

## **Leadership Crisis and The Challenges of Ungoverned Spaces in Border Towns of Ogun State: Implications for National Security**

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**ABSTRACT:** *This research paper examines the impact of leadership crisis on ungoverned spaces in border towns of Ogun State, Nigeria, and its implications for national security. The study will explore the nature and extent of leadership crisis in these border towns, including the factors that contribute to the emergence and persistence of ungoverned spaces. It will also examine the challenges posed by these ungoverned spaces, including their potential to aggravate conflict, promote criminal activities, and undermine national security. The research will also explore the role of state and non-state actors in addressing the challenges of leadership crisis and ungoverned spaces in these border towns. The research adopted descriptive survey design, using a questionnaire structured on 5-point Likert's rating scale of 5 – 1 to elicit information from respondents. The data collected, were analysed using SPSS. The tools used are frequency tables and percentage distribution. The findings of this study revealed that the insecurity situations in border towns of Ogun State largely dependent on the failure to control ungoverned spaces leading to high incidences of banditry attacks on farm settlements, villages, highways resulting in kidnapping and unwanted killings. The study recommends that Government at all levels should prioritize security in every nooks and cranny of the states which will in turn discourage activities of criminal elements in ungoverned spaces in Ogun state, the South-West and Nigeria at large, while also addressing the basic livelihood problems of poverty, inequality, and unemployment which has contributed to the problem of insecurity and threat to national security. The study will also have implications for policy and practice, highlighting the need for a more integrated and holistic approach to governance and security in border areas.*

**KEYWORDS:** leadership crisis, ungoverned spaces, border towns, national security, Terrorism.

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## INTRODUCTION

It has been established that Nigeria possesses abundant human and material resources that are crucial for national progress and growth. However, despite gaining independence, Nigeria has failed to achieve success due to poor leadership. Initially, Nigeria had high hopes of leading Africa towards progress and overcoming economic dependency, but it has been unable to do so. Instead, Nigeria has become known for its lack of development, corruption, decaying infrastructure, moral bankruptcy, and inadequate leadership. Rather than being a model for positive change, Nigeria is infamous for its mediocrity, corruption, violence, and moral decay. The current trends of insurgency and terrorism which is due to failure in leadership has made the Nigerian State more volatile when it comes to security. Insecurity has been a global human pandemic catastrophe, the consequences of which are far reaching and which are better imagined than experienced.

The problem is aided by ungoverned spaces and failure in leadership has had enormous impact on the political, social, economic lives of the people affected, thereby posing serious threats to sustainable human development to the people in regions and areas affected globally (Oyelude, 2020).

There are numerous ungoverned spaces worldwide, which can refer to physical or non-physical areas lacking state control due to a lack of capacity or political will. These areas are typically rugged, remote, maritime, or littoral zones that aren't effectively governed by any sovereign state. The concept of ungoverned space is a constantly debated topic in global security due to the challenges it poses, and it remains an emerging and contested area of discourse (Lenshie, 2018). Ungoverned spaces abound worldwide, for instance, the virtual or cyber sphere is an ungoverned space, which relies on physical infrastructure but exists in the hazy world of cyberspace. They exist and operate evading detection not as a physically contiguous space, like a remote, urban, or maritime area, but as a network (Hoiston, 2012).

A plethora of armed militias and sea pirates also abound setting up bases on seas, creeks, swamps and river channels (ungoverned spaces) in the violent campaign/agitation or the perpetration of one form of heinous crime or the other (Lenshie, 2018). For instance, the Taliban in Afghanistan and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia in Northern Ecuador use mountains and forests (ungoverned spaces) respectively as their havens (Theresa, 2006). In the Sub-Saharan Africa region (West Africa), ungoverned spaces exist between North Africa, Sahel region (ungoverned territories) and the Sahara Desert, where criminals transit and governments do not have the capacity to control such movements (Southern Pulse, 2011). The prosperity or decline of a society is heavily influenced by the actions of its leaders. In Nigeria, the negative impact of poor leadership is evident in the existence of ungoverned spaces, which reflects a lack of effective governance and leads to ongoing political crises, insecurity, extreme poverty, and hunger due to the activities of

terrorists and insurgents among the population, a pervasive culture of corruption, and increasing rates of unemployment.

Leadership crisis and ungoverned spaces are two interconnected phenomena that have significant implications for national security in Nigeria. Leadership crisis refers to a situation where there is a dearth of competent and accountable leadership, resulting in weak or non-existent governance and a breakdown of the rule of law (Aluko, 2015; Ofoegbu, 2016). Ungoverned spaces, on the other hand, are areas where the state's authority is weak or non-existent, and governance is provided by non-state actors, such as criminal gangs or armed groups (Perry & Williams, 2019; Williams, 2015). The combination of leadership crisis and ungoverned spaces can create a potent threat to national security, as it undermines the state's ability to maintain law and order, protect citizens, and promote development.

In Nigeria, border towns are particularly vulnerable to the challenges posed by leadership crisis and ungoverned spaces, given their strategic location and porous borders (Ugwuoke & Okpara, 2020). Ogun State, located in the southwest region of Nigeria, shares a border with the Republic of Benin and is home to several border towns that have experienced varying degrees of leadership crisis and ungoverned spaces (Ademowo & Adejare, 2020; Ogunleye, 2019).

The problem of leadership crisis and ungoverned spaces in border towns of Ogun State has significant implications for national security, both within the state and across Nigeria more broadly. The lack of effective leadership and governance in these areas creates a fertile ground for criminal and terrorist groups to operate, leading to increased levels of insecurity and instability. As noted by Agbese (2012), the problem of ungoverned spaces is a major challenge for the Nigerian state, and requires a comprehensive and coordinated response from both state and non-state actors. It is against the backdrop that the study seeks to investigate leadership crisis and the challenges of ungoverned spaces in border towns in Ogun State :Challenges to national security.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The aim of the study will be to investigate Leadership Crisis and the Challenges of Ungoverned Spaces in Border Towns of Ogun State and its Implications for National Security

. The specific objectives include:

- i. To examine the relationship between leadership crisis and ungoverned spaces in Nigeria.
- ii. To examine the impacts and current threats of ungoverned spaces on the leadership and people of border towns in Ogun State.
- iii. To examine the factors responsible for the emergence of ungoverned spaces in Nigeria.
- iv. To examine the security implications of leadership crisis and ungoverned spaces in the border towns of Ogun State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions with which the study shall be guided:

- i. Is there any significant relationship between leadership crisis and ungoverned spaces in Nigeria?
- ii. What are the impacts and current threats of ungoverned spaces on the leadership and people of border towns in Ogun State?
- iii. What are the factors responsible for ungoverned spaces in Nigeria?
- iv. What are the security implications of leadership crisis and ungoverned spaces in the border towns of Ogun State?

### **Conceptual Discourse**

Leadership can be defined as the process through which a leader is responsible for guiding and directing the actions of their subordinates or followers towards achieving predetermined goals. Effective leadership is crucial for the success of organizations, as it has a significant impact on job satisfaction and performance. In fact, history has shown that the impact of strong leadership is evident at both national and local levels. Therefore, it can be concluded that leadership is the art of motivating others to willingly contribute towards achieving a common objective.

Leadership crisis has been a long-standing challenge in Nigeria that has affected the country's development and progress. The country's leadership crisis can be traced back to the pre-colonial era, where leaders were not selected based on merit or leadership qualities, but rather on their social status, wealth, or family background. Over the years, Nigeria has experienced several leadership crises that have led to political instability, corruption, poverty, and underdevelopment. In this literature review, we will examine the historical and contemporary leadership crises in Nigeria, their causes and consequences, and possible solutions to address the challenge.

Throughout Nigeria's history, leadership crises have been a persistent issue. As Ayodele (2018) notes, even during the pre-colonial era, traditional rulers were often chosen based on factors other than their leadership abilities, such as social status, wealth, or family background. The British administration in Nigeria also struggled with leadership crises during the colonial period due to corruption and tribalism.

Despite the challenges Nigeria faced in its pre-colonial history regarding leadership, contemporary leadership crises in the country have persisted. Poor governance, corruption, ethnic and religious conflicts, and economic instability are still prevalent issues today (Adewumi, 2020). The failure of Nigeria's political leaders to provide good governance has resulted in widespread poverty, unemployment, and insecurity. The country's leadership has also lacked transparency and accountability, leading to corruption that undermines Nigeria's development and stability. Corruption is pervasive in all sectors of Nigerian society, and has affected the effectiveness of

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institutions, eroded public trust in governance, and hindered economic growth (Babatunde & Bolarinwa, 2019).

The impact of leadership crisis on Nigeria's development has been significant and multifaceted. The country has been ranked among the poorest in the world, with poor infrastructure, a weak economy, and widespread poverty being among the most significant consequences (Ojo & Fagbohun, 2019).

The lack of good governance has also led to insecurity and social unrest in several parts of the country, with the state failing to provide basic public goods and services such as education, healthcare, water, and electricity (Adebowale & Oloyede, 2019). In addition, the crisis has hindered Nigeria's progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are aimed at eradicating poverty, promoting economic growth, and improving social welfare (Adewumi, 2020).

The leadership crisis has also undermined Nigeria's international reputation and foreign relations, with many international organizations and countries expressing concern about the state of governance and human rights in the country (Babatunde & Bolarinwa, 2019).

### **Ungoverned Spaces**

Areas that lack state control, known as ungoverned spaces, can be physical or non-physical in nature. These territories are often rugged, remote, maritime, or littoral areas that are not effectively governed by a sovereign state. The absence of state capacity or political will to exercise control is a defining characteristic of these areas.

Others have taken a broader view of what constitutes an ungoverned space. For example, Bremner and Rico (2016) define ungoverned spaces as "areas where there is a lack of formal institutions and rules that govern social interactions." This definition includes not just areas where state authority is absent, but also areas where state authority is present but ineffective or corrupt. The implications of ungoverned spaces for security are significant. Kilcullen (2007) argues that such spaces provide a safe haven for terrorist organizations and other non-state actors, allowing them to plan and launch attacks with relative impunity. Ungoverned spaces can also be used for criminal activities such as drug trafficking and human smuggling. In addition, the lack of effective governance in these areas can lead to humanitarian crises, as the basic needs of the population are not being met.

Addressing ungoverned spaces is a complex and challenging task. One approach is to increase the capacity of the state to project its authority into these areas. This can be done through a variety of means, such as providing security assistance, improving governance and service delivery, and promoting economic development. However, as Bremner and Rico (2016) note, this approach can

be difficult and expensive, and may not be effective in all cases. Another approach is to work with local actors to establish alternative forms of governance. This can include supporting local community organizations, promoting traditional forms of dispute resolution, and building alliances with non-state actors who are willing to cooperate with the state. However, as Kilcullen (2007) notes, this approach can be risky, as local actors may have their own agendas that do not align with those of the state.

### **The Relationship between Ungoverned Spaces and Insecurity in the Border Towns of Ogun State**

The border towns of Ogun State have experienced high levels of insecurity in recent years, including armed robbery, kidnapping, and smuggling. The presence of ungoverned spaces is considered a major contributing factor to the insecurity in these areas. In this literature review, we will examine the relationship between ungoverned spaces and insecurity in the border towns of Ogun State and explore strategies for addressing this issue.

The presence of insecurity in the border towns of Ogun State is closely linked to the presence of ungoverned spaces. As noted by Obi and Rustad (2011), the lack of effective governance in these areas provides a breeding ground for criminal and terrorist activities. This includes the smuggling of goods, weapons, and people across the border, as well as kidnapping and armed robbery. The presence of these criminal activities contributes to a sense of insecurity in the area, which can further weaken state authority.

Addressing ungoverned spaces and insecurity in the border towns of Ogun State requires a multi-dimensional approach. One approach is to increase the capacity of the state to project its authority into these areas. This can be done through a variety of means, such as providing security assistance, improving governance and service delivery, and promoting economic development. As noted by Agbiboa (2015), economic development can play a critical role in addressing the root causes of insecurity, by creating employment opportunities and reducing poverty.

Another approach is to work with local actors to establish alternative forms of governance. This can include supporting local community organizations, promoting traditional forms of dispute resolution, and building alliances with non-state actors who are willing to cooperate with the state. According to Ibeanu (2013), traditional forms of governance may be more effective in areas where the state's authority is weak, as they are often better attuned to the needs of local communities. The relationship between ungoverned spaces and insecurity in the border towns of Ogun State is a complex and multifaceted one, with implications for security, development, and humanitarian issues. Addressing ungoverned spaces and insecurity requires a multi-pronged approach, including efforts to increase the capacity of the state to project its authority and work with local actors to establish alternative forms of governance.

### **The Nexus between Terrorism aided by Ungoverned Spaces and National Security**

Creating a favorable environment for socioeconomic development requires addressing security challenges, which are a universal issue. Insecurity does not only pose threats to the lives and properties of citizens, but slows down the overall development of a nation (Ekene, 2015; Haruna, 2013). The threat of terrorism is a worldwide issue that presents a substantial danger to national security. One factor that has made it easier for terrorist groups to operate and carry out attacks is the emergence of ungoverned spaces, which are areas lacking effective government control. Experts believe that these spaces provide a safe haven for terrorists to train, recruit, and plan attacks.

In recent time, Nigeria had continued to witness a tremendous setback in its socio-economic development fuelled by the continuous resurgence of different kinds of security threats particularly armed terrorism, kidnapping, insurgency, pastoralists/farmers conflict, among others thereby posing a serious threat to the country's national security (Akinbi, 2015).

The emerging security threats in Nigeria have had significant impacts on several South West states, including Ogun, Oyo, Osun, and Ondo. Despite the Nigerian government's efforts to combat these threats, which have reportedly cost over 462 trillion Naira over the past five years, the desired results have not been achieved. Olufemi (2015) warns that failure to address these issues could result in a complete breakdown of law and order.

The problem of leadership crisis and ungoverned spaces in border towns of Ogun State has significant implications for national security, both within the state and across Nigeria more broadly. The lack of effective leadership and governance in these areas creates a fertile ground for criminal and terrorist groups to operate, leading to increased levels of insecurity and instability. As noted by Agbese (2012), the problem of ungoverned spaces is a major challenge for the Nigerian state, and requires a comprehensive and coordinated response from both state and non-state actors.

The implications of leadership crisis and ungoverned spaces in border towns of Ogun state for national security have been extensively discussed in the literature. According to Akinwale (2017), the increased vulnerability of the country to transnational crimes such as terrorism, human trafficking, and drug trafficking, which are often perpetrated by criminal networks that exploit the porous nature of the border towns, is a major implication of this issue. These criminal networks can operate with impunity, thereby posing a serious threat to the security of the nation.

Similarly, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, which can exacerbate existing conflicts and contribute to the outbreak of new ones, is highlighted by Isiaka (2019) as a major implication. The lack of effective governance in the border towns of Ogun state creates an environment where arms can easily be smuggled into the country, leading to the proliferation of

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arms and light weapons in the country. This has already led to a rise in cases of armed robbery, kidnapping, and other violent crimes in the affected areas, which in turn threaten the peace and security of the entire nation.

Furthermore, scholars such as Adedeji and Adeleke (2018) have noted that the issue of ungoverned spaces in border towns of Ogun state can lead to inter-communal clashes between different ethnic and cultural groups. The lack of governance creates a vacuum that can be filled by violent extremist groups, thereby stoking tensions and heightening the risk of inter-communal violence. The resulting conflicts can spill over into other parts of the country, leading to a wider breakdown of law and order.

Finally, the impact of leadership crisis and ungoverned spaces on the economic development of the country is discussed by Adeleke and Afolabi (2018). With the absence of effective governance, legitimate trade and commerce can be hampered, leading to a loss of revenue for the government. Additionally, the instability caused by the absence of effective governance can discourage foreign investors, leading to a slowdown in economic growth and development.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **The Securitization theory**

The theory of securitization explains how states identify threats to national security based on subjective evaluations of perceived danger, rather than objective assessments. This theory suggests that state actors can elevate certain political issues to the level of "security" concerns, allowing them to use exceptional measures in the name of protecting national security. The Copenhagen School, consisting of scholars such as Barry Buzan, Ole Wøever, Jaap de Wilde, and others, is credited with developing the theory of securitization. This group is named after the Conflict and Peace Research Institute (COPRI) in Copenhagen, where many of their seminal writings on the topic were produced during the 1990s.

The emergence of securitization theory has been significant in broadening our understanding of security, particularly in relation to terrorism and other forms of insecurity. This theory challenges traditional notions of security and expands the scope of referent objects beyond the state. As a result, it has contributed to a wider perspective on security issues. Dugan, (2004) suggested that individuals who feel insecure may be inclined to react violently towards the source of their insecurity as a means of self-defense. This perspective contrasts with the situation in the agriculturally viable region of Ogun State, South-West Nigeria



## METHODOLOGY

The study utilized a survey research design method to investigate Leadership Crisis and the Challenges of Ungoverned Spaces in Border Towns of Ogun State: Implications for National Security. The population for this study consists of farmers, health workers, civil servants, private business owners, traders and people living in the area of study.

**Table 1: Population Design**

S/N	Category	No. of Persons
1.	Farmers	40
2.	Health Workers	30
3.	Civil Servants	25
4.	Private Business Owners	15
5.	Traders	10
	<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>

**Source:** Field Survey 2023

To collect data, the researchers developed a structured questionnaire titled Leadership Crisis and the Challenges of Ungoverned Spaces in Border Towns of Ogun State: Implications for National Security.(LCCUSBTOSINS) The questionnaire was formulated in line with the research questions targeted at capturing responses in conformity with the research objectives. The survey utilized a structured questionnaire with a 5-point Likert rating scale, ranging from 5 to 1. A total of 120 questionnaires were administered to the participants.

To ensure the reliability of the instrument, a pilot study was conducted with a sample of 20 participants using Cronbach's alpha, which produced a coefficient of 0.6780, indicating good reliability. The survey utilized both stratified random sampling and purposive sampling techniques to select a total of 120 participants. The data collected were analyzed using simple percentages as a descriptive tool for statistical analysis on the SPSS.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A total of 120 copies of the questionnaires were distributed, out of which 95 copies were properly completed and retrieved representing (79%) of the questionnaire.

**Table 2: Questionnaire Administered and Returned Rate**

Options	No. of Questionnaires	Percentage (%)
Retrieved	95	79
Non-Retrieved	25	21
Total	120	100

**Source:** Compiled from Field Survey 2023

### Demographic Characteristics of Respondents in Border Towns of Ogun State

It contains the presentation and analysis of respondents' bio-data which shows the capability of the respondents to provide appropriate responses to administered questionnaire.

**Table 3: Sex of Respondents**

Option	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Male	58	61
Female	37	39
Total	95	100

**Source:** Compiled from Field Survey 2023

The analysis of the above table 3 indicates that 61% of the respondents representing 58 people are male while 39% are female. This is an indication that there are more male are concerned with ungoverned spaces and the challenges of leadership in border towns of Ogun State.

**Table 4: Respondents' Marital Status**

Option	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Single	25	26
Married	70	74
Total	95	100

**Source:** Compiled from Field Survey 2023

In table 4 above is the data on marital status of the respondents, the analysis shows that 70 people which represents 74% of the respondents are married while 26 people representing 26% of the respondents are still single. This is an indication that majority of sampled respondents are married.

**Table 5:** Categories of Respondents

Categories	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Farmers	30	32
Health Workers	25	26
Civil Servant	5	5
Private Business Owners	15	16
Traders	20	21
Total	95	100

**Source:** Compiled from Field Survey 2023

The data in table 5 revealed that 30 respondents representing 32% are farmers, 25 respondents representing 26% are health workers, 5 respondents representing 5% are civil servants, 15 respondents representing 16% are private business owners while 20 respondents representing 21% are traders.

### Data Presentation and Analysis of Respondents

Various responses gathered from the research respondents were presented and analysed under this section. It presents and analyses the respondents' responses on the various survey statements which are designed to proffer appropriate solution to the identified research problems.

**Table 6: Respondents' response on impacts and current threats of ungoverned space on the leadership and people of border towns in Ogun State.**

	SA	A	UD	D	SD	Total	Mean	Remarks
F	41	44	2	10	3	100		
X	5	4	3	2	1			
Fx	205	176	6	20	3	410	4.1	Strongly Agreed

**Source:** Compiled from Field Survey 2023

The data in table 6 above shows that the means score is 4.1. This means that the respondents agreed on a strong term that ungoverned spaces have had impact and threats to the leadership of people in border town of Ogun State. Some of the impacts are shut down of existing companies and business, loss of farm produce to rising cases of terrorism in the area, famine due to inability to farm and also threat to life itself because of insecurity enhanced by ungoverned spaces.

**Table 7: Respondents' response on significant contributions of leadership failure toward ungoverned spaces that have led to rise in terrorism in border towns of Ogun State.**

	SA	A	UD	D	SD	Total	Mean	Remarks
f	45	16	12	10	17	100		
x	5	4	3	2	1			
fx	225	64	36	20	17	362	3.6	Agreed

**Source:** Compiled from Field Survey 2023

The data presented in the above table 7 gives a mean score of 3.6. This means that there are significant contributions of failed leadership towards ungoverned spaces which has led to rise in terrorism in border towns of Ogun State.

**Table 8: Respondents' response on factors responsible for leadership crisis and ungoverned spaces in border towns of Ogun State.**

	Unemployment	Corruption	Nepotism	Lack of Political Will	Absence of Government Presence in some areas	Total	Mean	Remarks
F	20	41	5	25	9	100		
X	5	4	3	2	1			
F x	100	164	15	50	9	338	3.3	Agreed

**Source:** Compiled from Field Survey 2023

The above table 8 shows the mean score of 3.3 which simply mean that the respondents agreed that there are factors responsible for leadership crisis and ungoverned spaces in border towns of Ogun State. These factors as enumerated by the respondents include unemployment, corruption, nepotism, lack of political will and also absence of government presence in some areas in the border towns.

**Table 9: Respondents' response on strategies that would enhance the development of national security and the eradication of terrorism caused by ungoverned spaces in border towns of Ogun State.**

	SA	A	UD	D	SD	Total	Mean	Remarks
F	25	65	10	25	5	100		
X	5	4	3	2	1			
fx	125	140	30	50	5	350	3.5	Agreed

**Source:** Compiled from Field Survey 2023

The data in table 9 above shows the mean score of 3.5 which simply means that there are strategies that would enhance the development of national security and the eradication of terrorism caused by ungoverned spaces in border towns of Ogun State.

**Table 10: Respondents' response on insecurity situations in border towns of Ogun State largely dependent on the failure of control of ungoverned spaces.**

	SA	A	UD	D	SD	Total	Mean	Remarks
f	28	41	4	18	9	100		
x	5	4	3	2	1			
fx	140	164	12	36	9	361	3.6	Agreed

**Source:** Compiled from Field Survey 2023

The data presented in table 10 above shows that the respondents firmly agreed that insecurity in border towns of Ogun State is largely dependent on the failure of control of ungoverned space. This is as a result of the mean score of 3.6 that is greater than the cut-off point.

**Table 11: Respondents' response on Challenges facing military leadership in Border towns of Ogun State as regards ungoverned spaces.**

	SA	A	UD	D	SD	Total	Mean	Remarks
f	22	42	13	18	5	100		
x	5	4	3	2	1			
fx	110	168	39	36	5	358	3.6	Agreed

**Source:** Compiled from Field Survey 2023

The data in table 11 above shows the mean score of 3.6 which simply means that there are challenges facing leadership in Border towns of Ogun State as regards ungoverned spaces.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study suggests that the failure of government security agencies to protect citizens from armed bandit attacks can be interpreted as a violation of the social contract, which may ultimately result in social unrest. The effects of armed banditry on victims, their families, travelers, and residents are substantial, however, the government's efforts to prevent further incidents have been inadequate.

The relationship between ungoverned spaces and insecurity in the border towns of Ogun State is a complex and multifaceted one, with implications for security, development, and humanitarian

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issues. The government and security agencies have a critical role to play in addressing leadership crises and ungoverned spaces in the border towns of Ogun State.

This requires a multi-pronged approach that includes efforts to improve governance and service delivery, strengthen institutions of governance, and enhance the capacity of security agencies to respond to security challenges. By working together to address these challenges, the government and security agencies can restore peace and stability to the region and promote development and prosperity for the people of Ogun State.

Overall, addressing the problem of ungoverned spaces and insecurity in the border towns of Ogun State requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach involving both state and non-state actors. By addressing the root causes of the problem and improving governance and security, it is possible to create a more stable and secure environment for the population and promote development and progress in the region

### **Recommendations**

The researcher viewed terrorism and ungoverned spaces in Nigeria as regards failure of leadership, leadership crisis and the increasing rate of terrorism, hence, the following recommendations are suggested:

- i. There is need for government to prioritize security in every nooks and cranny of the states which will in turn discourage activities of terrorist groups in ungoverned spaces in the South-West and Nigeria at large.
- ii. Improving border security is crucial for enhancing national security, preventing the movement of illegal arms and people across the border. This can be done through measures such as improving border surveillance and management, providing training and equipment to border security agencies, and promoting cross-border cooperation.
- iii. Government at all levels should develop and implement policies and programs that address poverty, unemployment, and other basic livelihood problems faced by citizens.
- iv. To build lasting peace, federal and state governments in the South West should work together to address the structural causes of insecurity in the region, with support from international partners.
- v. Functional security systems like community policing should be put in place to supplement the operations of other security agencies. Local vigilante groups can also work collaboratively with security agencies to maintain peace and order.
- vi. The government should allocate resources to fund disarmament and deradicalization programs aimed at curbing arms proliferation across the region.
- vii. Efforts should be intensified to create meaningful employment opportunities for youths trapped in joblessness, through programs aimed at addressing endemic poverty in the South-West and the country as a whole.

Viii The Western Nigerian Security Network codename Amotekun should be more equipped and trained to carry out their mandate and work with the local hunters who are more conversant with most of these ungoverned spaces.

ix Another approach to this problem is to engage in dialogue with local communities to address the grievances that may fuel the insecurity and lawlessness in the border towns. This can involve collaborating with traditional leaders, civil society organizations, and other non-state actors to build trust and promote social cohesion.

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