Community Involvement in Intelligence Gathering & Security Operations in Nigeria: A Panacea to a Robust National Security & National Stability

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Abstract

This study explored the impact of community involvement in intelligence gathering and security operations in Nigeria: A panacea of national security and national stability. The study adopted a survey research design. The population comprised of security experts, government officials, and literate members of the general public residing in Nigeria. the study administered 461 copies of questionnaire and respondents were selected using stratified random sampling technique. The data obtained for the study was analyzed using Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling. The study found that community involvement in intelligence gathering and security operations has positive and statistically significant impact on robustness of national security in Nigeria at 5% level of significant. While, community involvement in intelligence gathering and security operations has positive but statistically insignificant impact on national stability in Nigeria at 5% level of significant. And robust national security can mediate the relationship between community involvement in intelligence gathering, security operations and national stability in Nigeria at 5% level of significant. The study concludes that effective community involvement in intelligence gathering and security operation can lead to robust national security and influence national stability. The study therefore, recommends among others that The Government/Policymakers and security agencies of Nigeria should improve on encouraging community participation and security agencies in intelligence gathering capable of resolving all kind of insecurities in order to gain national stability.

Key words: Community, Intelligence Gathering, National Stability, Operation, Security,

Introduction

Globally, national stability is recognized as a critical foundation for a country's long-term development, prosperity, and security. A stable nation is characterized by factors such as political, economic, and social harmony, as well as the absence of violent conflicts and civil unrest (Gyamfi & Brenya, 2020). Maintaining national stability is a key priority for governments worldwide, as it enables them to effectively address challenges, foster growth, and ensure the well-being of their citizens (Baba, 2019). In the African context, the pursuit of national stability has been an ongoing challenge for many countries. Factors such as political instability, ethnic tensions, and the legacy of colonialism have often undermined the stability of African nations (Maiangwa, 2020). However, some African countries have made notable progress in enhancing national stability through initiatives such as democratic reforms, inclusive governance, and community-based approaches to conflict resolution (Nwolise, 2016). Nigeria, as the most populous country in Africa, has long grappled with the challenge of maintaining national stability. The country has faced a range of security threats, including insurgency, banditry, and communal conflicts, which have posed significant obstacles to achieving and sustaining national stability (Ojo, 2018). The Nigerian government has implemented various strategies to address these challenges, including strengthening the security apparatus, promoting economic development, and fostering social cohesion (Baba, 2019). However, the quest for national stability in Nigeria remains an ongoing and complex endeavor.

National security is a fundamental concern for all countries, as it involves the protection of a nation's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the safety of its citizens (Ojo, 2018). A robust national security framework encompasses various elements, including effective intelligence gathering, proactive law enforcement, and collaborative efforts between the government and the community (Nwolise, 2016). Countries around the world have recognized the importance of national security in maintaining stability, fostering economic development, and ensuring the overall well-being of their populations (Gyamfi & Brenya, 2020).

Therefore, national security and national stability of a nation can be achieved through effective community involvement in intelligence gathering and security operations. Globally, the importance of community involvement in intelligence gathering and security operations has been widely recognized (Agbiboa, 2015).

This approach recognizes that communities possess valuable local knowledge and can serve as essential partners in identifying security threats, providing early warning signals, and assisting in the implementation of security measures (Maiangwa, 2020). Such community-based approaches have been successfully implemented in various countries, including the United States, the United Kingdom, and several African nations (Nwolise, 2016).

In the African context, the importance of community involvement in intelligence gathering and security operations has been highlighted in countries such as Kenya, South Africa, and Nigeria (Agbiboa, 2015). These countries have recognized the potential of community-based approaches to enhance national security and promote stability, particularly in addressing challenges like terrorism, organized crime, and communal conflicts. In Nigeria, the need for community involvement in intelligence gathering and security operations has become increasingly apparent, given the complex security challenges the country faces, such as insurgency, banditry, kidnapping, communal conflicts and religion conflict (Baba, 2019). The involvement of local communities can provide valuable insights, facilitate information sharing, and foster a sense of ownership and collaboration in addressing security threats (Nwolise, 2016; Maiangwa, 2020). Therefore, by leveraging the knowledge and resources of local communities, Nigeria can enhance its national security capabilities and contribute to the overall stability and development of the country (Gyamfi & Brenya, 2020). This approach aligns with the global trend of recognizing the pivotal role of community-based initiatives in strengthening national security and promoting sustainable peace and development.

Nigeria, as the most populous country in Africa, has grappled with a myriad of national security challenges that have undermined its overall stability and development. The country has faced a range of security threats, including the Boko Haram insurgency, banditry, kidnapping, and communal conflicts, which have resulted in the loss of lives, the displacement of communities, and the disruption of economic activities (Baba, 2019; Ojo, 2018). Despite the Nigerian government's efforts to address these security challenges through the deployment of security forces and the implementation of counter-terrorism strategies, the persistence and

complexity of the threats have continued to undermine the country's national security and national stability (Nwolise, 2016).

One of the key challenges in the Nigerian context is the lack of effective community involvement in intelligence gathering and security operations (Maiangwa, 2020). In addition, Awotayo et al. (2023) submitted that Nigeria today faces a variety of security risks that are threatening to undermine its status as an independent republic. These include armed robbery, urban violence, smuggling of weapons, kidnapping, trafficking in people, and disputes between communities and religions. A strong intelligence system that can readily gather and analyze data to precisely predict the movement of criminals and other unwanted elements inside society might alleviate all these concerns. The insecurity challenges in Nigeria such as ethno-religious conflict, communal clashes, Kidnapping, murder, cultism, militancy etc. have become daily occurrence and these have been compounded by the rising waves of terrorism since the return to democratic rule in 1999.The resultant effects of these, are loss of lives and properties of the citizens. The challenges of insecurity are traceable to lapse of intelligence gathering and its proper utilization (Adegoke, 2020).

Furthermore, the local communities, which are often the most affected by security threats, possess valuable information and insights that could aid in the identification, prevention, and resolution of these threats (Gyamfi & Brenya, 2020). However, the disconnect between the government's security apparatus and the local communities has prevented the effective utilization of this community-level intelligence and the fostering of collaborative security efforts (Agbiboa, 2015). Consequently, the problem of inadequate community involvement in intelligence gathering and security operations in Nigeria has hindered the development of a robust national security framework and the achievement of sustainable national stability.

Although studies have been conducted in this area, but most of them predominantly focused on the role of the government, security agencies, and military in addressing security challenges (Ojo, 2018; Nwolise, 2016). While these studies have provided valuable insights, there is a gap in the literature regarding the potential benefits of community involvement in intelligence gathering and

security operations as a means to enhance national security and national stability in Nigeria. The objective of this study is therefore, aims to explore the impact of community involvement in intelligence gathering and security operations in Nigeria: A panacea of national security and national stability. The specific objectives are to:

i. assess the impact of community involvement in intelligence gathering on robust national security in Nigeria;
ii. assess the impact security operations on robust national security in Nigeria;
iii. examine the impact of community involvement in intelligence gathering on national stability in Nigeria security; and
iv. examine the impact security operations on robust national security on national stability in Nigeria.
v. determine the mediating role of robust national security on the relationship between community involvement in intelligence gathering, security operations and national stability in Nigeria.

The study hypothesized as follows:

H_{A1}: community involvement in intelligence gathering has significant impact on robust national security in Nigeria.

H_{A2}: security operations have significant impact on robust national security in Nigeria

H_{A3}: community involvement in intelligence gathering has significant impact on national stability in Nigeria

H_{A4}: security operations have significant impact on national stability in Nigeria

H_{A5}: robust national security mediates the relationship between community involvement in intelligence gathering, security operations and national stability in Nigeria

Literature Review

National stability

National stability can be understood as the condition in which a country or nation experiences a high degree of political, economic, and social coherence, enabling it to maintain its territorial integrity, institutional functionality, and the overall well-being of its population (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2019; Besley & Persson, 2011). Political stability refers to the presence of a legitimate and effective government,

the rule of law, and the peaceful transfer of power (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2019). It involves the absence of political violence, coups, and civil unrest, as well as the government's ability to implement policies and respond to the needs of the population (Blattman & Miguel, 2010).

Economic stability encompasses sustained economic growth, low inflation, manageable levels of public debt, and the equitable distribution of resources (Besley & Persson, 2011). It also includes the availability of employment opportunities, access to basic services, and the promotion of inclusive economic development (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012). Social stability is characterized by the presence of social cohesion, cultural harmony, and the effective management of diversity (Putnam, 2007). It involves the protection of human rights, the provision of social services, and the mitigation of social tensions and inequalities (Abouharb & Cingranelli, 2007). Territorial integrity refers to the preservation of a nation's sovereign borders and the absence of external threats or internal secessionist movements that could undermine the country's unity and sovereignty (Fazal, 2007). It is essential for maintaining national security and the effective governance of the entire territory (Tir, 2010). Institutional functionality encompasses the effective and efficient operation of a country's governance structures, including the legislature, executive, judiciary, and public administration (Fukuyama, 2014). It ensures the delivery of public services, the enforcement of laws, and the maintenance of democratic processes (Rothstein & Teorell, 2008).

National security

National security is a multidimensional concept that encompasses the protection of a country's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the well-being of its citizens from internal and external threats (Matlary, 2016). It involves the maintenance of a strong military, effective intelligence and law enforcement agencies, and the ability to respond to a wide range of security challenges. National security is the ability of a nation to protect its internal values from external threats (Rotberg, 2017). This definition emphasizes the preservation of a country's fundamental values and way of life. Awotayo et al. (2023) been defined national security as a nation-capacity state's to, among other things, maintain its territorial integrity and physical integrity, maintain reasonable economic relations with the rest of the

world, maintain its nature, institutions, and system of government from the outside, and control its borders.

According to Buzan and Hansen (2019), national security can be understood as the protection of a state's core interests, including its territorial integrity, economic well-being, and the safety of its citizens, from internal and external threats. While according to Biscop and Coelmont (2020), national security encompasses the safeguarding of a state's survival, its economic well-being, and the protection of its citizens from both military and non-military threats, such as terrorism, organized crime, and environmental degradation. The maintenance of national security requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach that involves the collaboration of various government agencies, the private sector, and international partners (Matlary, 2016). It is a dynamic and evolving field that must adapt to the changing nature of security threats and challenges in the 21st century. The national security of a nation can be understood through military and defense, intelligence and counterintelligence, cybersecurity, the economic well-being of a country, environmental and resource security (Lowenthal, 2020; Altman, 2022).

Community involvement in intelligence gathering

The concept of community involvement in intelligence gathering has gained increasing attention in recent years, as it is recognized as a valuable approach to enhancing national security (Gill & Phythian, 2016; Lefebvre, 2021). Community involvement in intelligence gathering refers to the active participation of local communities, civil society organizations, and the general public in identifying, reporting, and helping to address security threats and issues (Friedlander, 2020). One key aspect of community involvement in intelligence gathering is the development of strong partnerships between law enforcement, intelligence agencies, and local communities (Friedlander, 2020). By fostering trust and open communication, these partnerships can facilitate the exchange of information and the identification of potential security threats at the grassroots level (Friedlander, 2020; Spalek, 2010). For example, community members may be able to provide valuable insights into suspicious activities, potential radicalization, or other security concerns within their neighborhoods (Spalek, 2010).

Another important component of community involvement in intelligence gathering is the empowerment of citizens to play an active role in their own security (Spalek, 2010). This can involve initiatives such as community-based crime prevention programs, neighborhood watch schemes, and public awareness campaigns that encourage individuals to be vigilant and report any suspicious activity (Friedlander, 2020; Weine et al., 2013). By engaging the community in this way, intelligence agencies can leverage the collective knowledge and resources of the public to enhance their overall situational awareness and responsiveness (Spalek, 2010). The benefits of community involvement in intelligence gathering are manifold. It can help to improve the accuracy and relevance of intelligence, as well as strengthen the relationship between the government and the public (Gill & Phythian, 2016; Lefebvre, 2021). Additionally, it can contribute to the development of more effective and sustainable security strategies that are tailored to the specific needs and concerns of local communities (Weine et al., 2013).

However, the implementation of community involvement in intelligence gathering is not without its challenges (Spalek, 2010). Issues such as privacy, civil liberties, and the potential for abuse of power must be carefully addressed to ensure that the rights and freedoms of citizens are protected (Friedlander, 2020; Lefebvre, 2021). Careful consideration must also be given to the cultural, social, and economic factors that may influence the willingness and ability of communities to engage in such initiatives (Weine et al., 2013). Community involvement in intelligence gathering represents a promising approach to enhancing national security, provided that it is implemented with due regard for the rights and concerns of citizens (Gill & Phythian, 2016; Lefebvre, 2021). By fostering strong partnerships between intelligence agencies, law enforcement, and local communities, this approach can contribute to a more comprehensive and effective security landscape (Friedlander, 2020)

Security operations

Security operations refer to the coordinated efforts and activities undertaken by organizations, agencies, and authorities to maintain safety, protect assets, and mitigate threats (Fryer-Biggs & Spolar, 2020; Manunta, 2021). These operations are critical in ensuring the well-being of individuals, communities, and nations, and they encompass a wide range of strategies and tactics (Glover & Bateman, 2021;

Manunta, 2021). One key aspect of security operations is threat assessment and risk management (Fryer-Biggs & Spolar, 2020; Manunta, 2021). This involves the systematic identification, analysis, and evaluation of potential risks, such as criminal activities, natural disasters, or acts of terrorism, and the development of appropriate countermeasures and response plans (Glover & Bateman, 2021; Manunta, 2021). By continuously monitoring the threat landscape and adapting their strategies accordingly, security professionals can enhance their ability to anticipate and respond to emerging challenges (Fryer-Biggs & Spolar, 2020; Manunta, 2021).

Another important component of security operations is the deployment of a range of security measures and technologies (Glover & Bateman, 2021; Manunta, 2021). This may include physical security measures, such as access control systems, surveillance cameras, and perimeter fencing, as well as cybersecurity solutions, such as firewalls, intrusion detection systems, and data encryption (Fryer-Biggs & Spolar, 2020; Manunta, 2021). The effective integration and utilization of these security tools and technologies can significantly enhance the overall resilience and responsiveness of an organization or community (Glover & Bateman, 2021; Manunta, 2021). Effective security operations also rely on strong collaboration and coordination among various stakeholders, including law enforcement agencies, intelligence services, emergency responders, and private sector entities (Fryer-Biggs & Spolar, 2020; Manunta, 2021). By fostering an environment of information sharing, joint planning, and coordinated response, security professionals can leverage the collective expertise and resources of these diverse partners to address complex security challenges (Glover & Bateman, 2021; Manunta, 2021).

Empirical Review

Community involvement in intelligence gathering, Security operations, National security and National stability

Awotayo et al. (2024) conducted a study on intelligence system and national security in Nigeria: the challenges of data gathering. The study employs qualitative methodologies and draws on secondary sources like newspapers, the internet, and published academic works. The findings show that a number of intricate and interconnected problems can be blamed for the Nigerian intelligence system's lack of efficacy. These problems, which include an apparent lack of data,

under-use of the data that is already available, and improper data, are made worse by inconsistencies in data management and sharing across the numerous security agencies operating in the nation. The study concludes that it is important for the various security apparatuses to be data-driven and exchange intelligence with one another in order to promote early response to any threat to the security of citizens' lives and property. The study was conceptual nature and relied on previous researches to drown conclusion.

Uzoagu (2022) conducted community involvement in intelligence gathering and joint security force in crime control. The study dwells on the involvement of community in intelligence gathering and joint security force in crime control. The study went ahead to look at what is community and community involvement, intelligence, and their involvement in intelligence gathering in crime control. It highlighted the measures undertaking to control crime in the society. The study also identified and discussed the role of community involvement in intelligence gathering in crime control. It also enumerated efforts of joint security force in crime control as well as elements of security intelligence in curtailing crime in Nigeria. The study concluded that community involvement in intelligence gathering and crime control is a welcome idea and should be sustained by all means by government. The study was conceptual in nature and did not conduct any statistical analysis.

Nasiru and Olusegun (2022) conducted a study on national security policy and intelligence gathering in Nigeria: prospects and challenges. The study adopted survey research which used primary and secondary tools to collect data. Population of the study was drawn from the six geo-political zones where questionnaires were distributed while key participant interviews were conducted with some major stakeholders in national security and intelligence. The theoretical underpinning of the study is structural functionalism. The findings of the study showed that intelligence gathering and national security are inseparable. Intelligence gathering can facilitate the attainment of security objectives in Nigeria if nationalistically used. The study used descriptive statistics at analyzed data obtained. Findings also showed that safe environment enhanced local and foreign investors business. The study showed that unhealthy rivalry between and among security agencies did not allow synergy in operations, hence, the lingering security

challenges in the country. The study only relied on descriptive statistics to analyze data.

Adegoke (2020) conducted a study on intelligence gathering and challenges of insecurity in Nigeria. The study adopts as its theoretical framework, the theory of structural functionalism to examine intelligence gathering and challenges of insecurity in Nigeria. The secondary data method is adopted by use of police records, internets newspapers and academic journal for data collection. The study argues that there is positive relationship between the effective intelligence gathering and national security.

Iregbenu and Uzonwanne (2015) conducted a study on security challenges and implications to national stability. The study employed a mixed-methods research design, combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The study utilized a survey questionnaire and in-depth interviews to gather data from the participants. The target population for the study included security experts, government officials, and members of the general public residing in Nigeria. A sample size of 500 respondents was selected using a combination of purposive and random sampling techniques. The study used frequency distributions, mean calculations, and regression analysis to analyzed data. the study found that Nigeria faced a wide range of security challenges, including terrorism and insurgency, ethnic and religious conflicts, organized crime, such as kidnapping, armed robbery, and human trafficking, corruption and weak governance, poverty, unemployment, and socioeconomic inequalities.

Theoretical Framework

Community Policing Theory

This study is anchored on community policing theory. The Community Policing Theory was primarily developed and propagated by Robert Trojanowicz in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The Community Policing Theory is a law enforcement approach that emphasizes the active involvement and partnership between the police and the local community in identifying and addressing security concerns (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1990). The theory posits that effective policing requires a collaborative relationship between the police and the community they serve (Cordner, 2014). This partnership allows for the sharing of information, joint

problem-solving, and the development of tailored security strategies (Nalla & Newman, 2013). The theory advocates a problem-solving approach, where the police and community work together to diagnose the underlying causes of crime and disorder, and develop comprehensive solutions to address them (Goldstein, 1990). This contrasts with the traditional reactive approach to law enforcement (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1990).

However, the theory was criticized by some scholars, one of the main criticisms of community policing is the lack of a clear and consistent definition, which has led to various interpretations and inconsistent implementation across different jurisdictions (Skogan, 2006; Zhao et al., 2002). This lack of clarity can make it difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of community policing initiatives.

Despite the criticism of the theory, it still has significant relevance to the study on community involvement in intelligence gathering and security operations in Nigeria, as both concepts emphasize the importance of collaborative partnerships between law enforcement and the community. One of the core principles of community policing is the development of strong partnerships and trust between the police and the community (Skogan, 2006; Weisburd & Eck, 2004). Similarly, the study on community involvement in intelligence gathering and security operations in Nigeria highlights the need for improved collaboration between security agencies and local communities to enhance national security and stability (Bamidele, 2013; Onifade et al., 2013). The theory also emphasizes the importance of information sharing and intelligence gathering from community members to inform law enforcement decision-making and operations (Gill et al., 2014; Mastrofski et al., 1995). This aligns with the focus of the Nigerian study on leveraging community involvement to improve intelligent.

The study adopted survey research design. The target population for the study included security experts, government officials, and literate members of the general public residing in Nigeria. A sample size of 600 (200 security experts, 200 government officials and 200 literate members of the general public residing in Nigeria) respondents was selected using a combination of purposive and random sampling techniques. The justification for focusing on security experts, government officials, and literate members of the general public residing in

Nigeria was based on the fact that they are more suitable to respond to the research instrument used in this study.

Research Methodology

The objective of this study is to examine the impact of community involvement in intelligence gathering and security operations in Nigeria: A panacea of national security and national stability. Community involvement in intelligence gathering and security operations served as independent variable and, national stability serves as in independent variable and robust national security serves as mediator variable. This study adopted a survey research design follows a logical approach in which hypotheses were developed and tested. In order to analyze the relationship between the research variables, a quantitative methodology based on the deductive strategy was employed in this study (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The quantitative data used for this study was obtained through the use of survey instruments, such as questionnaires with closed-ended questions about the variables under study.

The population for this study comprised of security experts, government officials, and literate members of the general public residing in Nigeria. The justification for focusing on security experts, government officials, and literate members of the general public residing in Nigeria was based on the fact that they are more suitable to respond to the questionnaire used in this study. However, due to the difficulties associated with conducting research among all the subjects of a population and difficulties to obtained the exactly population of security experts, government officials, and literate members of the general public residing in Nigeria, Cochran's (1977) sample size determination formula for calculating infinite or unknown population was adopted to determine the sample size. The Cochran's (1977) sample size determination formula is given as $n=Z^2 \times P (1 - P)/C^2$, where: n is the sample size for the study, Z^2 is Z value at 95% confidence interval, C is Margin of error (5%), P is proportion of the population 0.5 and 1 – P is 0.5. using this formula, a sample size of 384 was arrived at. However, the attrition rate of 20% was added to the sample size determined; hence, the result of the addition produced a new sample size of 461, this is in line with the opinion of Singh and Masuku (2014).

Adapted questionnaire was employed as the instrument for data collection and respondents were selected using stratified random sampling technique. The questionnaire for: national stability was adapted from the works of Iregbenu and Uzonwanne (2015); community involvement in intelligence gathering was adapted from the works of Uzoagu (2022); security operations was adapted from the works of Fryer-Biggs and Spolar (2020); and robust national security was adapted from the works of Nasiru and Olusegun (2022). The justification for adopting a stratified random sampling technique for this study was based on the fact that the population of the study is heterogeneous, with significant variations in terms of ministry, age, geographical location, and other relevant characteristics (Ajayi, 2016). It also allows the researcher to divide the population into homogeneous subgroups (strata) based on these characteristics, ensuring that the sample is representative of the different segments of the population (Etikan & Bala, 2017).

The questionnaire was administered physically through the use of 6 research assistants: Cronbach alpha values was used assessed the instrument used in this study. Cronbach alpha value of equal to or greater than 0.7 is appropriate (Hair, et al., 2019).

Out of 461 copies of questionnaire administered, 389 copies constituting 84% of total questionnaire administered were valid and useful for the data analysis. The data gathered was analyzed using Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) in determining the measurement, structural models and hypotheses testing through SmartPLS 3.0 software (Hair, et al., 2022). Validity and reliability of the measures were first of all ascertained before testing the hypothesized relationships using algorism and bootstrapping techniques (Hair, et al., 2022). The model for the PLS-SEM is depicted pictorially in figure 1.

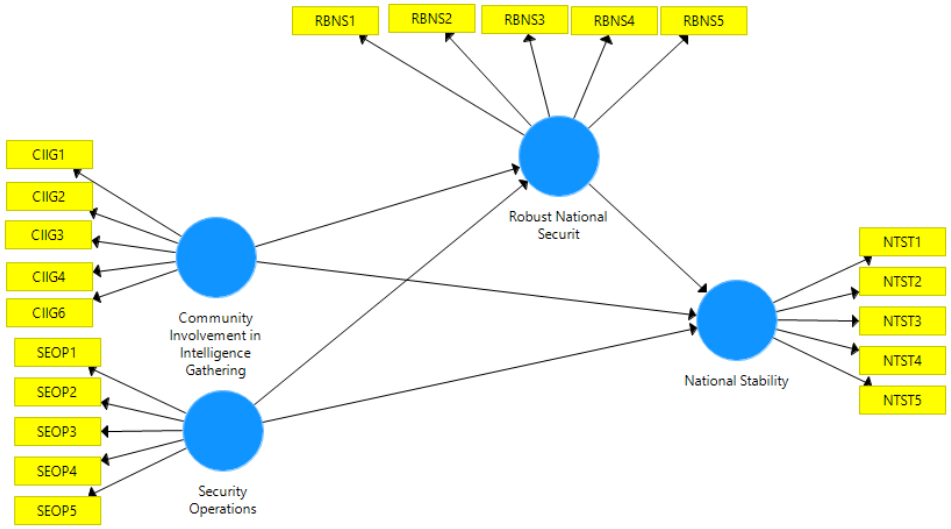


Fig. 1: Model Specification

Table 1: Measurement scale

Variables	Code	Items
National Stability	NTST1	peace and security
	NTST2	maintaining law and order
	NTST3	national defense forces to protect the country
	NTST4	quality of public services (e.g., education, healthcare, infrastructure)
	NTST5	societal harmony and absence of violent conflicts
Community Involvement in Intelligence Gathering	CIIG1	local community participates in providing information to security agencies about potential threats or suspicious activities
	CIIG2	Trust and cooperation between local community and security agencies

	CIIG3	The local community feels empowered to report suspicious activities
	CIIG4	Community vigilante
	CIIG5	Action on community report on suspicious activities
Security Operation	SEOP1	The Nigerian security agencies (e.g., police, military, intelligence) effectively respond to and address security threats in a timely manner
	SEOP2	The Nigerian security agencies demonstrate a high level of professionalism,
	SEOP3	The Nigerian security agencies demonstrate a high level of discipline, and respect for human rights in their operations.
	SEOP4	The coordination and information-sharing among different Nigerian security agencies.
	SEOP5	The Nigerian security agencies have sufficient resources (personnel, equipment, funding) to effectively carry out their operation
Robust National Security	RBNS1	The Nigerian government has a comprehensive national security strategy that effectively addresses current and emerging threats
	RBNS2	well-equipped, trained, and resourced to respond to a wide range of security threats.
	RBNS3	Nigerian government's policy and legal frameworks for national security

	RBNS4	The Nigerian government's coordination and cooperation with neighboring countries and international partners
	RBNS5	The Nigerian government's investment in and commitment to cybersecurity and critical infrastructure.

Result and Discussion

Measurement Model Evaluation

The measurement model was tested using the algorithm on SmartPLS; factor loadings, Cronbach's Alpha, and composite reliability were all calculated to determine the reliability and validity of the study measures. All the constructs used in this study has achieved the acceptable factor loadings of equal to or above 0.7; composite reliability (CR) of all the constructs were all above 0.70 and Average variance extracted (AVE) were all above 0.5 as recommended by Hair et al. (2022), as illustrated in table 2.

The results of the reliability and validity analyses are presented in table 2 and fig. 2. Cronbach's alpha was used to conduct a reliability analysis of the scales to assess their consistency. Ordinarily, the dependability coefficient of Cronbach's alpha is between 0 and 1, with a maximum of 1. The study determined that an acceptable scale should have a coefficient above or equal to 0.80, an acceptable scale has a coefficient above 0.70, and an exploratory scale has a coefficient greater than or equal to 0.60. (Hair, et al., 2019). The Cronbach's alpha results of this study are NTST (0.919), CIIG (0.942), SEOP (0. 895), and RBSE (0.954). These indicators thus have satisfied all the requirements. Because none of the scales have the value of less than 0.80, it means that they are good and reliable measures of the relevant structures.

The composite reliability test has advantages over Cronbach's alpha as a convergent validity test in a reflective model. Since Cronbach's alpha has the potential to overstate or underestimate scale dependability, it might be preferred

as a reliability indicator. A number between 0 and 1, with 1 denoting fully estimated reliability, is used to represent composite dependability. In an exploratory model (Chin, 1998; Hock, et al., 2022); in a confirmatory model (Henseler, et al., 2015); and in confirmatory research (Daskalakis & Mantas, 2008), composite reliabilities should be equal to or greater than 0.6. The composite reliability values for NTST (0.937), CIIG (0.956), SEOP (0.923), and RBSE (0.965). which are all displayed in Table 2 and fig. 2, This revealed that composite reliabilities for all the construct have achieved the accepted level of equal to or greater than 0.6.

The average variance extracted (AVE) can be used to test both convergent and divergent validity. In a reflective model, AVE represents the average communality for each latent factor. In an appropriate model, AVE should be greater than 0.5 as suggested by Chin, (1998) and greater than the cross-loadings, implying that the components should explain at least half the variance of their respective indicators. When the AVE is less than 0.50, it signifies that the error variance exceeds the explained variance. As shown in Table 2 and fig. 2, the AVE values are; NTST (0.746), CIIG (0.814), SEOP (0.706), and RBSE (0.846). This proves the validity of the constructs.

Table 2: Convergent validity

Variables	Indicators	Loadings	Cronbach's alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
National Stability	NTST1	0.867	0.919	0.937	0.749
	NTST2	0.843			
	NTST3	0.889			
	NTST4	0.863			
	NTST5	0.866			
Community Involvement in Intelligence Gathering	CIIG1	0.945	0.942	0.956	0.814
	CIIG2	0.873			
	CIIG3	0.885			
	CIIG4	0.940			
	CIIG5	0.865			
Security Operation	SEOP1	0.874	0.895	0.923	0.706
	SEOP2	0.877			
	SEOP3	0.798			
	SEOP4	0.877			
	SEOP5	0.769			
Robust Security	RBNS1	0.945	0.954	0.965	0.846
	RBNS2	0.929			
	RBNS3	0.869			
	RBNS4	0.937			
	RBNS5	0.918			

Source: SmartPLS Output, 2024

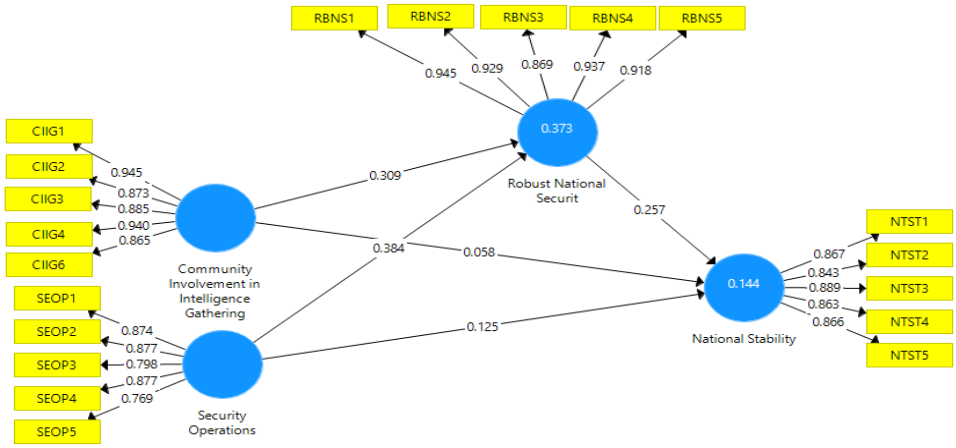


Fig. 2: Measurement model of the study constructs and indicators.
Source: SmartPLS Output, 2024

Discriminant Validity

Table 3: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

	National Stability	Community Involvement in Intelligence Gathering	Security Operation	Robust Security
National Stability				
Community Involvement in Intelligence Gathering	0.531			
Security Operation	0.521	0.430		
Robust Security	0.326	0.288	0.287	

Source: author's computation via SmartPLS Output, 2024

Table 2 above shows the results of Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio for the variables used in this research. From the table, the result in all the respective cases indicated that there is absent of discriminate validity problems. Since discriminate validity problems are present only when HTMT values are high than 0.90 for

structural models (Henseler, et al., 2015). In this case all the HTMT values for the variables used are less than 0.90 therefore proved the absent of discriminate validity problems.

Assessment of Structural Model

Prior to assessing the structural relationships, collinearity must be examined to make sure it does not birth biasness in the regression results. If collinearity assumptions are satisfied, the next step is to examine the coefficient of determination (R2) value of the endogenous construct(s).

Collinearity Test

A collinearity test was conducted to ensure the absence of multicollinearity which could lead to bias in the results. This was assessed through the variance inflation factors (VIF). As a rule, VIF values should not be more or higher or greeter the 5 to indicate the absence of multicollinearity, (Hair, et al., 2019). The result of the collinearity test for this study is shown in table 4:

Table 4: Collinearity Statistics (Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)

Variables	VIF
Community Involvement in Intelligence Gathering	1.268
Security Operation	1.328
Robust Security	1.253

Source: SmartPLS Output, 2024

The Table 4 shows variance inflation factor (VIF) values for the independent variables used this study. From the table the variance inflation factor (VIF) values for all the independent variables used are 1.268, 1.328 and 1.253. The variance inflation factor (VIF) values for all the respective cases indicated that the explanatory variables are not highly correlated. This shows the absence of multicollinearity among the independent variables since multicollinearity exists only when the VIF Value is greater than 5. The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) was used to evaluate the collinearity of the formative indicators. All the VIF values in table 4 above were less than 5 indicating the absence of critical collinearity issues among the indicators of formatively measured constructs, (Hair, et al., 2019).

Model Goodness of Fit

Table 5: Model Goodness of Fit (GOF)

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.057	0.057
d_ULS	0.689	0.689
d_G	2.772	2.772
Chi-Square	2,535.206	2,535.206
NFI	0.671	0.671

Source: author's computation SmartPLS Output, 2024

Table 5 above shows the result of model goodness of fit. Sequel to the need to validate the PLS model, there is a need to assess the goodness of fit of the model as suggested by Hair, et al., (2019). This study used the standardised root mean square residual's (SRMR). The choice of this index was based on the fact that the SRMR provides the absolute fit measure where a value of zero indicates a perfect fit. The study adopted Hu and Bentler (1998) suggestion which stated that a value of less than 0.08 represents a good fit while applying SRMR for model goodness of fit. The study result indicates an SRMR value of 0.057 which is less than 0.08, therefore, indicating the fitness of the model of this study as suggested by Hu and Bentler (1998); Ringle, et al. (2019).

Structural Model and Hypotheses Testing

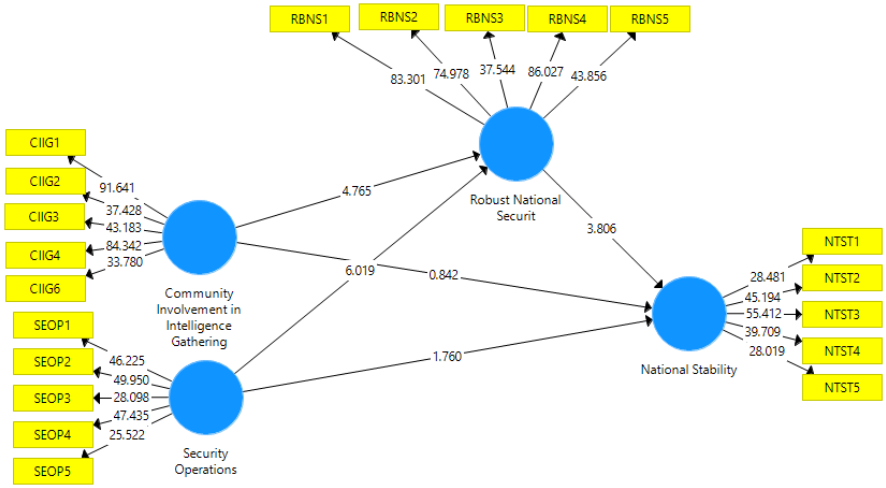


Fig. 3: Structural Model and Hypotheses Testing

TABLE 6: RESULTS OF THE STRUCTURAL MODEL ANALYSIS (HYPOTHESES TESTING)

Hypotheses	Relationship	Path Coefficient Beta (β)	Standard Error	T Statistics	P value	Decision
H_{A1}	CIIG->RBNS	0.308	0.065	4.765	0.000	Accepted
H_{A2}	SEOP->RBNS	0.386	0.064	6.019	0.000	Accepted
H_{A3}	CIIG->NTST	0.059	0.069	0.842	0.400	Rejected
H_{A4}	SEOP->NTST	0.127	0.071	1.760	0.079	Rejected
H_{A5}	RBNS->NTST	0.259	0.067	3.806	0.000	Accepted

Source: SmartPLS Output, 2024

The fig. 3 and Table 6 show the structural model and hypotheses testing result for this study. The table shows the values for Beta, standard Error, T-statistics and P Value, the beta value, t-values and the corresponding p-value were used in assessing the structural model in this study. This was done through the bootstrapping procedure.

The path coefficient (β) between Community Involvement in Intelligence Gathering (CIIG) and Robust National Security (RBNS) is 0.308 with t-value of 4.765 and a p-value of 0.000. This indicates that CIIG has a positive and statistically significant effect on RBNS. The implication is that greater community involvement in intelligence gathering can enhance the robustness of national security in Nigeria at 5% level of significant. This result has provided sufficient ground for accepting the hypothesis which state that community involvement in intelligence gathering has significant impact on robust national security in Nigeria.

The path coefficient (β) between security operations (SEOP) and robust national security (RBNS) is 0.386 with t-value of 6.019 and a p-value of 0.000. This suggests that SEOP has a positive and statistically significant impact on RBNS in Nigeria at

5% level of significant. The implication is that effective security operations can improve the robustness of national security in Nigeria. This result has provided sufficient ground for accepting the hypothesis which state that security operations have significant impact on robust national security in Nigeria.

The path coefficient (β) between community involvement in intelligence gathering (CIIG) and national stability (NTST) is 0.059 with t-value of 0.842 and a p-value of 0.400. Since the p-value is greater than the commonly used significance level of 0.05, this result revealed that community involvement in intelligence gathering has positive but statistically insignificant impact on national stability in Nigeria at 5% level of significant. Therefore, the hypothesis which state that community involvement in intelligence gathering has significant impact on national stability in Nigeria is rejected. The implication is that community involvement in intelligence gathering does not have a direct significant effect on national stability. In other words, community involvement in intelligence gathering although is positive but not sufficient to lead to national stability in Nigeria

Similarly, the path coefficient (β) between security operations (SEOP) and national stability (NTST) is 0.127 with t-value of 1.760 and a p-value of 0.079. the p-value is greater than 0.05, this revealed that security operations have positive but statistically insignificant impact on national stability in Nigeria at 5% level of significant. Therefore, the hypothesis which state that security operations have significant impact on national stability in Nigeria is also rejected. This means that security operations do not have a direct significant impact on national stability. In other words, security operations although is positive but not sufficient to lead to national stability in Nigeria.

The path coefficient (β) between robust national security (RBNS) and national stability (NTST) is 0.259 with t-value of 3.806 and a p-value of 0.000. This indicates that RBNS has a positive and statistically significant effect on NTST. This means that robust national security can mediated the relationship between community involvement in intelligence gathering, security operations and national stability in Nigeria. The implication is that a robust national security system can enhance national stability in Nigeria.

Table 7: R Square and Adjusted R Square Table

Variable	R Square	Adjusted R Square
National Stability	0.144	0.135
Robust National Security	0.373	0.369

Source: SmartPLS Output, 2024

Tabe 7 shows the R Square and Adjusted R Square values for the dependent and mediating variable in relation to independent variable used. The R-squared value of 0.144 indicates that the independent variables (CIIG, SEOP, and RBNS) explain 14.4% of the variance in the dependent variable, National Stability. The adjusted R-squared value of 0.135 takes into account the number of predictors in the model and provides a more conservative estimate of the proportion of variance explained. The implication of this result is that there are other factors, not included in the model, that also contribute to the explanation of National Stability. The model could be improved by identifying and including additional relevant variables that might have a significant influence on National Stability.

The R-squared value of 0.373 suggests that the independent variables (CIIG and SEOP) explain 37.3% of the variance in the mediating variable, Robust National Security. The adjusted R-squared value of 0.369 indicates that the model explains 36.9% of the variance in Robust National Security, after taking into account the number of predictors. The implication of this result is that the model has a reasonably good explanatory power for Robust National Security, with CIIG and SEOP being important predictors. The model indicates that community involvement in intelligence gathering and effective security operations are key factors that contribute to the robustness of national security.

Overall, the results suggest that the model is better at explaining the variance in Robust National Security (37.3%) compared to National Stability (14.4%). This implies that the independent variables in the model have a stronger influence on Robust National Security than on National Stability. To improve the explanatory

power for National Stability, additional relevant factors should be considered and included in the model

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings from this study, it is concluded that community involvement in intelligence gathering has a positive and significant influence on the robust national security in Nigeria This suggests that encouraging and facilitating community participation in intelligence gathering can enhance the overall strength and effectiveness of the national security system.

Similarly, the study conclude that effective security operations have a positive and significant influence on robust national security in Nigeria. This indicates that well-designed and efficiently executed security operations are crucial for bolstering the country's national security.

However, the study found that community involvement in intelligence gathering and security operations have a positive but insignificant influence on national stability in Nigeria. This implies that community involvement in intelligence gathering contribute to national stability in Nigeria but insignificantly.

Importantly, the study conclude that robust national security can mediate the relationship between community involvement in intelligence gathering, security operations, and national stability in Nigeria. This suggests that a strong and resilient national security system can serve as a crucial link, facilitating the positive influence of community involvement and security operations on the country's national stability.

In line with the findings and the conclusions drawn by this study, the following recommendations are made:

i. The Government/Policymakers and security leaders of Nigeria should develop targeted initiatives and programs that actively engage citizens in the intelligence gathering process. This could include establishing community-based information sharing networks, incentivizing the reporting of suspicious activities, and providing training and resources to empower local communities to serve as effective partners in intelligence collection. By

harnessing the knowledge and vigilance of the community, the national security apparatus can be strengthened, leading to more informed decision-making and proactive threat mitigation.

ii. The Government/Policymakers and security agencies of Nigeria should prioritize the improvement of security operations by investing in the necessary resources, technology, and personnel training. This may involve enhancing inter-agency coordination, improving intelligence-led policing, and streamlining operational procedures to maximize the impact of security interventions. Additionally, regular evaluations and adjustments to security strategies should be implemented to ensure they remain responsive to evolving security challenges.

iii. The Government/Policymakers and security agencies of Nigeria should improve on encouraging community participation and security agencies in intelligence gathering capable of resolving all kind of insecurities in order to gain national stability.

iv. The Government/Policymakers and security agencies of Nigeria should improve on strengthen and optimize the country's security apparatus by way of providing necessary resources, technology, and personnel training. This may involve enhancing inter-agency coordination, improving intelligence-led policing, and streamlining operational procedures to maximize the impact of security interventions. Additionally, regular evaluations and adjustments to security strategies should be implemented to ensure they remain responsive to evolving security challenges and can contribute more directly to the achievement of national stability

v. Finally, the Government/Policymakers and security agencies of Nigeria should always ensure that the national security system is well-equipped, efficient, and responsive to the needs of the community. By strengthening the national security apparatus, the positive impacts of community engagement and effective security operations can be amplified, ultimately contributing to enhanced national stability.

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