

## Growing Security and Security Studies: Resource Person – reading/studying, observing and thinking

Evidently there is a gap on the part of the students and resource persons involved in the teaching and supervision of students in the security studies unit of the Institute. Until the creation of the unit, there was no institution in Nigeria – public tertiary institutions – teaching security studies. There are few private tertiary institutions teaching security. There are institutes focusing on strategic studies. Strategic studies are field oriented towards the military and military related issues.

If at all security was canvassed in these units devoted to strategic studies, it was within what the military conceives of as security. In the case of Nigeria, security was conceived from the military's professional orientation and as the governing elite for the better part Nigeria's post independence history. This does not constitute security and it was not studied from the point of view of security studies.

This is the gap that students and resource persons need to overcome as we attempt to grow security studies as distinct from strategic studies. Both students and resource persons are disabled from this perspective. In order to correct this disability, we need to do more than just teach what we experience as security (mostly in the course of the practice of the military as professional/usurpers of political power, in the course of what we experience in the few elective courses we had in the universities and/or what we experience from educating self through news medium such as the CNN, BBC, Aljazeera etc) to debriefing ourselves using knowledge created in America and Europe – societies with established theory and practice of security and security studies.

Debriefing ourselves meant we need to invest in books and journals on security studies as available in the West; we need to read/study these books and journals; we need to observe what we have read/study in these books and journals with the practice in the West and then observe this in the practice in Nigeria; we need to think about the books and journals we have read, observe the content of the books and journals in practice and think about all that we have read/study and observe in those areas and in Nigeria.

For most of the students and resource persons, we have not read/study, observe and think about security and security studies outside what we think we know about security. The academic field is a different ball game as far as knowledge is concerned. Knowledge is articulated in the four walls of the school and it is different from what we thought we knew that has not been subject to the rigour of validation.

For the resource person, until the introduction of the programme, security was not one of our research interests. If we dabble in security it is purely from pedestrian perspective.

There was little that was pedagogic about this and the little there was come from what was written on security within Nigeria. What was written does not come from a programme of studies on security. It came from the practice of security within the environment created by the military. These experiences came with shortcomings that the investment of time and resource could ameliorate particularly with the cultivation of interest. For the resource persons, the starting point is the cultivation of interest in security and security studies. The cultivation of interest should come through investment of time and resources to begin the process of educating self on security and security studies. The salvation for the students will come from the learned resource persons. Indeed this is where the difference between students and resource persons rest.

It is worth noting that growing security and security studies will benefit from the resource persons and students' diverse disciplinary background as each discipline can creatively bring something to bear in developing security and security studies in Nigeria. The diversity of resource persons and students is an asset to the field in so far as the right motivation governs the enrolment into the programme. This motivation would act as push and pull factors to learn, relearn and grow security and security studies for the interest of most Nigerians.