2017 submits that most sub-Saharan states are confronting with one or both of these issues. Inadequate and untimely intelligence will give rise to bad policy outcome while in some instance actionable and accurate intelligence may be disseminated to the government but because of lack of political will they will ignore or refuse to metamorphose the intelligence to good policy.

Usman & Salihu, 2018 posits that government functions such as providing housing, transportation, good health care, defence, diplomacy, agriculture et cetera needs accurate and timely intelligence on them for the state to survive and perform effectively. Intelligence is difference from policy 'government functions' but the two words goes concurrently. It is a general assertion that good intelligence if properly utilizes will resulted in good policy. Intelligence should be x-ray in a holistic view by identifying some factors of it. More importantly, intelligence is secret and it should be treated as such (Onuoha, 2018). The government needs to keep secrets some vital information from other governments and equally, the government officials must be subjected to oath of secrecy and oath of

allegiance; no doubt, this will curtail the unnecessary breach of secrecy by them. Intelligence is based on the nature of secrecy. More so, this same secrecy can be a source of bewilderment amongst the government officials and the intelligence officers. Notwithstanding, it is apt to note that "All intelligence is information but not all information is intelligence" (Onapajo, 2018).

In addition, the only strong distinction between the policy and intelligence is 'secrecy' which is the hall mark of nationhood stability. Secrecy does not transform uniqueness in intelligence but rather is bedrock of it. Intelligence is the end product of information after undergoes three closely items such as collation, evaluation and interpretation (Mosandi, 2019). National intelligence has three subsets which are foreign, domestic and homeland security, gathering intelligence on these depends on the policymakers to assign or saddled the relevant agencies to gathered the intelligence. Adegoke, 2017 postulates that the National Intelligence Agency are saddled with procurement of foreign intelligence, while the Department of State Services are charged with gathering of domestic intelligence and the Defence Intelligence Agency are responsible for acquiring of both domestic cum foreign intelligence but strictly on military matters. All through the globe, it is a general assertion that the PM must charge the IC on the need to procure timely, accurate and reliable intelligence of both domestic and foreign for them to survive. Without formidable and proactive IC there is no government of PM will survive in governance, formulating foreign policy, and so on (Bodunde, et al., 2018).

### **Literature Review**

Lowenthal (2014) suggests that intelligence gathering must be secretive and yet it must not be compromise by intelligence community in discharging their statutory responsibilities. Onuoha (2018) corroborate Lowenthal that, despite intelligence must be kept secret, the right channel of transforming information to intelligence must be strictly follow using the necessary avenue such as direction, collection, processing, analyzing, dissemination and feedback. During this will enhance the professionalism of the intelligence community in producing accurate and timely intelligence to the policy makers in formulating good policy that will assist all and sundry (Mosandi, 2019). For the purpose of clarity and further explanations on this study, the researcher seeks out relevant literature describing bias as relates to the policymaking procedure.

The literature explaining bias in the intelligence gathering and the literature describing to the organizational structure of the Nigerian state. Literature regarding the many different dispositions and their possessions on decision-making thrives several studies have been shown and articles dispatched about the psychology of the policymakers and how their decisions are made (Odomovo, 2017). More so, several studies have been directed and articles inscribed adopting the tribulations of bias and how to curtail such in the intelligence community. This made intelligence gathering and material rather easy and even to a point, imperious in that so much of it is present. Where the research gap is identified, however, there is need to espouse the two communities together that is IC and PM should alleviate

policymakers' biases, at the same time sustaining its integrity and objectivity (Onuoha, 2018).

Bodunde, et al (2019) posits that intelligence community should not be bias and unprofessional in discharging their statutory duties to the policymakers in terms of gathering accurate intelligence. The fundamental point made in their argument is the power, enthusiasm and zeal in doing their main duties which is intelligence gathering. The issue of cognitive skills should be magnified and fully utilized and personal opinions should be overlooked in course of their responsibilities. The policymakers, both the executive and legislature should work in synergy and avoid working in silos to avoid acrimony in terms of good policy formulation to the masses (Adegoke, 2017).

More importantly, the research gaps revealed that none of the previous works probe further into the that relationship between the (PM and IC), research the problems, and offer submissions for better interactions. Many works occur covering the significance of maintaining objectivity and vindicating bias within the intelligence community (Akinbi, 2017). Nevertheless, very slight study has been conducted into how the IC can sustain its freedom from politicization and objectivity while still being resounding enough to overawed the biases of the policymakers they serve. For the intelligence community to offer accurate, timely and actionable intelligence there needs to be a methodical and proven system to its work. Directing study and analysis in the intelligence sphere is little different thn in much of academia in that information may not be avail, may be classified, or purposely denied access in a bid to deceive (Onuoha, 2018). By presenting structure to the study and analysis process, the IC can guarantee that the information converted to intelligence must remain free from partisan political inspirations, accurate and objective.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This paper was anchored on triarchic theory of intelligence. The theory was propounded by an American psychologist cum intelligence analyst in the year 1985. The main theory was centered on trio intelligence which are the contextual, the experimental and componential subtheories. It is germane to note that the theory has explained the relationship between Intelligence personnel and the policy makers. It furthers expatiate on the three levels of intelligence, how it can be fully utilized in formulating laudable and accurate policies by policy makers. The contextual intelligence is synonymous to functioning well in one's environment or area of responsibilities; while the experimental intelligence is the ability to pact with innovative issues and the componential intelligence is the situation to solve problems.

The trio subtheories of triarchic theory of intelligence were apt to advance expound its relevance to the study. There must be a synergy between all the intelligence community and the relevant governments both (The executive and the legislature) authority. No doubt, these will assist both the IC and PM in discharging their statutory roles which are accurate and timely intelligence gathering and prompt policies making formulation. The theory also upholds the legislature in terms of oversight functions of the executive and confirmation of

appointment of government officials and ministers as stated in the 1999 Federal Republic of Nigeria Constitution.

The theory was a bridge between the policy makers and the intelligence community in working in harmony and discharging their statutory responsibilities in order to stabilize the state. As stated in the 1999 FRNC S.14(2)b that the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary focus. The various forms of intelligence play a vital role in the theory of triarchic in terms of meta-components that enable us to keep track of, control, and assess the mental processes to make better decisions, solve difficulties, and formulate for the future.

**Table I.** Research Stakeholders

Serial No	Intelligence Community	Sample Selected
1.	Department of State Services (DSS)	15
2.	Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA)	15
3.	National Intelligence Agency	10
	Total number of selected samples	40

**Source:** Authors' 2024

### Methodology

Basically, data for the study were collected through face-to-face semi-structured in-depth interviews (Qualitative). This methodological method was considered very effective as it allowed the participants to inquiry deeper into the topic of discussion on intelligence community and policymakers. To make this method more active in the research of the subject matter, participants selected for the interviews were chosen as "key informants." This approach simplified a more comprehensive gathering of rich data as the respondents were probed beyond the level of what questionnaire could cover. Through the method, likely errors of interpretation were reduced, this enhancing trustworthiness of the research, as quality data were collected until saturation point was reached. The study was conducted in Abuja, Nigeria, and the study population comprised of the intelligence community which are personnel of Department of State Services, Defence Intelligence Agency and National Intelligence Agency. The participants were asked 10 interview questions and 15 personnel were interviewed from DSS, 15 personnel were interviewed from DIA and 10 personnel were interviewed from NIA respectively. The participants were chosen across a wide range of Intelligence community to give the research a more reasonable research approach. More so, the participants were selected because of their knowledge and experiences in the field of security cum intelligence gathering. No doubt, this aided the trustworthiness of the research findings.

The principal investigator adopts a purposive sampling method, the study established an estimated gender ratio in the study to eliminate restricting the study participants to a specific gender. On this note, 28 male and 12 female individuals were sampled for the study, making 40 respondents for the entire study population. It is germane to emphasize that the



ratio distribution of respondents was based on the principal investigator's judgmental standards, which predisposed to a greater level the sample size used for the research; and this tend on to moderate any intricacy connected with data management, analysis and collection.

All the interviews were conducted in English, while the respondents were allowed to express certain points in the language of their choice. The interviews were recorded on tape and transcribed by the principal investigator. The data collected were analyzed by a process called "thematic content analysis". This method was used to analyze and explain the data that had been compressed into manageable portions (Olofinbiyi & Steyn, 2019b, p.11).

### Discussion of Findings

The study revealed that intelligence gathering is key in policy formulation in order to efficacious in good governance. The demographic result from the study population shows that 70% were male and 30% were female. Also, 83% of the participants agreed that intelligence gathering is the bedrock of good policy formulation and these can be achieved by intelligence community personnel, while 17% of the participants disagreed based on their philosophical views. The IC must serious and committed to their core primary duty which is intelligence gathering for the production of good policy formulation which will aid all and sundry. The current intelligence infrastructure has contributed vastly to curb the menace of threats in the Nigerian State. The current intelligence mechanisms such as open-source intelligence, human source, imagery intelligence, geospatial intelligence, intelligence circle such as (Direction, Collection, Processing, Analysis and Dissemination) and many more have contributed richly in combating the threats and aided the policy maker to formulate a good policy decision. Despite the strengths of intelligence mechanisms, there are some pitfalls that was found out such as lack of data base amongst the intelligence community, they lack intelligence sharing amongst themselves, ego boosting in terms of gathering intelligence, intelligence gathered are not coordinated amongst the IC, rather, they are working in silos. More so, limited resources from the government to the IC, and technological gaps.

There are various security threats in the Nigerian State such as basic and contemporary threats. Despite these various security threats prevalent in Nigeria, such as terrorism, insurgency, espionage, subversion, sabotage, cybercrimes, kidnapping, ritual killings, white collar crimes, green collar crimes, salami's technique, communal conflicts and many more. The timely and accurate intelligence gathering were able to curtail all these crimes to barest minimal. The policymakers were advised on the need to comply with timely and accurate intelligence given to them by the IC. No doubt, it will reduce the issues of insecurity and potential threats in the county. The policymakers should also emphasize the significant of informed decision-making on intelligence reports. Intelligence gathering driven revealed that for policy formulations to be apt, the intelligence reports by the IC to the policymakers must be accurate and timely at all time (Usman & Salihu, 2019).



### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The study has focused on how Intelligence gathering can lead to good policy. It has considered the effects of the Intelligence gathering on policy formulation by the policy makers as it concerns the Nigerian state. The result of the research relies on respondents' in-depth data information, relative analysis of findings with preceding study inquires in related studies. This improved the credibility and dependability of the study through a dense and rich description of respondents' discernment of the empirical empathetic of how poor intelligence gathering can hinder good policy formulation by the policymakers in the Nigerian State. In addition, it is germane to note that qualitative research can be showed by exploiting a variety of data collection methods as it was used in this research method case study. Understanding this contention in a broader logic, (Creswell, 2007) opined that data collection techniques in qualitative research could be categorized into four types: (1) respondent observation, (2) direct observation or non-respondent observation, (3) document analysis; and (4) In-depth interviews. For the determination of this study, an in-depth interview method was used as the main technique of qualitative data collection. The study perceives in-depth interview as a influential technique for generating explanations and interpretation of people's social worlds and such is essential qualitative research technique (Akinola & Tella, 2017).

The government should invest more on the IC in terms of training and retraining of its personnel, acquiring the modern security gadgets such as fighter drones, bugging devices, high impact trackers, bomb jammers, spying devices, et cetera. No doubt, these modern tools will enhance their duties in discharging their statutory roles which is intelligence gathering and professionalism. Also, the IC must strictly adopt the two (2) intelligence operations which are covert and overt techniques. Using these two methods in gathering intelligence will assist them richly to gathered timely and accurate intelligence. The oath of secrecy and oath of allegiance must be strictly obeyed by the IC personnel and anybody found wanting should face the wrath of laws. Enforcing these rules will make the IC personnel to be loyal and dedicated to their core responsibilities (Adegoke, 2017)

Lastly, thr PM should not politicized the intelligence given to them by the IC. This will make the IC personnel to be loyal and dedicated to their core responsibilities which is accurate, timely and credible intelligence gathering. The results of these will turn to good policy formulations which will assists the government to boost social-economic State, enhance political will, citizenry loyalty and equally win the 'heart and mind' of the masses (Bodunde, et. al., 2019).

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