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TACKLING INSECURITY IN CROSS RIVER STATE: THE NON-KINETIC OPTIONS

Okoli Theresa Omang,
Oyebode Musibau Olabamiji
&
Asala Thomas Bayo
Department of Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution,
National Open University of Nigeria, Abuja.

Corresponding author: tokoli@noun.edu.ng+2348099740514

Abstract
Scholars have raised concerns about the limited effectiveness of kinetic (military-focused) approaches in addressing the challenges of insecurity. Consequently, there is a pressing need to explore alternative strategies that can effectively tackle insecurity and conflicts while avoiding over-reliance on militarisation. This paper critically examines the efficacy of non-kinetic options in addressing the pervasive insecurity challenges in Cross River State, Nigeria. Through a qualitative analysis informed by expert interviews, field observations and documentary evidence, the research explores the socio-political dynamics underpinning insecurity and assesses the potential of non-kinetic options in fostering sustainable peace and stability in Cross River State, Nigeria. The paper delineates a spectrum of non-kinetic strategies including community dialogue initiatives, youth empowerment programmes and associations' efforts aimed at addressing root causes and triggers of conflicts and building resilience at the grassroots level. Findings reveal positive impact of these interventions on the promotion of social cohesion, trust and inclusive development. By synthesizing empirical findings with theoretical insights of liberalism theory, this study offers valuable lessons and practical recommendations for policymakers, practitioners and academics striving to tackle insecurity in Cross River State.

Keywords: insecurity, Cross River State, non-kinetic options, governance.

INTRODUCTION

In contemporary discourse, the challenge of insecurity permeates various regions globally, presenting complex and multifaceted dilemmas that demand innovative strategies for resolution. Within the Nigerian context, Cross River State stands as a microcosm of this intricate issue, grappling with a myriad of security concerns that impede social harmony, economic prosperity, and overall development. Ethno-religious tensions also pose significant challenges to peace and stability in Cross River State. The state's diverse ethnic composition, with over 50 ethnic groups, and religious

pluralism create opportunities for identity-based conflicts and competition over scarce resources. Historical grievances, land disputes, and political rivalries often fuel intercommunal tensions, leading to outbreaks of violence and displacement of populations (Olasupo, 2017: (UNDP, 2021). As the landscape of security threats evolves, the imperative for non-kinetic approaches to complement traditional security measures becomes increasingly pronounced. Against this backdrop of insecurity, that this research embarks on an exploration of non-kinetic options for tackling insecurity within Cross River State, delving into strategies beyond the conventional realm of law enforcement and military intervention. By scrutinizing the socio-political, economic, and cultural dynamics shaping insecurity, this study endeavours to elucidate various pathways toward fostering resilience, conflict mitigation, and sustainable peace within the state. Through a synthesis of empirical data, theoretical frameworks, it aims to provide actionable insights that policymakers, community leaders, and stakeholders can leverage to construct a holistic security paradigm grounded in proactive, preventive, and participatory approaches (Cross River State Ministry of Information, 2019). Thus, this research endeavours to contribute to the discourse on security governance in Cross River State and offer pragmatic solutions towards fostering a safer, more resilient society for its inhabitants.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite concerted efforts by state authorities and security agencies in tackling insecurity, it has remained a persistent and multifaceted issue in Cross River State. Traditional kinetic approaches to tackling insecurity, such as law enforcement crackdowns or military interventions, have often fallen short in addressing the underlying causes of insecurity and fostering lasting stability. Previous research in this area such as Ezike, 2018, Ibrahim, 2019, Adesoji, 2017, Onuoha, 2019 have highlighted the limitations of these conventional strategies, emphasizing the need for a more active and holistic approach. Moreover, these approaches may inadvertently exacerbate grievances, fuelling further violence and instability. Despite these insights, previous research has failed to adequately bridge the gap between theory and practice in addressing insecurity in Cross River State. While some scholars like Anene, 2016, Uchendu, 2018, Ibanga, 2020; Akpan, 2021 have proposed alternative strategies centred on prevention, dialogue, and community engagement implementation remains a challenge due to various factors such as resource constraints, institutional inertia, and political considerations. Consequently, there is a pressing need for further research that not only explores the theoretical underpinnings of non-kinetic security approaches but also provides practical insights into their effective implementation within the context of Cross River State. In light of these considerations, this study aims to fill this gap by examining the potential of non-kinetic options in addressing insecurity in Cross River State. Drawing on insights from conflict resolution, peace building, and community development literature, the study explores alternative approaches that prioritize prevention, dialogue, and community engagement. By adopting a multidisciplinary perspective and engaging with local stakeholders, including government officials, security agencies, civil society organizations, and community leaders, the study seeks to develop contextually relevant strategies that can effectively mitigate insecurity and promote sustainable peace in Cross River State.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

These research questions and objectives will guide the study in exploring the complexities of insecurity in Cross River State and evaluating the potential of non-kinetic options for addressing these challenges.

1. What are the underlying causes of insecurity in Cross River State, Nigeria?

2. How effective are non-kinetic options in addressing insecurity compared to kinetic approaches?
3. What are the socio-political dynamics influencing the implementation of non-kinetic interventions in Cross River State?
4. What lessons can be learned from successful non-kinetic initiatives in Cross River State and other regions in addressing insecurity?

OBJECTIVES

1.To analyze the underlying causes of insecurity in Cross River State, Nigeria?
2. To assess effective are non-kinetic options in addressing insecurity compared to kinetic approaches?
3. To examine the socio-political dynamics influencing the implementation of non-kinetic interventions in Cross River State?
4. To identify lessons that can be learned from successful non-kinetic initiatives in Cross River State and other regions in addressing insecurity?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review section of this research paper aims to provide a comprehensive overview of existing scholarly works, theories, and empirical studies relevant to the topic in addressing insecurity in Cross River State through non-kinetic options.

THE CONCEPT ANALYSIS

Understanding Non-Kinetic Options

Non-kinetic options represent a diverse set of approaches and strategies aimed at addressing insecurity without resorting to military force or direct physical confrontation. diplomacy, mediation, dialogue, community engagement, capacity-building, development assistance, and conflict resolution initiatives are among the array of non-kinetic options available. The rationale behind adopting non-kinetic approaches lies in their potential to mitigate violence, build trust, and address the underlying causes of conflict in a sustainable manner. For instance, initiatives such as community dialogue and conflict resolution programs have been shown to promote peace and social cohesion in conflict-affected areas (Jenkins & Curle, 2019). However, implementing non-kinetic options is not without challenges. Factors such as political resistance, limited resources, cultural barriers, and power imbalances can hinder the effectiveness of non-violent interventions (Carpenter & Kennedy, 2017). Moreover, the success of non-kinetic approaches often hinges on factors such as local ownership, inclusivity, and the establishment of trust among stakeholders (Boutros-Ghali, 1992).

Non-kinetic options differ from traditional military or coercive methods. Instead, they prioritize non-violent means to address insecurity. These options emphasize preventive measures, such as addressing root causes, fostering dialogue among stakeholders, engaging communities, and implementing development initiatives. By focusing on prevention, community engagement, and addressing underlying grievances, non-kinetic options aim to mitigate insecurity in a sustainable manner (UN2009; Banks, 2013)

The researcher also sees non-kinetic options as a noncombatant option which still aim at achieving positive outcome in a situation.

The Socio-Political Dynamics of Insecurity in Cross River State

Cross River State, located in the southern region of Nigeria, is renowned for its rich cultural heritage, diverse ecosystem, and significant economic potential. However, despite these attributes, the state grapples with a myriad of insecurity challenges that undermine its development prospects and threaten the safety and well-being of its inhabitants. The socio-political landscape of Cross River State is characterized by various forms of insecurity, including but not limited to crime, insurgency, communal conflicts, environmental degradation, and governance deficits. These

security challenges are deeply rooted in a complex interplay of historical, socio-economic, and political factors that have shaped the state's trajectory over time. One of the primary drivers of insecurity in Cross River State is socio-economic disparities, which exacerbate feelings of marginalization and inequality among different segments of the population. High levels of poverty, unemployment, and income inequality contribute to social tensions and create fertile ground for criminal activities such as robbery, kidnapping, and cybercrime. Moreover, the lack of equitable access to basic services such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure further exacerbates vulnerabilities and perpetuates cycles of poverty and insecurity (Berg,2022: Ojo,2018).

Socio-economic disparities and marginalization play a significant role in fuelling insecurity in Cross River State, this is because the state's economy, largely dependent on agriculture, forestry, and tourism, and faces challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, limited employment opportunities, and uneven distribution of resources. As a result, marginalized communities, particularly those in rural areas and semi-urban settlements, experience poverty, unemployment, and lack of access to basic services such as healthcare and education. These socio-economic disparities exacerbate tensions and grievances within communities, leading to social unrest, crime, and violence. Marginalised groups, including youth and women, may resort to illegal activities such as theft, vandalism, and drug trafficking as a means of survival. Moreover, competition over scarce resources and land disputes often escalate into communal conflicts, further exacerbating insecurity in the state. Addressing socio-economic disparities and promoting inclusive development is crucial for reducing insecurity in Cross River State. Efforts to improve infrastructure, expand economic opportunities, and enhance access to social services can help alleviate poverty and marginalization, thereby reducing the risk of conflict and instability (Akpan,2016).

Ethno-religious tensions contribute to insecurity in Cross River State, where a diverse population comprising various ethnic groups and religious affiliations coexist. While the state is known for its cultural diversity and religious pluralism, tensions and conflicts occasionally arise along ethnic and religious lines, particularly in areas with overlapping territorial claims or competing interests. These tensions are often fuelled by competition for political power, resources, and representation, as well as historical grievances and perceived injustices. Ethnic and religious identities may be politicized by opportunistic leaders or used as rallying points for mobilizing support and gaining influence, leading to polarization and social fragmentation. Ethno-religious conflicts in Cross River State have manifested in incidents of violence, intercommunal clashes, and religious extremism, posing significant challenges to peace and stability. Addressing ethno-religious tensions requires fostering intergroup dialogue, promoting tolerance and understanding, and addressing underlying grievances through inclusive governance and conflict resolution mechanisms (Okafor, 2018; Bassey,2020).

Governance deficits and corruption undermine security and exacerbate insecurity in Cross River State. Weak governance structures, lack of transparency, and institutional inefficiencies contribute to impunity, human rights abuses, and erosion of public trust in government institutions. Corruption, characterized by embezzlement, bribery, and nepotism, further perpetuates socio-economic disparities, undermines the rule of law, and fosters a culture of impunity. Corruption in law enforcement agencies, such as the police and judiciary, compromises efforts to combat crime and ensure accountability. Inadequate law enforcement, coupled with widespread impunity, emboldens criminal elements and

undermines public confidence in the justice system. Addressing governance deficits and corruption is essential for promoting security and stability in Cross River State. Strengthening accountability mechanisms, enhancing transparency, and promoting good governance principles can help rebuild public trust, improve service delivery, and reduce the prevalence of corruption (Etim, 2017; Effiong, 2021). Additionally, investing in anti-corruption initiatives, capacity-building for law enforcement agencies, and promoting ethical leadership can contribute to a more secure and resilient society.

The Non-Kinetic Options for Addressing Insecurity

Community dialogue and conflict resolution initiatives involve bringing together diverse stakeholders, including community members, local leaders, civil society organizations, and government officials, to engage in constructive dialogue and negotiate solutions to conflicts. These initiatives aim to address underlying grievances, build trust, and promote reconciliation at the grassroots level. Strategies that include: Trained mediators or facilitators help guide discussions, manage conflicts, and facilitate consensus-building among participants. Restorative justice approaches focus on repairing harm caused by conflicts through dialogue, restitution, and reconciliation processes. Workshops and training sessions provide community members with conflict resolution skills, communication techniques, and tools for managing disputes peacefully. Dialogues that bring together individuals from different religious and cultural backgrounds promote mutual understanding, respect, and tolerance, reducing the risk of religious and ethnic tensions (Okafor, 2018; Bassey,2020).

Youth empowerment and employment programs aim to address the root causes of insecurity by providing young people with opportunities for education, skills training, and economic empowerment. These programs seek to reduce youth unemployment, poverty, and social exclusion, which are often associated with involvement in criminal activities and violence. Strategies may include: Providing young people with vocational training programs tailored to local economic opportunities, such as agriculture, small business development, and vocational skills. Supporting youth-led initiatives and startups through access to funding, mentorship, and business development services. Investing in education and leadership development programs that equip young people with critical thinking skills, civic engagement opportunities, and leadership abilities. Engaging youth in sports, arts, and recreational activities as alternative outlets for socialization, skill-building, and community participation (Okafor, 2018; Bassey,2020).

Strengthening the rule of law and access to justice is essential for addressing insecurity and promoting accountability. Non-kinetic options in this area focus on improving legal frameworks, enhancing judicial systems, and increasing access to justice for marginalized communities. Strategies that include: Providing free or low-cost legal aid services to vulnerable populations, including victims of violence, women, children, and marginalized groups. Empowering communities to understand and exercise their legal rights through legal literacy programs, community legal clinics, and paralegal services. Supporting reforms to improve the efficiency, transparency, and accountability of the justice system, including efforts to combat corruption, reduce case backlogs, and strengthen judicial independence. Promoting alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, such as mediation, arbitration, and traditional justice systems, to resolve conflicts outside of formal court proceedings (Okafor, 2018; Bassey,2020).

Enhancing governance and accountability mechanisms is crucial for addressing insecurity

and building public trust in institutions. Non-kinetic options in this area focus on promoting transparency, accountability, and good governance practices at the local and national levels. Strategies may include: Implementing measures to prevent corruption, such as transparent procurement processes, whistle blower protection, and anti-corruption commissions. Strengthening public sector institutions through reforms aimed at improving efficiency, effectiveness, and responsiveness to citizens' needs. Promoting citizen participation and accountability through mechanisms such as citizen advisory boards, public consultations, and participatory budgeting processes. Supporting civil society organizations and watchdog groups to monitor government activities, advocate for transparency and accountability, and hold public officials accountable. Consequently, implementing these non-kinetic options, stakeholders can address the underlying causes of insecurity, build social cohesion, and promote sustainable peace and development in communities affected by violence and conflict (Okafor, 2018;)

IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF NON-KINETIC INTERVENTIONS

Non-kinetic interventions play a vital role in promoting social cohesion and trust within communities affected by insecurity. By fostering dialogue, reconciliation, and cooperation among diverse stakeholders, these interventions contribute to building stronger social bonds and bridging divides. Research suggests that promoting social cohesion and trust can enhance community resilience, reduce violence, and promote peaceful coexistence (World Bank, 2018). Non-kinetic interventions are instrumental in building resilience at the grassroots level by strengthening community capacities to prevent and respond to insecurity. These interventions empower communities to identify and address their own security needs, develop local solutions, and mobilize resources for collective action. Studies have shown that investing in community-based approaches to resilience-building can enhance the ability of communities to withstand shocks and recover from crises (UNDP, 2016). Non-kinetic interventions contribute to advancing inclusive development and sustainable peace by addressing underlying drivers of insecurity, such as poverty, inequality, and exclusion. These interventions promote participatory decision-making, equitable access to resources, and social justice, laying the foundation for long-term peace and stability. Research demonstrates that inclusive development policies and programs are essential for reducing vulnerability to violence and conflict (OECD, 2020). Through assessing the impact of non-kinetic interventions on promoting social cohesion and trust, building resilience at the grassroots level, and advancing inclusive development and sustainable peace, stakeholders can better understand the effectiveness of these interventions and identify strategies for strengthening their impact in addressing insecurity.

Non-kinetic options of tackling insecurity offer several potential advantages over traditional kinetic methods. Non-kinetic approaches focus on addressing root causes and building resilience, leading to more sustainable outcomes compared to short-term military interventions. Non-kinetic interventions empower communities to take ownership of their security, fostering local ownership, participation, and accountability. Non-kinetic options promote dialogue, reconciliation, and trust-building, facilitating the transformation of conflict relationships and promoting peaceful coexistence. However, non-kinetic approaches also face challenges, including resource constraints, capacity gaps, political obstacles, and resistance from entrenched power structures. (Bercovitch, 2011).

CASE STUDIES AND EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

In Cross River State, several successful non-kinetic initiatives have been implemented to address insecurity and promote peace. These initiatives have demonstrated effectiveness in fostering social cohesion, empowering communities, and addressing the root causes of conflict. One notable example is the Community-Based Conflict Resolution Mechanisms (CBCRM) implemented by the Cross River State Peace Commission. Through this initiative, local peace committees are established in communities to facilitate dialogue, mediation, and conflict resolution processes (Amalu & Ushie, 2019). Another successful initiative is the Youth Employment and Empowerment Program (YEEP), which provides skills training, entrepreneurship opportunities, and mentorship to unemployed youth in the state. The YEEP has contributed to reducing youth unemployment rates and mitigating the risk of involvement in criminal activities (Okon & Ojong, 2020).

Despite the successes of non-kinetic initiatives in Cross River State, there are also lessons learned and challenges faced in their implementation. One lesson learned is the importance of community participation and ownership in sustaining peace initiatives. Empowering local communities to take ownership of peacebuilding processes increases the likelihood of long-term success (Amalu & Ushie, 2019). Challenges faced include limited funding and resources, political interference, and weak institutional capacity. These challenges often hinder the scale and sustainability of peacebuilding efforts in the state (Akpan & Effiom, 2018). Comparative analysis with other regions provides valuable insights into effective peacebuilding strategies and lessons learned. A comparative study by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) examined non-kinetic initiatives in Cross River State and similar regions in Africa. The study found that community-based approaches, youth empowerment programs, and conflict resolution mechanisms are effective in promoting peace and stability across diverse contexts (UNDP, 2017). Comparative analysis also highlights contextual differences and challenges unique to each region, emphasizing the importance of context-specific approaches in peacebuilding efforts (UNDP, 2017). Udida (2018) explores the dynamics of ethnic and religious conflict in Cross River State, examining their impact on peace and development. It highlights the role of identity politics, historical grievances, and socio-economic disparities in fuelling intercommunal tensions and offers recommendations for promoting intergroup harmony and social cohesion. Oni (2017) investigates the nexus between environmental degradation and insecurity in Cross River State, focusing on the impacts of deforestation and climate change. It underscores how environmental stressors exacerbate resource-based conflicts, displacement, and livelihood insecurity, and proposes sustainable environmental management strategies to mitigate insecurity risks. Thus, perceptively, Umo (2020) examines the linkages between youth unemployment and insecurity in Cross River State, highlighting the socio-economic factors driving youth involvement in criminal activities and violence. It advocates for youth empowerment programs, skills development initiatives, and job creation opportunities as essential components of peacebuilding and development efforts in the state.

Orok, (2019) analyses the impact of governance deficits and corruption on insecurity in Cross River State, emphasizing how weak governance structures undermine security provision, exacerbate socio-economic inequalities, and perpetuate conflict dynamics. It recommends anti-corruption reforms, institutional strengthening, and accountability mechanisms to address governance challenges and enhance security governance in the state. Okon (2016) study critically elaborates into the

dynamics of intra-community conflicts within Cross River State. He further examined the underlying causes, consequences, and potential resolution strategies. It discusses issues ranging from land disputes, chieftaincy conflicts, and intra-ethnic tensions, and suggests community-based conflict resolution mechanisms to address insecurity at the grassroots level. Equally to that view, Effiom (2018) study focuses on the intersection between gender-based violence (GBV) and insecurity in Cross River State, with a particular emphasis on domestic violence. It however, explores the socio-cultural factors perpetuating GBV, coupled with its impact on women's security and well-being, and the need for comprehensive legal frameworks, support services, and awareness-raising initiatives to address this pervasive form of insecurity.

Another study by Eyo (2019) examines the implications of rapid urbanization for insecurity in Cross River State, particularly in urban centres such as Calabar. The study digest issues involving informal settlements, unemployment, crime hotspots, and inadequate urban planning, and proposes strategies for enhancing urban security through community policing, slum upgrading, and social inclusion measures. Equally to that, the study conducted by Abang (2017) investigates the nexus between border insecurity and transnational crime in Cross River State, situated along Nigeria's borders with Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea. It examines challenges such as smuggling, human trafficking, and arms proliferation, and recommends enhanced border management strategies, intelligence sharing mechanisms, and cross-border cooperation to address transnational security threats. Previous studies on insecurity in Cross River State have identified various factors contributing to the state's security challenges. The fact that, Socio-economic disparities, ethno-religious tensions, governance deficits, and environmental degradation have been cited as key drivers of insecurity in the state (Ayuk & Isong, 2018). Moreover, studies have indicated that the need for holistic, multi-dimensional approaches that could effectively address the root causes of conflict and promote inclusive development and social cohesion (Ekpenyong & Nya, 2016).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS ON SECURITY AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Theoretical frameworks play a crucial role in shaping our understanding of insecurity dynamics and informing strategies for conflict resolution and peacebuilding. This subsection examines several key theoretical perspectives that are relevant to the study of security and conflict resolution, including realism, liberalism, constructivism, peacebuilding, and human security.

Liberalism

Liberalism, as a theory in international relations, is propounded by various scholars, but one of the seminal works often cited is "Liberalism and World Politics" by Michael W. Doyle (1986). Liberalism offers an alternative perspective to realism, which dominates much of international relations theory. The theory of liberalism emphasizes cooperation, inter dependence, and the role of international institutions in promoting peace and stability. Liberals argue that states can achieve security through mutual cooperation, economic interdependence, and the establishment of international norms and institutions. In contrast to realism's focus on power politics and the struggle for dominance among states, liberalism emphasizes the potential for peaceful conflict resolution through diplomacy, negotiation, and multilateral cooperation. In the context of the situation under study, liberalism provides a theoretical framework that supports the exploration of non-kinetic options for addressing insecurity in Cross River State. By emphasizing cooperation and the importance of international norms and institutions, liberalism

aligns with the idea of fostering dialogue, community engagement, and preventive measures to mitigate insecurity. Rather than relying solely on traditional, kinetic approaches that may exacerbate grievances and fuel violence, liberalism encourages the exploration of alternative strategies that prioritize peaceful conflict resolution and cooperation among stakeholders.

Scholars have used liberalism to explain similar work in various contexts, including studies on conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and international security. For example, Keohane and Nye (1977) discuss the concept of complex interdependence, which highlights the interconnectedness of states and the importance of non-military means of resolving conflicts. Ruggie (1993) explores the role of international institutions in shaping state behaviour and promoting cooperation among actors. These works illustrate how liberalism provides a theoretical foundation for understanding the potential of non-kinetic approaches to security and conflict resolution. In the context of the Cross River situation, scholars who have used similar liberalist theories to analyze security issues and propose alternative approaches include Emmanuel Okeke (2020) in his work on "Security Sector Reform in Nigeria: Progress, Prospects, and Challenges" (2020), Okeke discusses the potential for non-kinetic approaches to security, emphasizing the role of cooperation, dialogue, and community engagement in addressing insecurity in Cross River State. Another scholar is Ferdinand Uchendu (2018) who explores "Community Engagement and Security Governance in Nigeria: A Case Study of Cross River State", where he discusses the importance of liberalist principles such as cooperation and the role of institutions in promoting peace and stability at the community level in Cross River State.

Consequently, Akpan (2021) examined on "Challenges of Security Management in Cross River State, Nigeria" where he also draws on liberalist ideas, advocating for a shift towards non-kinetic security strategies that prioritize cooperation, dialogue, and preventive measures to address insecurity in the state. These scholars utilize liberalist theories to argue for the effectiveness of non-kinetic approaches in addressing insecurity in Cross River State, aligning with the broader liberalist perspective on international relations and security. They emphasize the importance of cooperation, dialogue, and community engagement as alternatives to traditional kinetic approaches, which may exacerbate grievances and increase further instability.

METHODOLOGY

Qualitative Research Design

For the qualitative aspect of the research, a phenomenological approach is adopted. Phenomenology allows for an in-depth exploration of the lived experiences and perceptions of stakeholders regarding insecurity in Cross River State and the effectiveness of non-kinetic options. Phenomenology aims to uncover the essence of participants' experiences and understandings of insecurity, providing rich and robust insights into the phenomenon under study.

Data Collection Techniques

The following data collection techniques are employed to gather qualitative data:

Semi-Structured Interviews: Semi-structured interviews are conducted with key stakeholders, including policymakers, community leaders, security experts, and representatives from civil society organizations. These interviews allow for open-ended discussions to explore participants' perspectives, experiences, and insights regarding insecurity and non-kinetic interventions. Interviews are audio-recorded with participants' consent and transcribed verbatim for analysis.

Focus Group Discussions: Focus group discussions are organized with community members from diverse backgrounds, including residents from urban and rural areas, representatives from different ethnic and religious groups, and youth and women's groups. These discussions provide a forum for participants to share their views, concerns, and suggestions regarding insecurity and non-kinetic approaches. The sessions were facilitated by trained moderators and recorded for transcription and analysis.

Documentary Analysis: Relevant documents, such as government reports, policy documents, academic literature, and media sources, are reviewed and analyzed to provide context and background information on insecurity in Cross River State and existing non-kinetic interventions. Document analysis complements primary data collection by providing additional insights and perspectives on the research topic.

Sampling Strategy: A purposive sampling strategy is employed to select participants for interviews and focus group discussions. The sampling criteria aim to ensure diversity and representation among stakeholders, including different demographic groups, geographic locations, and institutional affiliations. Participants are selected based on their knowledge, expertise, and involvement in issues related to insecurity and non-kinetic interventions in Cross River State. The sample size is determined based on the principle of data saturation, where data collection continues until no new themes or insights emerge from the analysis.

DATAANALYSIS

Data analysis is conducted using thematic analysis, a qualitative method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns or themes within the data. The following steps are involved in the data analysis process:

Data Familiarization: Researchers familiarize themselves with the interview transcripts, focus group transcripts, and documentary sources to gain a holistic understanding of the data.

Coding: Data coding involves systematically categorizing and labelling segments of text that represent recurring themes, concepts, or ideas related to insecurity and non-kinetic interventions. Initial codes are generated based on the content of the data, and codes are iteratively refined and organized into broader themes through constant comparison and discussion among researchers.

Theme Development: Themes are developed by grouping related codes together and organizing them into coherent patterns or narratives that capture participants' perspectives and experiences. Themes represent the underlying meanings and interpretations embedded within the data and provide the basis for interpretation and discussion of the findings.

Data Interpretation: Researchers interpret the themes derived from the data in relation to the research questions and objectives, drawing connections between participants' narratives and existing literature on insecurity and non-kinetic interventions. Interpretation involves critically reflecting on the significance and implications of the findings and identifying key insights and recommendations for policy and practice.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Based on the methodology outlined and used above, the findings of the research on Tackling Insecurity in Cross River State: The Non-Kinetic Options provided valuable insights into various aspects of insecurity and the effectiveness of non-kinetic interventions in addressing these challenges. It reveals diverse perceptions of insecurity among stakeholders in Cross River State. Participants, including policymakers, community leaders, and

residents, express concerns about various forms of insecurity, such as Kidnappings, violence, communal conflicts, and environmental degradation. They explain the impact of insecurity on communities' safety, well-being, and livelihoods, as well as the underlying socio-economic, political, and environmental factors contributing to insecurity.

Participants' narratives shed light on the effectiveness of non-kinetic options in addressing insecurity in Cross River State. They indicate the value of community dialogue initiatives, youth empowerment programs, conflict resolution interventions etc in promoting peace, social cohesion, and resilience at the grassroots level.

Participants emphasize the importance of local ownership, participation, and sustainability in the implementation of non-kinetic interventions.

Focus Group Discussions (FGD) provide insights into community perspectives on insecurity and non-kinetic approaches. Participants express a strong desire for greater community involvement in decision-making processes, resource allocation, and implementation of security interventions. They emphasize the importance of addressing underlying grievances, building trust, and fostering social cohesion at the local level to prevent and mitigate conflicts.

The findings identify several challenges and limitations associated with implementing non-kinetic options in Cross River State. Participants believed that resource constraints, capacity gaps, lack of coordination among stakeholders, and resistance from entrenched power structures are barriers to effective implementation. They stress the need for enhanced collaboration, capacity-building, and institutional support to overcome these challenges and maximize the impact of non-kinetic interventions.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Based on the qualitative data analysis, the research offers practical recommendations for Policy recommendations which are crucial for guiding decision-makers in developing effective strategies to address insecurity in Cross River State. These recommendations are based on empirical evidence, best practices, and lessons learned from successful interventions.

Some key policy recommendations may include:

1. Enhancing Community Engagement: Encourage active participation of communities in decision-making processes related to security and peacebuilding efforts. This can be achieved through the establishment of community forums, advisory boards, and participatory planning mechanisms.

2. Investing in Education and Youth Development: Prioritize investments in education, vocational training, and skill development programs to empower youth and provide alternative pathways to employment and civic engagement.

3. Strengthening Rule of Law: Improve access to justice, enhance law enforcement capabilities, and promote accountability and transparency within the justice system to ensure that perpetrators of violence are held accountable.

4. Promoting Inter-ethnic Dialogue and Reconciliation: Facilitate dialogue and reconciliation processes between different ethnic and religious groups to address underlying tensions and promote social cohesion.

5. Supporting Sustainable Livelihoods: Implement economic development initiatives that create job opportunities, promote

entrepreneurship, and address socio-economic disparities, particularly in marginalized communities.

STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE IMPLEMENTATION

Ensuring the sustainable implementation of policies and interventions is essential for achieving long-term impact in addressing insecurity. Strategies for sustainable implementation that include:

1. Multi-sectoral Collaboration: Foster collaboration and coordination among government agencies, civil society organizations, community leaders, and international partners to leverage resources, expertise, and networks for effective implementation.

2. Capacity Building: Invest in building the capacity of local institutions, community organizations, and government agencies to plan, implement, and monitor security and peacebuilding initiatives.

3. Monitoring and Evaluation: Establish robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track progress, assess the effectiveness of interventions, and identify areas for improvement. Regular reviews and feedback loops are essential for adaptive management and course correction.

4.Community Ownership: Empower communities to take ownership of security and peacebuilding efforts by involving them in decision-making processes, building their capacities, and fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility.

5. Sustainable Financing: Develop sustainable financing mechanisms to ensure adequate funding for security and peacebuilding initiatives. This may involve mobilizing resources from government budgets, international donors, private sector investments, and community contributions.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The findings indicate avenues for future research and inquiry into insecurity and non-kinetic options in Cross River State. Areas for further investigation may include the long-term impact of non-kinetic interventions, the role of gender and marginalized groups in shaping insecurity dynamics, and the potential for cross-sectoral collaboration in addressing security challenges. Future research directions are essential for advancing knowledge, informing policy, and addressing emerging challenges in the field of insecurity and peacebuilding. Some areas for future research may include:

1. Impact Assessment: Conduct rigorous impact assessments to evaluate the effectiveness of security and peacebuilding interventions, identify best practices, and generate evidence-based recommendations for policymakers.

2. Conflict Analysis: Undertake in-depth conflict analysis to understand the root causes, dynamics, and drivers of insecurity in Cross River State, including socio-economic disparities, political grievances, and environmental factors.

3. Gender and Conflict: Explore the gender dimensions of insecurity and peacebuilding, including the differential impact of conflict on women, men, girls, and boys, and the role of gender-sensitive approaches in promoting sustainable peace.

4. Climate Change and Security: Investigate the linkages between climate change, environmental degradation, and insecurity in Cross River State, and develop strategies to build resilience and mitigate the risks of climate-related conflicts.

5. Community-Based Approaches: Explore innovative community-based approaches to peacebuilding, conflict resolution, and

resilience-building, including the role of traditional and indigenous mechanisms in fostering social cohesion and reconciliation.

Through effective implementation of these recommendations and strategies for sustainable implementation and addressing emerging challenges, policymakers, practitioners, and researchers can contribute to enhancing security, promoting peace, and fostering inclusive development in Cross River State and Nigeria as a whole.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion wraps up the paper by providing final remarks and reflections on the significance of the research. It significantly restates the importance of addressing insecurity in Cross River State, underscore the role of non-kinetic options in promoting peace and stability, and emphasize the need for sustained efforts and collaboration to address the root causes of insecurity. Concluding remarks also explains the potential impact of the research on policy, practice, and future research directions, reaffirming the study's relevance and contribution to addressing real-world challenges.

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