Poverty and Security Situation in Nigeria

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DOI: 10.56201/ijefm.v9.no5.2024.pg97.120

Abstract
The widespread issue of poverty and security in Nigeria has become overwhelming for both the government and the citizens. This challenging situation has worsened the conditions of individuals living in abundance, significantly impacting the nation's progress. This study explored the relationship between poverty and security conditions in Nigeria. Specifically, it examined how the poverty rate, political stability index, unemployment rate, and inflation rate correlate with the security risks index in Nigeria from 1991 to 2022. The research employed the Augmented Dickey-Fuller (ADF) tests, the Autoregressive Distributed Lag (ARDL) technique, as well as stability and diagnostic tests due to the nature of the variables used for estimation. The findings revealed that the poverty rate has a negative but significant correlation with the security threats index. Similarly, the political stability index shows a negative but insignificant correlation with the security threats index. Additionally, there is a strong and clear correlation between the inflation rate and the security risks index in Nigeria. Conversely, the unemployment rate coefficient shows a positive and significant correlation with the threats index in Nigeria. Therefore, it is essential for the government to enhance physical security measures nationwide by implementing robust security infrastructure and enforcing stringent punishments for those who violate security protocols. This underscores the need for the government to take proactive measures to address security challenges and threats. These strategies should include providing training, utilizing modern intelligence gathering techniques, sharing intelligence, managing logistics, and deploying contemporary technologies to effectively address security issues.

Keywords: *Poverty rate, security threats index, political stability index, unemployment rate, inflation rate*

1.1 Introduction

Poverty significantly jeopardizes national security. At the community level, leaders depend on residents' participation to ensure the safety of lives and property. The preservation of mutual cooperation hinges on the leadership's dedication to the residents' comfort and well-being. In a broader societal framework, this mutually beneficial relationship primarily exists between the upper echelon and the impoverished segment, which largely makes up the lower class. The primary responsibility of a nation's defense structure is to protect the lives and well-being of its citizens and the overall security of the community and the nation. However, the extent to which security services are rendered to the state depends on the compensation provided by the state. If the state fails to create conditions that alleviate poverty, then poverty becomes a threat to national security (Akran, 2018).

Recently, Nigeria's security system has received increased global attention due to systemic vulnerabilities and policy deficiencies. Despite Nigeria's wealth of intellectuals, technocrats, and vast mineral resources, the majority of its population lives in severe poverty. The country has recently experienced various crimes, including financial crimes, transnational organized crimes, armed robbery, theft, kidnapping, clashes between farmers and herdsmen, political assassinations, vandalism of government infrastructure, insurgency by Niger Delta militants, and terrorism by the Boko Haram sect (Adegoke, 2015; Osawe, 2015). Additional issues include the unequal distribution of income from natural resources, the presence of insurgent groups, pervasive corruption within government institutions, the lack of programs to manage cultural diversity, the absence of pre-conflict strategies, and a significant proportion of unemployed youth. Poverty contributes to the formation of militia groups that employ heavy weaponry and improvised explosive devices (IEDs). This issue has gained significant recognition both nationally and internationally, especially in Sub-Saharan African countries, including Nigeria (Abati, 2006; Ikyase & Namo, 2018).

Currently, most individuals in Nigeria are experiencing extremely poor living conditions that have reached alarming levels and have proven unsolvable due to weak state institutions and pervasive corruption. Poverty in Nigeria is as conspicuous as an elephant in a river, representing a form of modern-day enslavement in Africa. Its impact is widespread. An impoverished person poses a challenge to society and even to their well-being. They often exhibit anger, lack productivity, and rely on militia operations for survival. Poverty in Nigeria is a result of economic marginalization, unemployment, inequality, and lack of education. These factors are the main reasons behind the increasing prevalence of insecurity in the country. In this context, this study examines the correlation between poverty and the security situation in Nigeria.

1.2 Research Problem

The fall in the standard of living in developing countries, as well as Nigeria, has resulted in an increased incidence of poverty. This decline is linked to the contraction of economic growth in countries like Nigeria. Currently, a significant portion of the Nigerian population faces severe

deprivation in their living conditions, which has escalated to alarming levels. This situation has proven difficult to address due to the inadequate functioning of state institutions and widespread corruption. According to a report, nearly six individuals fall into poverty every minute in Nigeria. In 2020, Nigeria continued to have the highest number of people living in extreme poverty, with approximately 93.9 million Nigerians affected. This situation meant that over seven million Nigerians were experiencing extreme poverty during that year (Uzoho, 2021). The latest multi-dimensional poverty index from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) shows a poverty rate of 63% (NBS, 2022).

The global community has recently focused more on Nigeria's security system due to systemic vulnerabilities and deficiencies in policy formulation. The persistent poverty in Nigeria has resisted various policies and initiatives from both current and past administrations aimed at curbing its rapid expansion. Examples of such policies include the Operation Feed the Nation initiated in 1977, the National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS) implemented in 2014, the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) launched in 2001, and the establishment of the National Directorate for Employment (NDE) in 1989. In 2011, President Goodluck Jonathan's administration emphasized poverty eradication through the Transformation Agenda and President Yar'Adua's Seven Point Agenda (Adekunle & Alokpa, 2018). The current government has pledged to lift 100 million Nigerians out of poverty over the next decade. Additionally, poverty is a major focus for global institutions, as highlighted in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set by the World Bank and the United Nations (Musakwa & Odhiambo, 2020).

Poverty is a significant driver of insecurity in Nigeria. The country faces challenges such as unequal revenue distribution from natural resources, the presence of insurgent groups, pervasive corruption within public institutions, the lack of comprehensive cultural diversity management programs, the absence of pre-conflict strategies, and a high rate of youth unemployment. In this context, this study examines the relationship between poverty and the security situation in Nigeria.

2.0 Review of Related Literature

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Poverty

Poverty is a widespread issue that impacts people across various locations, continents, and nations in numerous ways. It exists in all countries and regions, though its severity differs from one place to another (Binuyo, 2014). Therefore, poverty can be understood as the absence of essential human necessities required for everyday survival (Awojobi, 2014). Poverty is the state where individuals lack sufficient income to access essential health services, food, shelter, clothing, and education necessary for a better quality of life (Ogbeide & Agu, 2015; World Bank, 2011).

Definitions and measurements of poverty can be divided into two main categories: "income poverty" and "poverty resulting from a lack of basic needs." Income poverty refers to the condition where a person does not have enough financial resources to achieve a certain standard of living. On the other hand, basic needs poverty is the result of insufficient fundamental necessities such as

food, shelter, and clothing (Ogbeide & Agu, 2015). This study employs the income perspective of poverty as defined by Ogbeide and Agu (2015) to conceptualize poverty. This approach is utilized because it is straightforward to measure and aligns with internationally recognized benchmarks, such as the thresholds of $1 and $2 per day.

2.1.2 Security

Security and insecurity, though seemingly contradictory, actually reinforce each other. Insecurity exists to create opportunities for the achievement and realization of security. According to Akin (2008), security refers to the measures taken by organizations or groups to prevent imminent harm to individuals or groups. Security can be understood as a collection of strategies designed to protect and defend against hostile actions intended to harm an adversary. Conversely, insecurity arises from specific actions or inactions that result in varying levels of risk, fear, hazards, uncertainty, and even death. Security is often perceived as more desirable than insecurity, which can have severe consequences that destabilize nations and cause extensive destruction.

Aliyu (2012) pointed out that historically, much of the mainstream literature on security studies defined it as the ability of a state to protect its borders from real or perceived threats and acts of aggression by potential adversaries. Thus, it is the responsibility of governments to develop, sustain, and modernize their military forces to achieve this goal. A state's ability to resist, fend off, or effectively intimidate an adversary eliminates potential or perceived danger and hostility. Domestically, it is commonly believed that a state can achieve security through its law enforcement agencies and other domestic intelligence tools. Nonetheless, the topic of security has been thoroughly explored in existing literature.

2.2 Nigeria's Security Situation

Nigeria is currently facing more security challenges than at any other time in its history. The northern region is grappling with issues such as the Boko Haram insurgency, armed militancy, kidnapping, cattle rustling, illegal mining and mineral theft, smuggling, and conflicts between nomadic herders and farmers. In the southern region, there are significant problems including armed militancy, abduction, oil theft and illegal refining, armed robbery, secessionist movements, and the smuggling of contraband (Ajayi, 2023). The security challenges can be summarized as follows:

Banditry

Bandit activities are causing severe humanitarian issues. These include physical harm, fatalities, destruction of livelihoods, disruption of essential services, and the displacement of people. In 2021, bandits were most active in Nigeria's North Central and Northwest regions. Reports suggest that a terrorist organization provided training to these bandits prior to their attacks (Tribune Online, 2021). This indicates a link between terrorism and banditry, increasing the likelihood of a rise in violent conflicts. The Nigerian government responded to the bandit attacks in 2021 with both military and peaceful strategies. Several state governments abandoned previously signed peace

agreements with certain bandit groups and opted for comprehensive military operations instead (Abubakar, 2020).

One factor contributing to the rise in banditry is the worsening relationship between farmers and herders. The scarcity of grazing routes, pasture, and water has become a significant cause of deadly conflict (The New Humanitarian, 2021). Additionally, ethnic tensions between the Hausa and Fulani communities in Zamfara have exacerbated the situation. Following the 2013 assassination of a prominent Fulani leader, the Fulani community sought revenge by systematically killing numerous Hausa individuals (Vanguard, 2021).

As a result, successive waves of attacks and retaliations from both sides have intensified the conflict. The ongoing violence led to the formation of ethnic militias and armed vigilante groups by both the Fulani and Hausa communities to carry out their disputes. These groups have caused the deaths of many innocent people and damaged the homes of civilians. Furthermore, the government's inability to manage the escalating conflicts in Nigeria has allowed various criminal organizations to establish and institutionalize their activities (Hamza, 2021).

2.2.2 Terrorism

Terrorist activities, including suicide bombings, kidnappings, and widespread destruction, have significantly harmed Nigeria, deterring foreign investments (Imhonopi & Urim, 2022). In Northeast Nigeria, such acts have displaced almost 3 million people and caused around 350,000 deaths (Council on Foreign Relations, 2021). The Nigerian Emergency Management Agency reports that rebels have destroyed approximately 254 schools in the Northeast, forcing about 120,000 students to abandon their education (Granville, 2020).

In 2021, a new trend in terrorism emerged. Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau killed himself with explosives to avoid capture by the Islamic State West African Province (ISWAP) (Premium Times Nigeria, 2021). ISWAP, led by Abu Musab al-Barnawi, took over Shekau's territories and detained 30 high-ranking Boko Haram officers loyal to Shekau (Kingley, 2021). This allowed ISWAP to strengthen its control over vulnerable areas, with farmers and combatants paying Zakat (taxes) to ISWAP (allAfrica.com, 2021). Reports also indicate ISWAP members wearing Nigerian military uniforms and setting up checkpoints to collect "tolls" from drivers.

Several factors contribute to terrorism in Nigeria, including corruption, poverty, unemployment, religious extremism, and illiteracy. Studies show that many in the Northeast live in poverty and are easily recruited by terrorist groups for survival. Foreign terrorist organizations like ISIS, Al-Qaeda, and Al-Shabab also influence terrorism in Nigeria by encouraging vulnerable individuals to commit acts of terror.

Farmer–Herder Conflict

The ongoing conflict between farmers and herders has become a significant security issue in Nigeria. This crisis has escalated from spontaneous clashes to planned and deadly attacks (Crisis

Group, 2018). The consequences include forced migration, social instability, food insecurity, decreased agricultural productivity, and high unemployment. In 2018, farmer-herder violence in North Central Nigeria caused over 1,500 deaths and displaced many others (Crisis Group, 2018). Initially, these conflicts were mainly in the Northern states of Taraba, Benue, Kaduna, Plateau, Nasarawa, and Adamawa, but recent reports suggest the violence has spread nationwide (Isola, 2022). The conflict arises from competition for grazing land and scarce resources, exacerbated by urbanization and climate change (ACCORD, 2021). Government inaction has worsened the situation (Osumah, 2021).

The primary cause of the farmer-herder conflict is debated. Some argue it is due to animals damaging crops (Brotem, 2021; Daniel, 2021), while others cite reduced farmland, climate change, loss of grazing areas, and cattle theft (Ebuta, 2018; Crisis Group, 2017). Population growth and competition for limited resources also fuel the conflict. The United Nations reports Nigeria's population grew from 33 million in 1950 to nearly 192 million in 2018, with projections of 364 million by 2030 and 480 million by 2050 (Akpoghome & Adikaibe, 2019). This rapid population increase strains land and water resources. Additionally, Benin Republic's enhanced border security and cross-border grazing ban to protect its sovereignty have heightened tensions, exposing herders to threats and mistreatment (Akpoghome & Adikaibe, 2019).

2.2.4 Secessionist Struggles

Nigeria is currently experiencing significant separatist movements, particularly in the southern regions (Nextier SPD, 2021). The most notable of these is the push for an independent Biafran state, led by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) under Nnamdi Kanu. IPOB has formed a parallel security organization called the Eastern Security Network (ESN) and is actively campaigning for independence. Additionally, the Yoruba Nation movement has seen a rise in secessionist demands in the Southwest, leading to extensive debate and conflict across the region's six states (Kabir, 2021).

In the Southeast, armed groups have persistently targeted security forces and government properties, employing ambush tactics to inflict harm, cause destruction, and steal weapons (Ujumadu et al., 2021). Security authorities often attribute these attacks to IPOB members, although the group consistently denies responsibility. Consequently, security forces have been conducting raids on suspected camps to apprehend or eliminate the perpetrators (Alozie, 2022). However, there have been reports of human rights violations and unlawful killings, further complicating the issue (Yakubu & Eromosele, 2021).

There is a misconception that Biafra is the only separatist threat in Nigeria. The country is also facing separatist movements from the Niger Delta Republic and the Arewa Republic. Insecurity and perceived discrimination by the federal government fuel these separatist sentiments. In the Southeast, heavy-handed security measures contribute to the desire for secession among some groups (Campbell & Quinn, 2021). Nigeria appears reluctant to address ethnic concerns effectively (Adibe, 2017). The lack of a sense of inclusion and ownership among certain ethnic groups has

led to demands for division and increased attacks by armed groups. While some regions exert significant control, others feel marginalized. Additionally, many historians attribute the persistent secessionist demands to the failures of federalism, arguing that Nigeria operates a centralized but weak system. The federal government's monopoly significantly contributes to Nigeria's structural problems (Council on Foreign Relations, 2022).

Extra-judicial Killings

Police brutality remains a critical issue in Nigeria. Beyond the illegal actions of some security officers, extra-judicial executions by mobs and vigilantes are prevalent. Communities have established local vigilante groups to protect their areas, but many innocent people have suffered fatal or serious harm without due process (Nextierspd.com, 2021). Agnes Callamard, the UN Special Rapporteur on Extra-judicial Executions, describes the situation in Nigeria as volatile and prone to erupting due to growing injustice. The prevalence of extra-judicial killings is driven by the slow criminal justice system and allegations of corruption within government institutions (Maruf, 2017). These issues erode public trust in the government, increase lawlessness, and lead to reactionary responses to crime.

The lack of trust between security agencies and citizens significantly contributes to extra-judicial killings. Experts cite the government's deliberate violations of fundamental rights and its indifference to protecting residents as primary reasons for these incidents (Ezeikpe, 2018). Other contributing factors include inadequate training of security personnel, insufficient accountability mechanisms, and limited access to due process and the criminal justice system (Thenationalnews, 2022).

2.2.6 Cultism

According to Nextier SPD (2021), Nigeria's youth increasingly face security threats from cult and gang activities. Higher education institutions, in particular, have become hotbeds for violent cults and criminal gangs. These cult organizations have extended their influence into communities, recruiting individuals from primary and secondary schools (Adebumti, 2021). The expansion of these groups and their growing membership present significant security challenges for Nigeria. Cults, which function as organized armed groups, can be hired to instill fear and intimidation in society. Some scholars argue that certain Nigerian elites are linked to cultism, militancy, and political thuggery (Nche, 2019). The central issue is that cult groups provide mercenary services to the political elite. Factors such as poor parental education, peer pressure, substance abuse, emotional instability, and ineffective political leadership contribute to cultism. Unfortunately, the Nigerian government has made minimal efforts to address this threat to national security and development (Ajibola, 2020).

Theoretical Review

The frustration-aggression hypothesis and relative deprivation theory suggest that individuals may resort to violence when they face perceived or actual obstacles hindering their life goals. The frustration-aggression theory posits that aggressive behavior always follows frustration, and that frustration inevitably leads to some form of aggression. Frustration is typically defined as the blocking of a desired goal. This theory, also known as the frustration-aggression displacement theory, was proposed by Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer, and Sears in 1939 (quoted in Uzoh, 2016).

According to this theory, aggression arises when a person's efforts to achieve a goal are thwarted. If the source of frustration cannot be confronted, the aggression is redirected toward an innocent target. This theory can also explain the occurrence of riots and revolutions, as economically disadvantaged and marginalized groups may express their frustration and anger through violent acts (Uzoh, 2016).

Relative deprivation theory, introduced by Ted Robert Gurr in 1970, is closely related to the frustration-aggression theory. This theory emphasizes that individuals may perceive themselves as deprived relative to others. Inter-group antagonism is driven primarily by perception rather than actual relative standing. This often occurs when conditions for one group improve more slowly than for another. The theory suggests that collective actions arise from individuals who perceive a lack of goods and services. People and groups who feel deprived of certain goods and services are more likely to unite to improve or protect their situation. Gurr argues that the likelihood of collective violence is greatly influenced by the degree and extent of relative deprivation experienced by individuals within a group. Just as dissatisfaction leads to individual aggression, relative deprivation can predict collective violence in social groups (Gurr, 1970 cited in Uzoh, 2016). This issue has been prevalent in Nigeria for many years.

This research explores the connection between poverty and insecurity, focusing on the concept of relative deprivation. When resources are insufficient to meet everyone's needs, those who are deprived may experience relative deprivation, particularly among the poor. This sense of deprivation can drive individuals to engage in criminal activities such as banditry, kidnapping, robbery, prostitution, drug abuse, and conflicts between farmers and herders. These criminal activities result in a lack of security, causing people to lose their livelihoods and forcing them to leave their homes, leading to widespread poverty in the community. Draman (2003) has identified several theoretical and empirical studies demonstrating a clear link between poverty and insecurity. These studies show that poverty, inequality, resource scarcity, and external economic forces collectively destabilize political stability. These arguments can be categorized into psychological and economic perspectives.

2.4 Empirical Literature

Oyigebe and Meshach (2023) explored the link between poverty and insecurity and their impact on sustainable national development in Nigeria, using the frustration-aggression and relative deprivation theories as analytical frameworks. They employed qualitative content analysis and found that factors such as corruption, poor governance, and policy inconsistencies have led to widespread extreme poverty, contributing significantly to Nigeria's high insecurity levels.

Ohazuruike (2020) examined Nigeria's major security challenges and proposed solutions. Using an exploratory design and secondary data analysis, the study found that the Nigerian state is weak and ineffective in addressing its numerous security issues. Additionally, Nigeria's heavy reliance on coercive measures has been insufficient in tackling insecurity effectively.

Amina and Ibrahim (2020) investigated the impact of poverty on Nigerian youth and security problems, establishing a theoretical connection. They also examined how Nigeria's political dynamics influence youth contributions to insecurity. Their historical-descriptive research, using secondary data, revealed that Nigerian politics has been marked by violent activities, including ballot snatching, thuggery, bloodshed, and assassination, since independence. Poverty has fueled the rise of extreme and terrorist organizations, some with religious undertones and others based on ethnic and regional ties. The study concluded that poverty is a primary driver of all forms of violence, especially in societies with a large youth population.

Odalonu and Obani (2020) analyzed the correlation between poverty and the rise of Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria's North-East using secondary data and the theories of relative deprivation and frustration-aggression. They identified multiple factors contributing to Boko Haram's emergence, but highlighted poverty as the main catalyst. The insurgency has severely disrupted the region's economic activities, increasing poverty rates and displacement. Boko Haram's actions threaten Nigeria's security, unity, and economic progress. The study concluded that unresolved economic and political issues would continue to fuel insecurity in the North-East.

Iheagwam, Iheagwam, and Oni (2020) studied the factors contributing to poverty, its impact on human security, and strategies to alleviate poverty in Nigeria between 2000 and 2018, using secondary data and content analysis. They found that poverty not only affects human security but also underpins several human security issues.

Okolie, Onyema, and Basey (2019) examined the correlation between poverty and insecurity in Nigeria using a descriptive approach and a survey of 600 participants. Their analysis, based on the frustration-aggression hypothesis, showed a positive and significant correlation between poverty and insecurity. The study also found that poverty had a statistically significant impact on insecurity.

Literature Gap

The literature review reveals inconsistencies in the understanding of poverty and security conditions in Nigeria. There is a lack of scholarly discourse on the correlation between poverty and security in Nigeria. This study aims to address this gap by examining the consequences of the persistent increase in poverty and insecurity from 1991 to 2022, despite numerous efforts by individuals and the government to tackle these issues. This research seeks to establish that poverty and insecurity are directly linked, with one exacerbating the other, a connection that has been insufficiently explored in previous studies.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Model Specification

According to the frustration-aggression hypothesis and relative deprivation theory, individuals are prone to violent behavior when they encounter obstacles that they perceive or experience as impediments to their life goals. The frustration-aggression theory posits that aggressive behavior is always preceded by frustration, and that frustration inevitably results in some form of aggression. The model's functional notations are as follows:

$SEC = f(POV, POLS, UNEM, INF)$……..……(1)
Where;
SEC = Security threats index
POV = Poverty rate
POLS =Political stability index
UNEM = Unemployment rate
INF = Inflation rate

The linear regression equation derived from the functional relationship above is:
$SEC = \beta_0 + \beta_1 POV + \beta_2 POLS + \beta_3 UNEM + \beta_4 INF + \mu$……(2)

The logarithmic conversion of the equation above yields the structural form of production function as:
$LnSEC = \beta_0 + \beta_1 POV + \beta_2 LnPOLS + \beta_3 UNEM + \beta_4 INF + \mu$……(3)

The intercept of the function is represented by β0, and the estimation parameters are denoted by β1 through β4. The natural logarithm is indicated by Ln, and the stochastic variable is symbolized by μ. It is expected that the security situation in Nigeria will negatively correlate with the poverty rate, political stability index, and unemployment rate. However, if the estimated parameters show signs or magnitudes that conflict with economic theory, they will be considered invalid unless there is substantial evidence suggesting that economic theory does not apply in that particular instance.

3.2 Method of Data Analysis

The features of the time series data used for model estimation will be examined to avoid spurious regression, which occurs when nonstationary series are regressed. Unit root tests are crucial in assessing the stationarity of a time series because a nonstationary regressor invalidates many standard empirical results and thus requires special handling. Granger and Newbold (1974) found through simulation that the f-statistic from the regression involving nonstationary time-series data does not follow the standard distribution, leading to overstated significance and spurious results. The variables in this study will be subjected to stationarity tests and made stationary using the Augmented Dickey Fuller (ADF) test, which addresses the problem of autocorrelation by including sufficient terms to ensure that the error term is serially uncorrelated (Dickey & Fuller, 1979, 1981). The equation estimated for the ADF test is as follows:

$$\Delta Y_t = \beta_1 + \beta_2 + \delta Y_{t-1} + \alpha i \sum_{i-1}^{m} \Delta Y_{t-1} + \mu_t \text{ ----------(4)}$$

Where; ΔY_t is the change in time t
ΔY_{t-1} is the lagged value of the dependent variables
$\sum_t$ is the white noise error term.

If $\delta = 0$ in the above context, it indicates the presence of a unit root. Otherwise, the series is stationary. The lag selection will be guided by the Akaike Information Criterion.

After performing stationarity tests, the Autoregressive Distributed Lag (ARDL) bounds testing approach, as introduced by Pesaran et al. (2001), will be utilized for cointegration analysis. This methodology is preferred due to its superior small sample properties compared to other methods, such as those proposed by Engel and Granger (1987), Johansen and Julius (1990), and Phillips and Hansen (1990). The ARDL bounds testing approach offers the advantage of accurately capturing the data generation process within a general-to-specific framework, allowing for an unconstrained Error Correction Model (ECM) with appropriate lags. This method avoids the need to classify variables as I(1) or I(0) by creating bands of critical values to differentiate between stationary and non-stationary processes.

3.3 Sources of Data

The data were sourced from the World Development Index and The GlobalEconomy.com. The relevant variables collected include the security threats index, poverty rate, political stability index, and unemployment rate for the period from 1991 to 2022.

4.0 PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

4.1 Time Series Properties of the Variables

To determine the integration order of each variable in the model, an analysis of their time series properties was performed. The Augmented Dickey-Fuller (ADF) test was used to estimate unit roots. The results of the ADF test are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Augmented Dickey Fuller Unit Root Test

Variables	ADF-Statistic	Critical Value @ 1%	Order of Int.
Security threats index (LnSEC)	-6.295447	-3.670170	1(1)
Poverty rate (POV)	-4.431384	-3.670170	1(1)
Political stability index (LnPOLS)	-6.146902	-3.670170	1(1)
Unemployment rate (UNEM)	-4.609924	-3.670170	1(1)
Inflation rate (INF)	-7.761744	-3.689194	1(0)

Source: Author's Compilation using E-views 9 Output

The study utilized unit root test techniques, specifically the Augmented Dickey-Fuller (ADF) test, to determine the presence of unit roots in the series and to prevent spurious regression results. The results of the unit root tests indicated that the security threats index (LnSEC), poverty rate (POV), political stability index (LnPOLS), and unemployment rate (UNEM) were integrated of order 1 (denoted as 1(1)), as they were stationary at first differences. In contrast, the inflation rate (INF) was stationary at level 1 (denoted as 1(0)), indicating it is integrated of order 0.

Based on the ADF test results, the conditions for conducting the Johansen cointegration test were not met. Such discrepancies between test outcomes are common in practical applications (Shahbaz & Rahman, 2012). According to Ouattara (2004), the bounds test approach is appropriate when the variables exhibit a combination of I(0) and I(1) integrations. Therefore, the study proceeded with the bounds test to investigate the long-run relationship between the variables.

To explore this relationship, the study employed the Autoregressive Distributed Lag (ARDL) method, which is suitable for time series data characterized by different orders of integration (a mixture of I(0) and I(1)).

4.2 ARDL Bounds Testing Procedure

The ARDL modeling approach, following the methodology outlined by Pesaran and Pesaran (1997), was employed to analyze the long-term dynamic relationships among the variables in the model. The F-statistics test was conducted to assess the overall significance of the coefficients of all variables included in the model. According to the decision rule, if the computed F-statistic exceeds the upper bound value I(1), the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating the presence of cointegration. Conversely, if the computed F-statistic is below the lower bound value I(0), the null

hypothesis of no cointegration is accepted. If the calculated F-statistic falls between the lower and upper bounds, the test is considered inconclusive.

Table 4.2 ARDL Bound Test

Test Statistic	Value	K
F-statistic	4.377694	4
Critical Value Bounds		
Significance	**I0 Bound**	**I1 Bound**
10%	2.45	3.52
5%	2.86	4.01
2.5%	3.25	4.49
1%	3.74	5.06

Source: Author's Compilation using E-views 9 Output

One of the advantages of the ARDL method is its capability to simultaneously estimate both the short-term and long-term effects of independent variables on the dependent variable, even with limited sample sizes. The results of the ARDL model presented in Table 4.2 were analyzed using a bound test to determine the presence of cointegration. The outcome of the bound tests indicated rejection of the null hypothesis of no cointegration for the model. This conclusion was supported by the F-statistics value of 4.377694, which exceeded the upper bound critical value at the 5% significance level, affirming the existence of long-term equilibrium among all relevant variables.

However, these relationships among variables may diverge due to unforeseen economic disturbances in Nigeria. Furthermore, the optimal lag length was determined using the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC). The ARDL (2, 0, 0, 1, 1) model was selected based on the AIC criterion, as it yielded the lowest AIC value.

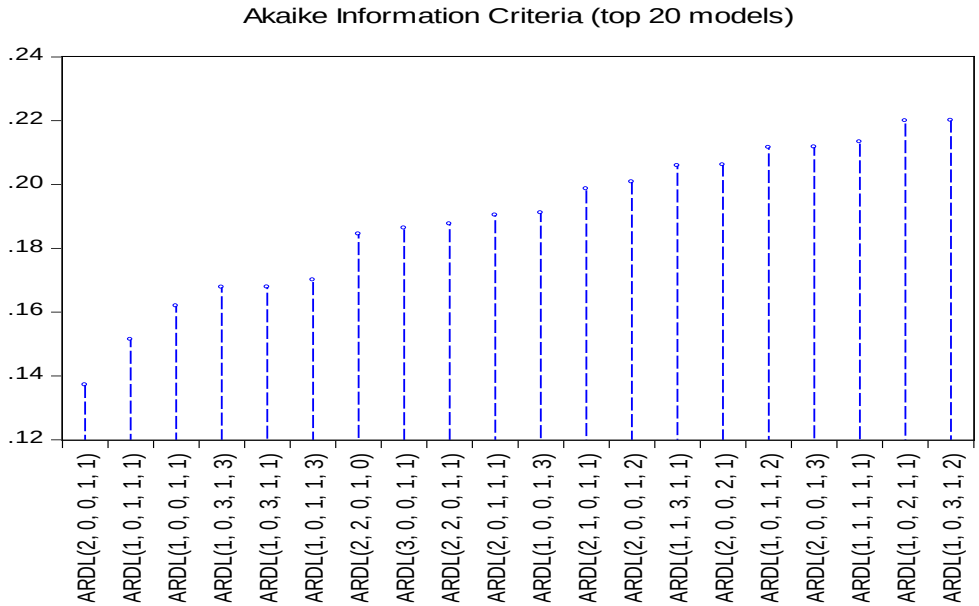

Figure 4.1: Akaike Information Criterion Lag Length for Model

4.3 ARDL Estimated Short-run and Long-Run Coefficients

The results for the short-run and long-run coefficients of the variables analyzed were estimated using the optimal ARDL model selected based on the AIC criterion. Below are the estimated coefficients for both the long-run and short-run effects:

Table 4.3 Estimated Long-run and Short-run Coefficients

	Regressor	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
Short-run	Security threats index D(LNSEC(-1))	-0.281585	0.195836	-1.437866	0.1652
	Poverty rate D(POV)	-0.021673	0.005470	-3.962163	0.0007
	Political stability index D(LNPOLS)	-0.018278	0.080461	-0.227169	0.8225
	Unemployment rate D(UNEM)	-0.391631	0.170218	-2.300756	0.0318
	Inflation rate D(INF)	-0.001952	0.004352	-0.448512	0.6584
	CointEq(-1)	-0.562954	0.179306	-3.139622	0.0049
R-squared = 0.532342 Adjusted R-squared = 0.354186 F-statistics = 2.988070 Prob (F-statistics) = 0.021095 Durbin Watson = 1.802548					
Long-run	Poverty rate (POV)	-0.038499	0.015785	-2.439041	0.0237
	Political stability index (LnPOLS)	-0.032468	0.139935	-0.232026	0.8188
	Unemployment rate (UNEM)	0.694021	0.285482	2.431051	0.0241
	Inflation rate (INF)	-0.018146	0.006631	-2.736505	0.0124
	Security threats index (LnSEC) ie., C	3.101500	0.616287	5.032556	0.0001

Source: Author's Compilation using E-views 9 Output
Note: * denote statistical significance at the 5% level.

In the long-run analysis, the coefficient of the poverty rate (POV) in Nigeria shows a significant negative correlation with the security threats index. Specifically, a one-unit increase in the poverty rate leads to a decrease of 0.038 units in the security threats index. This underscores that higher levels of poverty exacerbate instability within the economy, aligning with the notion that individuals experiencing deprivation are more prone to frustration and anger, potentially contributing to social unrest. Conversely, the coefficient of the political stability index (LnPOLS) and inflation rate (INF) both exhibit negative correlations, although statistically negligible, with the security threats index. An increase of one unit in LnPOLS results in a decrease of 0.03 units, while an increase in INF leads to a decrease of 0.018 units in the security threats index.

In contrast, the coefficient of the unemployment rate (UNEM) shows a positive and significant correlation with the security threats index in Nigeria. A one-unit increase in unemployment results in an increase of 0.039 units in the security threats index.

In the short-run, the coefficients for the poverty rate (D(POV)) and unemployment rate (D(UNEM)) also exhibit negative and statistically significant correlations with the security threats index. An increase of one unit in D(POV) and D(UNEM) leads to decreases of 0.02 units and 0.039 units, respectively, in the security threats index. On the other hand, the coefficients for D(LnPOLS) and D(INF) show statistically negligible and negative correlations with the security threats index, where an increase of one unit in D(LnPOLS) results in a decrease of 0.018 units, and an increase in D(INF) results in a decrease of 0.002 units in the security threats index.

The R-squared value of 0.532342 indicates that the explanatory variables collectively account for 53.2% of the variation in the security threats index in Nigeria. The adjusted R-squared value of 0.354186 suggests that even after adjusting for the number of explanatory variables, the model explains approximately 35.4% of the variation in the security threats index accurately.

The F-statistic of 2.988070 with a corresponding p-value of 0.021095 indicates that the overall model is statistically significant. The Durbin-Watson statistic of 1.802548 falls within the acceptable range of 1.5–2.0, indicating no significant autocorrelation in the residuals.

The coefficient of the error correction term (ECM(-1)) is -0.562954, indicating a significant adjustment towards long-term equilibrium. This means that about 56.3% of any deviation from the equilibrium in the security threats index is corrected within one year by the explanatory variables. This adjustment speed suggests a substantial convergence towards long-term stability in the model.

4.5 Diagnostics and Stability Test for ARDL Model

Various diagnostic tests were conducted to assess the robustness and stability of the model and to validate the accuracy of the findings. These tests encompassed examinations for regression pathologies such as serial correlation, heteroskedasticity, normality, Autoregressive Heteroskedasticity (ARCH), model specification using the Ramsey RESET test, as well as CUSUM and CUSUMSQ tests. The following summary provides an overview of the results obtained from each diagnostic test:

Table 4.4: Diagnostic Checking of the Model

Test Type	F-statistic	**Prob.**	**Remarks**
Serial Correlation (Breush-Godfrey Serial Correlation LM Test)	0.444310	0.6478	No serial correlation
Heteroskedasticity Test (Breush-Pagan-Godfrey)	2.386000	0.0628	No heteroscedasticity
ARCH Test (Autoregressive Heteroskedasticity Test)	1.007267	0.3245	No ARCH effect
Model Specification Test (Ramsey RESET Test)	1.478852	0.2381	Model Specification well specified
Normality Test (Jarque-Bera Statistics)	0.395103	0.820738	Normally distributed residuals

Source: Author's Compilation from E-views 9 Output

The Breusch-Pagan Godfrey test was utilized to assess heteroskedasticity, yielding a p-value of 0.0628, which surpasses the significance level of 0.05, indicating no evidence of heteroskedasticity in the model. Meanwhile, the Autoregressive Conditional Heteroscedasticity (ARCH) model, characterized by an autoregressive structure, showed heteroskedasticity across various time periods. Consequently, it was necessary to conduct an ARCH test, as per Gujarati & Porter (2009). The obtained probability value of 0.3245, exceeding the 5% significance level, supports accepting the null hypothesis that no ARCH effect exists. This outcome is advantageous, affirming that the causality model is devoid of heteroskedasticity.

Specification errors can arise when there is a relationship between an independent variable and the error term, or when the model excludes relevant variables or includes irrelevant ones. Omitting crucial variables can misallocate common variation among them, inflating the error term. Conversely, including extraneous variables can incorrectly attribute shared variance to them, affecting regression coefficient estimations significantly. To assess model specification, the Ramsey Specification Error Test (RESET) was employed to determine if non-linear combinations of estimated values could enhance the understanding of the endogenous variable. The probability value of 0.2381, exceeding the 5% significance level, indicates that the F-statistic was insignificant, confirming the null hypothesis of no omitted variables in the model.

Serial correlation in the model was evaluated using the Breusch Godfrey Serial Correlation LM test, resulting in a p-value of 0.6478, indicating no serial correlation as the value exceeded the 5% threshold.

The CUSUM and CUSUMSQ tests serve as criteria to assess the stability of model coefficients. If these statistics remain within the critical bounds of a 5% significance level, the model is considered stable and desirable. Visual representations of these outcomes are presented below.

These diagnostic tests collectively validate the model's reliability, ensuring it is free from issues such as heteroskedasticity, specification errors, and serial correlation, thereby bolstering confidence in the accuracy of the model's conclusions.

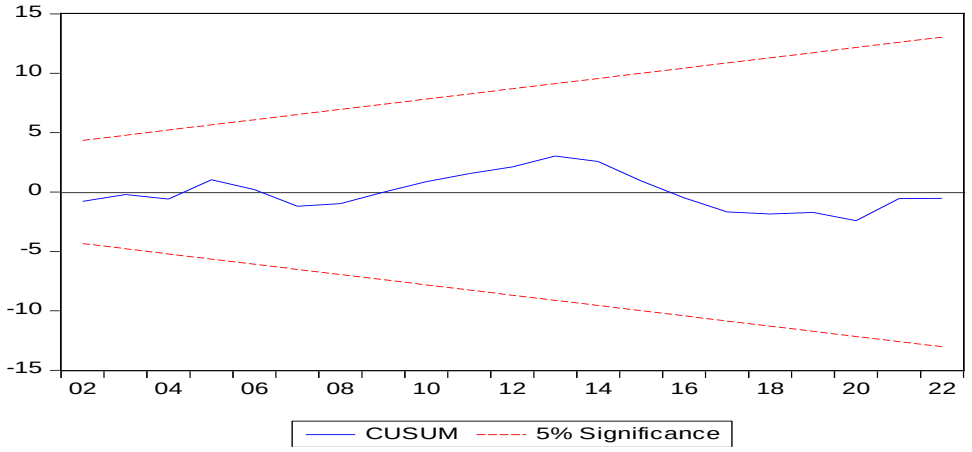

Figure 4.1: Plot of Cumulative Sum (CUSUM) of Recursive Residuals

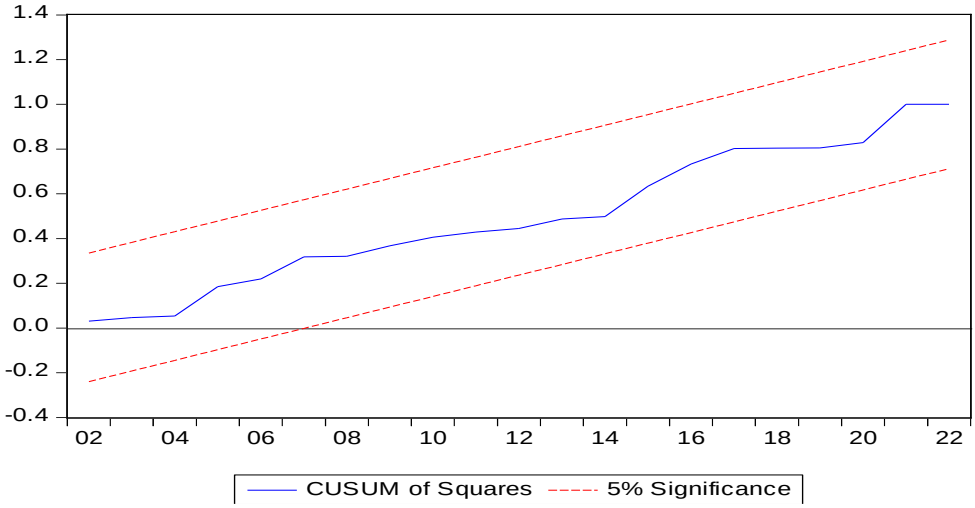

Figure 4.2: Plot of Cumulative Sum of Squares (CUSUMQ) of Recursive Residuals

The Cumulative Sum (CUSUM) plot of Recursive Residuals reveals a minor structural deviation beyond the 5% threshold initially, indicating a potential structural break. However, the model stabilized thereafter, remaining within acceptable bounds. Similarly, the CUSUMSQ plot of Recursive Residuals shows stability within the 5% threshold throughout. These findings affirm the reliability of the model, indicating that it operates effectively and that the conclusions drawn from it are accurate and trustworthy. This ensures that the model meets the necessary criteria for robustness and reliability in its application.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Poverty remains a critical and multifaceted challenge in Nigeria, significantly impacting the country's security landscape. The study underscores that Nigeria's pervasive poverty, threatening the well-being of millions, primarily stems from human actions. Persistent shortcomings in executing sustainable poverty reduction policies, compounded by over-reliance on oil revenue, have exacerbated poverty levels. Furthermore, misuse of public office by Nigerian officials has compounded these issues.

The research identifies a substantial negative correlation between the poverty rate and the security threats index in Nigeria. However, the political stability index shows a negative association with the security threats index that lacks statistical significance. In contrast, inflation rates demonstrate a significant correlation with security risks in Nigeria. Moreover, there is a notable positive correlation between unemployment rates and security threats.

To mitigate these challenges, it is crucial for the government to bolster national security measures by investing in security infrastructure and enforcing stringent penalties for security breaches. Proactive measures should include enhancing training, utilizing advanced intelligence gathering techniques, promoting intelligence sharing, optimizing logistical support, and deploying cutting-edge technology to effectively manage security threats.

Additionally, addressing poverty and inequality requires concerted efforts from all levels of government to create sustainable employment opportunities. This approach not only alleviates poverty but also enhances social stability and economic resilience across Nigeria.

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