
ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH INTELLIGENCE GATHERING IN NIGERIA

YILTAW E. GWAMIS

Email: yiltawe.gwamis2020@nda.edu.ng

Abstract

Nigeria has been experiencing insecurity issues for some time now. These insecurity issues ranging from kidnapping, cultism, militancy, ethno-religious conflicts, armed robbery, murder etc. has had a telling effect on the country, thereby halting economic and infrastructural development in the country. Hence, qualifying the assertion of Robert McNamara which says "security is development and without security there will be no development". However, such issues became prevalent in the society due to the inability of security agencies to carry out their intelligence gathering function as expected of them. Therefore, it was in the light of this reality that the study was carried out. The paper adopted Systems theory as its theoretical framework to evaluate issues associated with intelligence gathering in Nigeria. Secondary data method was used which permits the researcher to consult internet newspapers, academic journal, research sites etc. for data collection. The paper agrees that, the security of the state is dependent on intelligence gathering, without which the state is bound to suffer different kinds of insecurity challenges. Thus, validating the fact that there's a linkage between intelligence gathering and the security of a state. The study made the following recommendations; Proper orientation and re-orientation of security personnel, synergy in intelligence efforts, win the trust of citizens and adequate payment of security personnel.

Keywords: Intelligence Gathering, Security Agencies, Insecurity Issues, Nigeria

Introduction

From earliest times, intelligence has often involved covert operations intended to influence the course of events by methods ranging from deception to assassination” (Andrew 2019, 2). The regulations are constantly broken in clandestine intelligence activities. Simply put, these kinds of operations are inherently extra-legal and occasionally criminal (John Magruder, cited in Weiner 2008, 13). Henschke and Walsh (2024) opined that, when it comes to intelligence, it may be necessary to lie, spy, and manipulate others; in certain cases, it may even be commendable. Psychologists have conducted extensive research in the three areas of memory distortion, false confessions, and deception detection in the years following the September 11, 2001 tragedies. This research is pertinent to the collection of intelligence in ways that improve the likelihood that things won't go wrong (Loftus, 2011). The intelligence apparatus in the United States is extensive. Its

mission is to assess, integrate, and interpret information. It is made up of over a dozen agencies with about 100,000 employees (Fingar, 2011). According to Itoje-Akpokiniovo (2022) By giving national security decision makers fast, processed information, intelligence as an enterprise can prevent impending dangers to a nation. This is accomplished by gathering secret information about the capabilities, policies, and activities of foreign countries. To contain these risks, nations need certain tools. In order to respond effectively and protect themselves from both internal and external dangers, countries also implement strategies and policies, such as defense and security policies (Enahoro, 2010).

Intelligence plays a critical role in military operations by providing direction. The operation is likely to succeed if the intelligence is accurate. The 1991 Persian Gulf War operations Desert Storm and Desert Shield demonstrated the importance of this claim. During these missions, the US military received sufficient intelligence. The precision of the in-depth intelligence on the capabilities, vulnerabilities, and intentions of the enemy made the operations successful. In addition to directing military strength where it was most required, this allowed the US military to have a comprehensive perspective of the enemy (Itoje-Akpokiniovo, 2022). Baginski (2007) states that, due to the complexity of today's threats, it is now necessary for all national power tools to function as a cohesive system in order to defeat our enemies. This includes traditional diplomatic, military, and law enforcement problems. Professionals from the military, intelligence, and law enforcement communities have come together thanks to the emergence of joint task forces, intelligence operations centers, and fusion centers. This has given them a rare chance to exchange methods and tools for the defense of the country.

“In the face of these realities, and the need to collaborate effectively, intelligence and security agencies the world over have fallen into the trap of non-collaboration and indeed competition thereby attenuating security management and national security. In Nigeria, this challenge lives with us. Independent intelligence reports have shown lack of cooperation between military intelligence authorities and the state security service on one hand and between the intelligence agencies and law enforcement agencies on the other. This apparent anomaly is responsible for the massive intelligence failures in Nigeria and the triumph of domestic terrorists' attacks by Boko Haram in Northern Nigeria. Added to this are proven cases of lack of patriotism, ethnic, religious and political sentiments by security agents. Above all, a major missing link in security management is the alienation of the community in information/intelligence gathering in ways that hurts the nation greatly. Be it the counter insurgency operations in the Niger Delta or Boko Haram in the North, community integration provides the most dependable approach in security management in Nigeria. It is therefore logical by public safety and national security standards for Nigerian

intelligence community to witness the current level of massive intelligence failures against Boko Haram in Northern Nigeria where series of successful attacks have cast serious doubts on Nigeria's public safety capabilities" (Nte, 2013, pg 3).

Phenson et al (2014) opine that, Nigeria's insecurity issues can be linked to shortcomings in the collection and appropriate application of intelligence. The public's reluctance to provide security organizations with useful information is one of the many obstacles preventing the collection of intelligence. One of the main causes of the shortcomings in the deployment of vital security elements is the lack of citizen participation in state security management and their reluctance to give security information to law enforcement.

Statement of the Problem

Nigeria has recently seen an unprecedented degree of insecurity. Over time, this has put the foundation of national security at risk, and a great deal of resources have been invested to keep it at bay (Adegoke, 2020). Itoje-Akpokiniovo (2020) states that, Over the years, Nigeria's security and law enforcement organizations have struggled with the issue of insufficient intelligence sharing. Inadequate technical and human intelligence capabilities are the reason for Nigeria's inability to collect intelligence for security operations. These presumptions stem from the general perception of intelligence failure. To Adegoke (2020) The problems of insecurity can be linked to a failure to collect intelligence and use it appropriately. He further asserts that, One of the biggest obstacles to addressing the nation's insecurity is the appropriate use and precise assignment of responsibilities for the intelligence services to support security goals. The Department of State Service (DSS), also known as the State Security Service (SSS), the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), and the National Intelligence Agency are among the many intelligence organizations in the nation tasked with providing timely and accurate intelligence to address threats to national security. However, The importance of intelligence products in security operations is diminished by factors such as a lack of analytical abilities. Arguments concerning the quantity and caliber of intelligence gathered for national security have arisen in Nigeria as a result of recent occurrences, which include the Boko Haram story and the ongoing sectarian tensions in the Jos Plateau, among others (Itoje-Akpokiniovo, 2020).

Another issue is the government's incapacity to act quickly on intelligence information at their disposal in order to counteract insecurity. According to an intelligence report on the kidnapping of the Chibok girls, the government of President Goodluck Jonathan at the time was informed that

the terrorist organization Boko Haram was preparing to kidnap schoolchildren in Maiduguri and transport them across the Nigerian border in a coastal bus. Nevertheless, the administration took little to no action to prevent this regrettable event, and now the country is suffering from the loss of more than 200 schoolgirls.

Due to the aforementioned issues discussed, the most disturbing problems that prompted this research lie in the following questions; is there any dichotomy between security and intelligence gathering in Nigeria? What is the reason behind the unwillingness of citizens to collaborate with intelligence agencies in Nigeria and is it affecting the country negatively. Thus, the paper adopts descriptive and analytical approach to examine critically issues associated with intelligence gathering in Nigeria.

Methodology

The paper adopted qualitative survey approach method, since the study focuses on collecting data on intelligence gathering in Nigeria in which issues associated with it were put into consideration. The data collection method used for this research was secondary data collection method, which permits the researcher to consult Journals, research sites and additional publications that were vital for the study. While, the research design employed in this study was descriptive and the findings were based on content analysis method.

Literature Review

The history of intelligence stretches back millennia, but it is only recently that these histories have become more open to the public. “For centuries before the Second World War, educated British people knew far more about intelligence operations recorded in the bible than they did about the role of intelligence at any moment in their own history” (Andrew 2019, 1). This suggests that secrecy is a trait that is frequently linked to intelligence. Secrecy is frequently regarded as an important and distinguishing characteristic of intelligence (Warner, 2002).

Intelligence is defined as knowledge that has been gathered, honed, and condensed to satisfy the explicit, well-defined demands of policymakers. Countries need information about their local surroundings as well as those of other countries. They must monitor both internal and external threats to maintain their security, therefore this is required (Lowenthal, 2000). Awotayo et al (2024) averred that, the ability to understand the world, make decisions, and control behavior are

all components of intelligence. The ability to recognize objects and events, present information using a world model, and reason about future planning are examples of higher levels of intelligence. According to Warner (2000), The definition of intelligence revolves around secrecy.

Intelligence is not intelligence without secrets. To put it correctly, intelligence is the set of actions—whether analysis, gathering, or secret action—conducted on behalf of a country's foreign policy that would be nullified if its foreign "subjects" realized the hand of another nation and changed their behavior accordingly. Two more components are added to the analysis of intelligence operations in liberal democracies by the notion of dirty hands. First, the idea of "dirty hands" suggests that individuals in certain professions can be required to perform actions that are not acceptable under normal conditions. The benefit of this tactic is that it highlights the unique moral relevance of the position of political leadership, which is a key theme in the dirty hands literature (and realism literature as well) (Coady, 2011). Martin (2016) affirms that, It can be challenging to define intelligence because it has changed with the security environment and has different meanings for different states and agencies. According to traditional definitions, information or (fore)knowledge in a covert and "foreign" political environment is emphasized and manifested as a process, activity, or product. Even though it is rather broad, the current context encompasses both the domestic and international realms.

Thus, the paper looks at intelligence gathering as the gathering of vital information by security agencies through certain means for the sole purpose of ensuring national security.

Linkage Between Intelligence Gathering and Internal Security in Nigeria

Leaders need to have solid justifications for their choices in order to make wise choices. This exemplifies how intellect is understood. In order to reduce the uncertainty of policy makers, good intelligence will try to identify which reactions or outcomes are more likely to occur and, thus, where attention should be directed (Lowenthal 2017). According to Adegoke (2020) In Nigeria, there is no connection between intelligence producers and users. People who use intelligence, not those who create it, judge its worth; intelligence is most effective when it is completely interwoven with its users. Therefore, to ensure high-quality national security, intelligence and security agencies must effectively collaborate (Adegoke, 2020). Henschke and Walsh (2024) affirms that, information and decision-making are key. Furthermore, epistemic activity—such as information gathering, input, analysis, and distribution from collectors and analysts, as well as decision-making

by their leaders—is a part of the decision-making process, or at least the basis upon which the ultimate decision is reached. According to Nte 2013, Over the years, Nigeria's security and law enforcement organizations have struggled with the issue of insufficient intelligence sharing.

This problem is present in Nigeria. According to independent intelligence sources, there is a lack of collaboration between the state security service and military intelligence authorities, as well as between law enforcement and intelligence services. This seeming abnormality is the cause of Nigeria's severe intelligence shortcomings as well as the success of Boko Haram's domestic terrorist activities in Northern Nigeria. Furthermore, there are documented instances of security personnel lacking political, religious, ethnic, and patriotist attitudes. Above all, the community's alienation from information/intelligence collecting in ways that seriously harm the country is a significant weakness in security management (Nte, 2013). Bala (2020) states that, the threat profile facing Nigeria is akin to that facing US at the start of the war on terror. Some level of coordination exists within Nigeria's security service as it did in the US. However, the 9/11 Al-Qaeda attacks were successful because critical information was not understood for what it was and not interpreted correctly across the agencies. In Nigeria, such information is sometimes hoarded, and other agencies are treated with suspicion, leading to information silos and analysis gaps. Because intelligence is essential to nations, national intelligence organizations must be established and maintained among the Federal Government of Nigeria's agencies responsible for intelligence operations. These agencies include the National Intelligence Community (NIC), the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), and the Department of State Services (DSS), also known as SSS. Electronic devices and human labor are the mainstays of modern intelligence collection. It is carried out deliberately in a broad setting and, most of the time, discreetly; it goes beyond simply stealing someone's secret (Nte, Eke, and Anele, 2010).

Theoretical Framework

Systems Theory

“nothing could be understood by isolating merely one part of what plays a significant role in a system”- Ludwig Von Bertalanffy.

The research adopts systems theory as the theory suitable for its analysis. According to Laszlo and Krippner (1998), Leading scholars like Alfred North Whitehead, Ludwig von Bertalanffy, Anatol Rapoport, Kenneth Boulding, Paul A. Weiss, Ralph Gerard, Kurt Lewin, Roy R. Grinker, William

Gray, Nicolas Rizzo, Karl Men-ninger, Silvano Arieti, and, more recently, dynamical systems theorists, family systems theorists, and those who study dissipative structures and holistic paradigms have all contributed to the history of systems theories. Systems theory, which has its roots in biology, was created in the 1950s in response to the need for a collection of systematic theoretical frameworks for discussing the empirical world (Boulding, 1956; Bertalanffy, 1951). Systems theory also originated from mechanical engineering's cybernetic systems theory (Ashby, 1954; Wiener, 1948). Cybernetics describes the management and exchange of information within a machine system (Almaney, 1974).

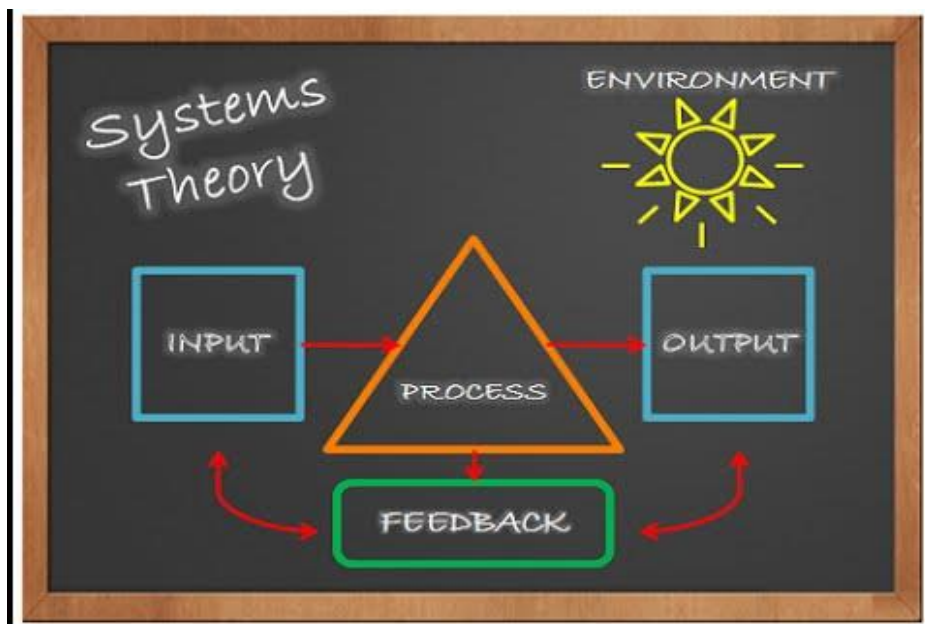
As with general systems theory, cybernetic systems theory principles were found to be helpful in explaining the behaviors of social systems that were derived from machine systems. To assist them maintain a stable state, cybernetic systems specifically rely on various feedback or control techniques. Numerous disciplines, including social science, ecology, and management, use systems theory. Researchers can learn about the behaviors of organizations at the macro and policy levels in addition to the individual level by using a comprehensive approach to system knowledge. Systems theorists frequently use multidisciplinary methods, referencing disciplines like physics, psychology, sociology, and mathematics, to investigate complex systems. This enables them to examine behavioral patterns and feedback-driven regulatory mechanisms (Skyttner, 2005). Bertalanffy (1968) argued that, Complex systems, according to systems theory, are more than the sum of their components, and a deeper comprehension of the whole can be attained by looking at the connections between those elements.

The goal of systems theory is to explain the interdependencies and dynamic relationships between system components as well as the relationships between organizations and their environments. The structure and patterns of the relationships that arise from the interactions between components provide the basis of a system. Because of these linkages and emergent patterns, every system is unique. To put it another way, social organization components have their own wills and intentional objectives, unlike biological systems. The environment, the social organization as a system, and the human players within the organization are the three levels of observations that are generally the focus of systems theory (Lai and Lin, 2017). Heil (2017) opined that, Systems theory considers every potential cause of the issue and looks at each one separately to see how it affects the system. The ideal way to define a system is as a collection of related items or components that together

constitute a complicated whole. A basic idea of what a generic system is is provided by this definition.

When discussing systems theory, Russell Ackoff claims that every component affects how the system functions as a whole, that every component is influenced by at least one other component, and that every element's potential subgroups have the first two characteristics (Ackoff, 1981). Adegoke (2020) argues that, it is assumed that the system is balanced. The fundamental stability of the other components of the system is sensitive to any disruptive factors. Second, society has limits as a system. It is possible to distinguish between elements that are part of the system and those that are not. Its borders must be upheld or only slightly changed in order to preserve equilibrium. Third, the social system's components are all connected to and related to one another.

Systems theories are extremely important in organizational psychology because they enable us to comprehend and examine the intricate relationships between the various elements that make up organizational behavior systems. A systems view, for instance, might assist in determining the connections and influences between various organizational components. This can assist in determining the underlying causes of issues and creating interventions that are more successful (Katz & Kahn, 1978). In summary, systems theory is a vital instrument for comprehending the intricate and ever-changing systems that influence our day-to-day existence (Bertalanffy, 1968).



Diagrammatical explanation of Systems Theory

Therefore, based on the various scholarly submissions on systems theory, this study finds it suitable for analysing security situations in Nigeria in relation to intelligence gathering, owing to the fact that, systems theory supports the coordination, the cooperation, the interrelation and the interconnection of different components in the society for the attainment of its goals. Thus, the essentiality of Intelligence gathering to the government and the society at large cannot be overemphasized as it is the pillar which holds the sovereignty of government. That's because vital information gathered are transmitted or disseminated to various governmental agencies for the purpose of promoting national security. According to Adegoke (2020), the intelligence community's output is dispersed among various agencies.

In clear terms, the security system consists of different sectors. These separate parts work purposely to ensure the healthiness of the whole system. In other words, they work independently and interdependently to ensure the smooth running of the entire system, when one part of the system malfunctions it affects the general functioning of the system. As such, intelligence gathering is a branch of security system in every society, therefore, its malfunctioning or when there's an issue with intelligence gathering the society is at risk of any possible danger.

Security Agencies and Intelligence Gathering in Nigeria

According to Awotayo et al (2024) The origins of Nigeria's intelligent system can be traced back to Ibrahim Gbadamosi Babangida's National Security Agencies Decree No. 19, 1986, issued during his administration, the National Security Agencies Act, Cap. N.74 of the Laws of the Federation 2004, and the Police Acts and Regulations Laws of the Federation, 2004. These legislation also created the Defense Intelligence Agency and the State Security Services. The Nigerian police are mandated by law to preserve both public order and internal security. Nigeria's intelligence community consists of the police, the Directorate of State Security Service (DSS), which is responsible for domestic intelligence, the National Intelligence Agencies (NIA), which is responsible for foreign intelligence and counterintelligence activities, and the Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA), which is responsible for military intelligence (Awotayo et al, 2024). Oshodi (2016) states that, when it comes to the safety and well-being of our residents, everyone, and everything that represents the government's interests, the State Secret Service and other national intelligence organizations continue to serve as the primary eyes guarding a number of crucial blind spots in our society.

However, Over the years, Nigeria's security and law enforcement organizations have struggled with the issue of insufficient intelligence sharing. Inadequate technical and human intelligence capabilities are the reason for Nigeria's inability to collect intelligence for security operations. These presumptions stem from the general perception of intelligence failure (Itoje-Akpokiniovo, 2022). Awotayo et al, 2024) averred that, the rise in terrorism, militancy, kidnappings, and armed robberies, to mention a few, is evidence that Nigeria's numerous security services have inadequate intelligence. Despite the huge yearly budgets allocated to these security services, they are mostly responsible for the deficiencies in intelligence collection and sharing of such intelligence reports with other relevant security agencies for appropriate implementation.

Critical intelligence was misinterpreted and not properly comprehended by agencies, which contributed to the success of the Al-Qaeda strikes on 9/11. There are information silos and gaps in analysis since such information is occasionally hoarded in Nigeria and other agencies are viewed with distrust (Bala, 2020). Even though the Army and the Police in Dapchi's case quarrelled over who should really take control of the town's security, it is still surprising that the intelligence agencies were blind to the terrorists' movement from their base along the edges of Lake Chad up to the town (Leo, Mutum, and Matazu, 2018). The incidents show how the various institutions are not in agreement with one another. The tragic but widely reported kidnappings of schoolgirls by Boko Haram on April 15, 2014, in Chibok, Borno State, and in Dapchi, Yobe State, on February 19, 2018, respectively, demonstrate how command and control and collaboration among institutions and even the civilian populace could result in serious breaches to national security and citizen safety (Bala, 2020). One of the problems identified as problem in intelligence gathering, is intelligence sharing, most of the intelligence gathered are not shared among the security agencies in Nigeria. Intelligence sharing arrangements cover an array of potential activity between governments including, inter alia, information sharing, operational cooperation, facilities and equipment hosting, training and capacity building, and technical and financial support (Privacy International, 2017). Awotayo, et al (2024) state that, Nigeria's intelligence community has faced interesting challenges as it attempts to handle the danger to its internal security posed by the widespread insecurity in some areas of the nation. The effectiveness of intelligence has been questioned due to ongoing intelligence failures and the ensuing condition of uncertainty.

Officers and staff from various security organizations have engaged in interagency rivalry, which has had a detrimental effect on inter-security activities in the country even though a whole of government approach has been used in defence governance through the involvement of different security organizations in multidimensional interagency operations. It is anticipated that these security organizations would work together to combat the nation's insecurity. But as criminals and non-state terrorist organizations continue to take advantage of the weaknesses in defence governance, it has proven challenging to accomplish this goal (Akale and Owan, 2023). State services such as intelligence and operational units must work together to achieve sustainable successes in order to counter threats that are highly networked and operated by operatives who communicate with one another in complex ways. According to Bala (2020), there needs to be a precise delineation of participant agencies and assigned tasks in order for shared objectives to be accomplished. When dealing with different facets of a danger, entities that already have established mandates may not need to be created or repurposed. Collaboration with different agencies is essential for the successful implementation of a multifaceted approach to conflict resolution. It takes interagency cooperation to achieve effective defence governance against both external and internal threats (Akale and Owan, 2023).

Relationship Between Nigerian Citizens and Security Agencies as it Relates to Intelligence Gathering

It is impossible to overstate the importance of intelligence-led policing as a practical alternative in the criminal justice system anywhere in the world. Decision-making, planning, strategic targeting, and crime prevention all depend on the professional and covert collection and processing of information (intelligence) by the appropriate police agencies (Olajire, 2023). Numerous studies highlight the unmatched advantages of police-community partnerships as a real law enforcement tool (Bergstrom, 2015; Chatterton, 2009). Blackmore (2014) highlighted the importance of effective police-community ties throughout the nation and the numerous benefits they bring. He emphasized how community members' knowledge is valued and frequently regarded as a trustworthy source of data required to combat crime in the United States of America.

According to Adegoke (2020), Intelligence collection is not the same as information exchange. Information is distributed using the same techniques as intelligence, but it must satisfy the intelligence cycle's rigorous standards and undergo careful assessment of its sources and substance.

He further asserts that, the information collected from the public is meant to serve as the foundation for producing useful and achievable intelligence, but in Nigeria, things are very different because people fear being charged by law enforcement, particularly the police, and that bad actors within the agencies may link information to criminals or suspects.

(Adegoke, 2020) The majority of Nigerians do not trust security agencies and agents because of some unpleasant incidences and antecedents (Lanshima, 2018; Ugwuoke, 2015). The conclusion that many authorities are unaware of and do not adhere to professional ethics is not an understatement. Private data is compromised and made public. For financial reasons, crime organizations may reveal the identity of people who volunteer to provide information (Adegoke, 2020). According to Langshima & Langshima (2024), As a result, many Nigerians have taken matters into their own hands and are refusing to cooperate with agents and security agencies that are trying to obtain intelligence. There are multiple reasons for this mistrust. Many Nigerians believe that security agencies and agents should embrace intelligent systems and technologies for intelligence and security management in light of technological advancements.

Conclusion

Intelligence gathering is the gathering of vital information by security agencies through certain means for the sole purpose of ensuring national security. It is a processed information given to decision-makers by the producers of intelligence to act upon, so as to stabilize the security of the country. That is because, it gives clear picture of threats or insecurity issues challenging the peace and sovereignty of the state. Just as it's being agreed in the social contract, it is the primary responsibility of government to provide security of lives and properties and the state as a whole. Therefore, it becomes imperative for government agencies charged with the task of intelligence gathering and security to be up and doing in order to ensure the security of lives, properties and the state at large.

Recommendations

The paper made the following recommendations;

1. **Orientation and Reorientation;** there are cases of security officers saddled with the responsibility of intelligence gathering underperforming when it comes to executing their duties, due to lack of proper training. This alone is posing serious challenge to intelligence gathering in Nigeria. Therefore, government should ensure that security personnel in charge of intelligence gathering are properly oriented and reoriented, so as to carry out their duty effectively and professionally.
2. **Synergy in intelligence efforts;** one major challenge facing the intelligence community is lack of synergy in intelligence efforts. This lack of cooperation and collaboration has cost the country a lot in terms of its fight against insecurity as security agencies work separately without synergizing so as to get vital information or intelligence about the situation of things as it relates to the security of the country. Therefore, there's need for the government to ensure that there is synergy among security agencies when carrying out their intelligence gathering duty, so as to facilitate their efforts and get the work done effectively.
3. **Win the trust of Citizens;** if there's anything which utmost importance should be placed upon when carrying out intelligence gathering function, then, it should be the relationship between the citizens and the producers of intelligence as there are information which may be difficult for intelligence officers to get without aligning with the people. However, in Nigeria today, the citizens do not trust the security officers as some of the security officers are capable of implicating the informants in the issue they are investigating, therefore, they are not interested in cooperating or collaborating with them in their efforts to gather intelligence. This has hindered them from effectively carrying out their duty. Hence, the reality in the country. So, government should try as much as possible to ensure that it wins back the trust of the citizens by educating security officers on how to relate with the people and by also making sure that trusted security officers are charged with the responsibility of intelligence gathering so as to avoid cases of information leakage to criminals.
4. **Adequate Payment of Security Personnel;** our security personnel are not adequately motivated to carry out their duties. This boils down to inadequate payment or poor remuneration. No one, will give out his best when not properly taken care of or when underpaid. This is a very critical issue in Nigeria, as this security personnel have separate

issues that can only be handled financially. So, therefore, the government should look into this, in order to motivate intelligence officers to take their duties seriously.

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