STRENGTHENING NATIONAL SECURITY THROUGH EMOTIONAL EMPOWERMENT AND COMBAT SELF-EFFICACY AMONG MILITARY AND SECURITY PERSONNEL IN ― ― ― NIGERIA ― ― ―

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Abstract
The growing incidence of violence, terrorism and insurgency in Nigeria has been a major concern to scholars in recent times. There is no gain saying, from all indications to assume that the nation is right in the theatre of war and insecurity. Despite all strategic and diplomatic efforts already taken by the government of the day in tackling the menace, the problem remains unabated. Yet, national security is the requirement to maintain the survival of the state through the use of economic power, diplomacy, power projection and political power. Howbeit, to ensure national security, effective military or Armed forces remains a major requirement. The military and other security outfits must be in a state of combat readiness. Hence, this paper focuses on the need to strengthen national security through emotional empowerment and combat self-efficacy among the military and security personnel in Nigeria. It is hoped that inculcation of these competency skills in those that are

constitutionally charged with maintaining security, will further enhance their performances, and thereby attain the much desired national security in Nigeria.

Key words: Emotional empowerment; combat self-efficacy; military; national security; Nigeria.

Introduction

Nigeria as a nation came into existence in 1914 with the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern protectorates by the British Colonial government. The amalgamation which was made to satisfy the British economic and political interests however failed to take into cognizance the diversity and multi colouration of the peoples in Nigeria, especially in relation to ethnicity, culture, tradition, religion, values and interests. Consequently, these have manifested, even right from inception, into series of sectional riots, agitation for political and economic control, religious intolerance, corruption, uprising and militant activities. Shedrack (2007) observed that Nigeria has always been engulfed in series of conflicts that claimed so many lives and properties.

There is a general concern about the growing state of insecurity in Nigeria in recent times despite the claim of outstanding democratic practice and the attendant economic growth by the government. In fact, to say that Nigeria is in a theatre of war can be regarded as an understatement. In the past, terrorism and insurgency used to be rampant in North Africa and apartheid South Africa but sparse in other parts of Africa, especially in the West African sub-region. Nigeria in particular used to be terrorist-free until in recent years. The Vanguard Newspaper (2012) decried the state of insecurity in the nation that "the Nigerian nation has on daily basis experienced an upsurge of activities that threaten and endanger its national security, kidnappings, arms proliferation – violence associated with ethnic, religious and political conflicts are among these threats". The recent activities of the Boko Haram have brought about a new dimension and new form of violence known as insurgency in Nigeria. This has now become the major focus of attention in Nigeria's security analysis. The sect through its various violence and dastardly activities has unleashed terror and mayhem in the country, most especially in the North Eastern region of the country.

Many villages and towns have been wiped off, lives and properties have been lost. These occurrences have posed serious security challenges and retarded the rate of development in the country since productive activities can only take place under a secured atmosphere.

According to Anifowose (2007), implications of insecurity in Nigeria include serious threat to the economic security of the nation, psychological trauma, absolute disintegration and social insecurity. However, the Nigerian government has made frantic efforts, both strategic and diplomatic towards combating the menace and brings the ugly situation under its control. These efforts include the declaration of a partial state of emergency in the affected states, collaboration with the neighbouring countries like Niger, Chad and Cameroun in regular surveillance activities and border patrols. Another notable step was the militarization of the affected area, which involved the establishment of more military formations in the North East, aggressive military patrols by the joint operational task force comprising all the security outfits such as the police, state security department, civil defence corps, among others.

Despite all these, little or no success has been recorded in bringing the insurgence under control. The sects have continued to unleash terror in the country. More worrisome is the adoption of suicide bombing, kidnapping of innocent girls as witnessed in Chibok and mass killing of innocent and harmless civilians (Punch, 2014). Most worrisome is the realization of the inability of the military in overcoming the insurgents. This situation has beginning to generate concern by all citizenry in Nigeria. It has also become a puzzle waiting to be unraveled by whosoever.

This paper discusses the need to inculcate emotional empowerment and combat self-efficacy among the military personnel, as a panacea to national security in Nigeria. It is the position of the paper that problems associated with inability of the security personnel in curbing insecurity could be tackled through the interplay of these two variables; emotional empowerment and combat self-efficacy into the training programmes and operations of the military in Nigeria.

Emotional Empowerment among Military Personnel
The concept "emotion" has been a topical issue of interest for experts

and researchers in virtually all fields of human endeavours. Adegoke, Adeoye and Dada (2011) viewed emotion as the most powerful force inside the human organism. It is a multi-component response that unfolds over relatively short time span, a physiological response to a situation that is too important to leave to intellect alone. Emotion is a general stimulation that can change from a deep feeling to a tense feeling in response to a certain situation (Erkus, 1994). Experts in the field of learning have found that emotions play an important role in the cognitive process. Emotion is a behavioural regulator and it is regulated developmentally. In other words, emotion is a feeling state, a psychological and physical reaction subjectively experienced as strong feelings and physiologically involving changes that prepare the body for immediate action. Emotions are manifested in forms of anger, fear, happiness, sadness, love, surprise, disgust and shame (Plutchik, 1980).

Peter Salovey and John Mayer first coined the term "emotional intelligence" in 1990. Their theory of emotional intelligence integrates key ideas from the fields of intelligence and emotion. From intelligence theory comes the idea that intelligence involves the capacity to carry out abstract reasoning. From emotion research, comes the notion that emotions are signals that convey regular and discernable meanings about relationships and that a number of basic emotions are universal (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2002). Ogunye (2012) viewed emotional intelligence as an umbrella term that captures a broad collection of interpersonal and intrapersonal skills. With this background therefore, emotional intelligence according to Goleman (1995), is the ability to understand, interpret and control one's emotion. Furthermore, Peter Salovey and John Mayer defined it as a form of intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions. Mayer, Salovey and Caruso (2008) described Emotional Intelligence (EI) as the ability to carry out accurate reasoning about emotions and the ability to use emotions and emotional knowledge to enhance thought.

The recent trend in research is the use of the word emotional empowerment to encapsulate emotional intelligence and to operationally situate the concept behaviourally as the degree to which an individual can use his or her emotions, feelings, moods and those of

others in a way that helps that person adapt and navigate effectively in a given setting. Liptak (2005) described Emotional Empowerment (EE) as a set of skills and competences needed to be effective in life and career. These skills can be learned by Nigerian Military and Security personnel and they include career management skills, personal competence skills and interpersonal competence. Goleman (1998, 2001) further posited that this emotional empowerment involves the inculcation of five competencies as follow:

i.   Self-Awareness: This involves ability to be self-aware, recognizing one's emotions and their effects. It includes ability to accurately assess one-self, knowing one's strengths, weaknesses, limits and willingness to take an honest look at oneself. Nigerian Military and Security Personnel could use this information optimally to perform better and excel in their endeavours. The assumption is that information on self also produces a sense of self-worth and confidence to produce optimally.

ii.   Self-Regulation: This involves ability to exercise control on emotions and impulses, keeping disruptive emotions and impulses in check, maintaining standards of honesty and integrity. It also involves ability to endure circumstances, adapting to change, receptive to new ideas, and innovations.

iii.   Self-Motivation: This includes ability to be highly motivated in striving for excellence. Nigerian Military and Security Personnel employing this competence would demonstrate high capability to persist in the face of obstacles and setbacks in achieving goals and set standards.

iv.   Empathy: Empathy has to do with social competence. It is the ability to understand others, sensing others' feelings, their wants, needs and viewpoints. Closely associated with empathic skills are ability to relate freely with others, high level of concentration, excellent listening skills and exploring possible opportunities.

v.   Social Skills: This will involve the Military and Security personnel having the ability to work freely with others as a team, toward shared goals, managing disputes and resolving conflicts, having, excellent communication skills, building and maintaining relationships.

Combat Self-Efficacy among Nigerian Military and Security Personnel
Self-efficacy refers to individual's beliefs about their capabilities to carry out a particular course of action successfully. Self-efficacy was developed by Albert Bandura and it is also known as beliefs regarding one's capabilities of successfully completing tasks or goals (Locke & Latham, 2002). According to Bandura (1997), the following facts are related to self- efficacy:

- High self-efficacy is likely to lead to increased performance.
- Low self-efficacy leads to low performance.
- Self-efficacy is not about skills that an individual possesses but about belief in putting the skills to productive use.
- Self-efficacy beliefs help determine what people will do with the knowledge and skills they possess.
- Self-efficacy beliefs provide the foundation for human motivation, wellbeing and personal accomplishment.
- Self-efficacy is both a personal and a social construct based on the fact that individuals operate collectively as well as individually.
- Self-efficacy beliefs help determine individuals' level of perseverance when confronted with obstacles and difficulties in achieving goals.
- Self-efficacy is situational in nature rather than being viewed as a stable trait.
- Self-efficacy is a task-specific evaluation.
- People with high self-efficacy strive to develop a higher amount of knowledge and increase their effort in order to overcome their failures and setbacks.
- People with high self-efficacy are more likely to set more challenging goals for themselves and be more committed to the goals.

Combat self-efficacy may be conceptualized as military personnel's beliefs in their own ability to plan, organize and carry
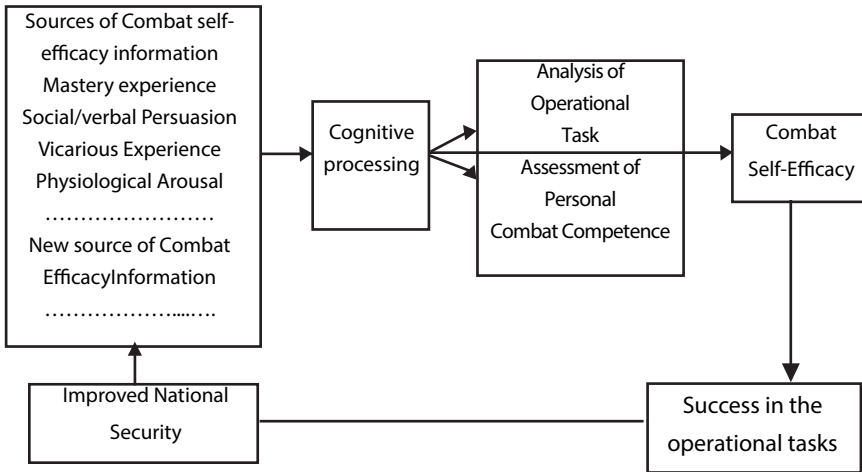
out tactical activities that are required to successfully achieve given operational tasks or mission (Locke & Latham, 2002).. Combat self-efficacy could also be defined as the military personnel's beliefs in his or her own capability to plan and execute course of action required to successfully accomplishing a specific military task in a war situation. It then implies that for desirable success in any military operation, both the officers and men in a Combat environment must develop high self-efficacy. In view of this, the following facts could be established or identified for Combat self-efficacy:

- Officers and men in the military who are self-efficacious concentrate on military task, motivate themselves to do military work and are irrevocably committed to mission tasks.

- High combat self-efficacious military personnel are full of initiatives and achieve at a higher level.

- They are more organized and never deterred by enemies' antics.

- They have high level of confidence in themselves which propels them into operational success.

- They are ever ready to explore and apply acquired knowledge and military skill.

- Military personnel with high levels of combat self-efficacy approach difficult operational tasks as challenges to master rather than as threats to be avoided.

- Positive past experience increases self-efficacy beliefs while negative experience reduces self-efficacy beliefs.

Source: Authors' Conceptualization (2014)

This model indicates the cyclical nature of combat self-efficacy of military personnel. It begins with Bandura's (1997) four sources of efficacy information. These are mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social/verbal persuasion, and physiological arousal. The personnel then processes to analyse the operational task. Personnel's competence in each specific operational mission is also analysed by critically examining the personal capabilities such as skills, knowledge, strategies or personality traits balanced against personal weaknesses or liabilities in a particular combat context. This

Figure 1: A Cyclical Model of Combat Self-efficacy

| Sources of Combat self-efficacy information
Mastery experience
Social/verbal Persuasion
Vicarious Experience
Physiological Arousal
……………………
New source of Combat EfficacyInformation
………………......… | → | Cognitive processing | → | Analysis of Operational Task
Assessment of Personal Combat Competence | → | Combat Self-Efficacy |

| Improved National Security | —————————— | Success in the operational tasks |

leads to combat self-efficacy and then the consequences surrounded by efficacy. These consequences of combat self-efficacy may include goal setting, motivation to achieve goals and persistent effort in the face of challenges. Performance is the next step of the model, which in turn leads to new sources of combat efficacy, thereby continuing the cycle.

The Nexus between Emotional Empowerment and Combat Self-Efficacy among Nigerian Military and Security personnel

The synergy between emotional intelligence and combat self-efficacy cannot be overemphasized. Goleman (1995) observed that emotional intelligence is just as important in academic success as Intelligence Quotient (IQ). He viewed emotional intelligence as a major determinant of self-efficacy and human success. Goleman (1995) also observed that emotional intelligence accounts for 80% of human performance while intelligence quotient (IQ) accounts for just 20%. Researchers such as Kolo (2006), Onawola (2009), Adegoke, Adeoye and Dada (2011) have expressed the significant importance of emotional empowerment on academic achievement of students. Low and Nelson (2004) found that emotional intelligence skills are key factors in the academic achievement and test performance of high school and college students. Likewise in the military, military personnel need some doses of emotional intelligence competencies to be

efficacious in their operational tasks. Through this, military personnel will be able to develop high emotional intelligence competencies which are requirements for managing combat frustrations and stresses.

Military personnel must be assisted to be emotionally empowered. Modern warfare involves the use of intelligent gathering and processing information, to which emotions are very crucial because they facilitate the storage and recall of information by giving a more activated and chemically stimulated brain which assists personnel to recall things better. The fact is that an officer/soldier that lacks adequate knowledge of emotional intelligence competencies, unable to transform negative emotions into positive productive behaviours, unable to control his moods, unable to think rationally and empathize with others cannot achieve higher and succeed in a chosen career no matter his/her level of self-efficacy. Therefore, military operational success requires a harmony of emotional empowerment and combat self-efficacy.

Increasing the combat self-efficacy of troops is a must for effective operational success for both officers and men in the military. Literature has shown that the various ways of doing this are strategies on what Bandura (1997) explained as sources of information on self-efficacy. This has been illustrated in Fig 1. There are basically four of them, they are (1) personal performance accomplishments (mastery experience); (2) observations of the successes and failures of others (vicarious experience); (3) verbal persuasion (social/verbal persuasion) and (4) physiological indices (physiological arousal).

National Security, Emotional Empowerment and Combat Self-Efficacy

Sesay (2014) defined security broadly as freedom from fear and freedom from want. He viewed security beyond military considerations as embracing all aspects of society including economic, political and social dimensions of the individual, family, community, national life and security of life of the individual. A very critical aspect of security is the concept of human security. Human security is all about eliminating all pervasive threats to people's and individual's rights, livelihoods, safety and life, and the promotion of human development to ensure freedom from fear and freedom from want (Sesay, 2014). Therefore,

the concept of national security entails all ramifications of security. It involves improving the social, economic, health, environmental, physical, political and food security of the people. Consequently, Abubakar (2005) opined that the combination of high level military intervention and improvement in the standard of living of the citizens are required to enhance national security. From the foregoing, it should be noted that the sole responsibility of maintaining national security is vested on the government of the day. To this end, Egbewole (2014) observed that national security begins the moment the people begin to experience personal, food and physical security within their geographical locations in a state. In Nigeria, the military roles according to the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria Section 217 (2) include:

- Defending Nigeria from external aggression,
- Maintaining its territorial integrity and securing its borders from violation on land, sea or air.
- Suppressing insurrection and acting in aid of civil authorities to restore order when called upon to do so by the President, but subject to such conditions as may be prescribed by an Act of National Assembly.
- Performing such other functions as may be prescribed by an Act of the National Assembly.

The effective performance of the constitutional roles of the military as illustrated above depends largely on the combat readiness of the military. The Emotional Intelligence Competencies stressed the need for self-awareness and self-regulation of individuals. This could only be achieved through the use of appropriate psychological tests for gathering and analyzing necessary data concerning individual player in the military and other security outfits. The military has been adjudged as one of the most stressful career in the world (Akinboye, 2002), therefore, rigorous screening needs to be conducted for new entrants into the profession. In addition, regular counselling programmes are to be organized for troops before and after operational task. These will further assist in reminding the officers and men of their oath to protect the sovereignty of the nation since most

of them might have joined the military as the last resort due to lack of job or by peer influence or for any other extrinsic values. Therefore, with the inculcation of appropriate emotional intelligence skills into the military training programme, troops will have high emotional competency skills. Through this, they will be well adjusted and bring high level of confidence into the military profession, and perform better in combat environment or situations.

It is therefore expedient that officers and men of the nation's military are emotionally empowered. When they have high emotional intelligence, other competencies such as motivation, empathy, social skills, among other skills needed for managing combat and non-combat stresses will be imbibed (Fakokunde, 2014). Thereby fulfilling, the requirement needed for leadership and man management in the military through acquisition of appropriate skills and development of competencies as equipment for individual to contribute in achieving national security.

Conclusion

The constitutional role of Nigerian military is to ensure national security. Effective performance of this role depends on the military personnel's personal perception of their capability to be successful in any operational tasks. This can be enhanced through emotional empowerment and combat self-efficacy. Emotional empowerment of the military personnel increases through self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, empathy and social skills. Combat self-efficacy increases through the four sources of efficacy information. Therefore the Nigerian Military as a major player in maintaining national security must have men with competencies that will make them to perform their constitutional responsibilities. This will serve as a panacea to the recurrent setback being experienced in maintaining national security in Nigeria. This study has shown the need for members of the military to be emotionally empowered in order to achieve this goal.

Based on the foregoing, the ideas are worthy of note:

(1) Psychological tests should be administered on candidates wishing to join the military. This is done with a view not to admit or recruit individuals that are not fit and prepared psychologically

for the tasks ahead in the nation's security.

(2)   Emotional empowerment programme should be incorporated into the in-service training programme of officers and men in the military.

(3)   Counselling and psychological support centres should be established in all military and para-military formations in the country.

(4)   Pre counselling programme should be organized for troops before they are launched into military operations in order to build their courage, focus and determination. Also during post-operations, troops are to be counselled before sending them to their families in order to manage the effects of post-operational trauma.

(5)   Appropriate authority should provide adequate support in terms of equipment, finance, military software and hardware to troops during operations. This will further increase their morale and enhance their commitment to the assigned tasks.

(6)   Establishment of viable communication and relationship with troops in combat and non-combat zones. Information on gallantry and successes achieved during operations should be adequately communicated to troops in order to increase their combat self-efficacy.

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