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Assessing the impact of the securitization narrative on climate change adaptation in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT
In Nigeria, the threat posed by climate change is leading policymakers and the media to frame climate change as a security threat that warrants support for adaptive actions. We draw upon securitization theory to examine how security narratives affect climate change adaptation. Using primary and secondary data, we find that although securitization arguments are easily identified in climate change policies and action plans in Nigeria, the implications of securitization for adaptation policy and practice are harder to discern. We find that adaptation is not as urgent a policy as would be expected from the logic of securitization. The transformation of security framing into urgent adaptation actions appears difficult because there are no urgent adaptation measures. We also find that people's level of vulnerability and adaptation to climate change is a function of deeper socio-political dynamics and processes that defy the political theatre of securitization.

Introduction

As politicians and policymakers grow more concerned about the impacts of climate change in developing countries, they are employing narratives that are more effective in attracting adaptation support (Peters and Mayhew 2019). They use narrative and framings, which specify how social and political actors rely on interpretation to understand and respond to risks (Reese 2001). In Sudan, Nigeria, and other African countries, resource scarcity, forced migration, and conflicts are framed as climate security issues that can lead to national insecurity with broader global implications (Mazo 2009, Nwauba 2018). According to Brzoska and Frohlich (2016), framing migration and violent conflict as climate security issues in Africa is often done with limited evidence.

Such framings are enabled by what Hulme (2011) describes as climate reductionism, in which climate change is regarded as the primary determinant of system behaviour or response.

This does not mean that climate change will be irrelevant for future patterns of migration and violent conflict. There is evidence that environmental degradation and resource scarcity can contribute to the likelihood of violent conflict when coinciding with other factors such as ethnic polarization, weak political structures, and a low level of economic development, but climate change alone is not causing violent conflict and migration (Brzoska and Frohlich 2016). However, the way an issue is framed can have a significant impact on which solutions are seen as plausible. Bettini (2013) has highlighted, for example, the use of security narratives to motivate social contracts that underpin developing countries' demand for assistance due to their higher vulnerability and lower adaptive capacity. That developing countries are entitled to adaptation support has become the globally dominant view to ensure social, ecological, and economic justice for those developing countries that have contributed least to climate change but are likely to be most affected by it (Saraswat and Pankaj 2016). This is because the unequal distribution of negative climate change impacts and low adaptive capacity is seen as a hindrance to development that risks turning into a humanitarian catastrophe that will lead to resource scarcity and loss of livelihood (Bettini 2013).

Although the precise links between climate change and insecurity are unclear, these insecurities are projected to be particularly severe in vulnerable countries experiencing political and economic challenges, and where there is a failure to address economic loss from disasters and resource scarcity, service delivery, and marginalization of communities (O'Sullivan 2017).

Nigeria has been forging the concept of climate security both at the domestic and international levels through media, official documents, and political speeches. The use of a climate security narrative in Nigeria is appropriate because climate-related issues also exacerbate the rates of desertification, erosion, resource scarcity displacement, and conflict (Olufemi and Samson 2012, Folami and Folami 2013, Haider 2019). One example of climate security framing in Nigeria is the recent connection between climate change and the terrorist insurgency around Lake Chad Basin. Rainfall variations and desertification caused by climate change around Lake Chad is undermining the welfare and livelihood of people who depend on Lake Chad. Moreover, the situation offers the Nigerian Islamist Insurgent group 'Boko Haram' ideal recruitment conditions, which in turn has increased insecurity in the region (Agbiboa 2017, Vivekananda *et al.* 2019, Owonikoko and Momodu 2020).

Another example is the connection between climate change and the growing conflict over increasingly scarce fertile land due to desertification between the Northern Fulani herdsmen and farming communities in Southern Nigeria that has claimed many lives and loss of property (Nte 2016, Oke and Olawale

2019). As the Fulani Herdsmen experience droughts and desertification, which affects pasture and water availability for animal consumption for their cattle, they become compelled to move from northern Nigeria down south. Unfortunately, this migration often leads to the destruction of farmlands and agricultural products in the host communities, causing conflicts and loss of lives of those involved in the conflicts.

Through employing a securitization narrative, adaptation issues evolve beyond national politics to global politics where vulnerability is seen as resulting specifically from climate change (Dupuis and Knoepfel 2013). Such a framing separates climate security issues from existing social vulnerability. This separation is misleading as it ignores socio-political issues that lead to disasters and the inadequate capacity to adapt to these disasters as an essential factor in the gradual process of securitization.

Thus, a critical yet under-researched area is the implications of applying securitization narratives to non-traditional security issues, such as climate change adaptation, where vulnerability based on socio-political dynamics are hard to ignore. In this article, we examine two questions. First, we ask: how is Nigeria framing climate change as a security threat? Second, we ask: what are the limits to urgent adaptation action even when a securitization narrative is employed? We organize the paper as follows. First, we explore the theoretical connection between securitization and climate change adaptation. Then, we analyse the impact of using securitization narratives on climate change adaptation in Nigeria. Finally, we assess the challenges of a securitization narrative on climate change adaptation more broadly.

Materials and method

The study location is scattered across the federal and state levels in Nigeria. We selected 30 experts using purposeful sampling at the federal parastatals, two states in the southeast, NGOs, and research institutions. The informants are distributed across the following state agencies: the State Ministry of Ecology, Environment, and Climate change; the State Ministry of Works; the State Emergency Management Agency and The Federal Ministry of Environment; and the Department of Climate Change. The experts also represent NGOs and academia. We selected 10 federal government experts (FGE) from the Federal Ministry of Environment, five Anambra state government experts (ASGE), and five Enugu state government experts (ESGE). We also selected four NGO experts (NGE) from two NGOs and six research institute experts (RIE).

We adopted a qualitative methodology, using primary and secondary data for macro-micro analysis. The micro-level analysis provides an overview of security narratives and how it affects adaptation in Nigeria. The macro-level analysis provides an overview of how the securitization narrative in Nigeria

intersects with global politics on climate change. The primary data consists of semi-structured interviews conducted between October 2017 and January 2018. The secondary data consist of official documents, newspaper articles, conference speeches, scientific articles, NGO documents, and policy documents. Specifically, to understand how climate change is framed as a security threat in Nigeria and how such a framing is affecting climate change adaptation, we examined the following documents: National Adaptation Strategy and Plan of Action on Climate Change for Nigeria (NASPA-CCN); Nigeria's Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC); Nigeria's National Communication: Under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (NNC-UNFCCC); National Progress report on the implementation of Hyogo Framework for Action (2013–2015)- interim drafted by National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA); National Climate Change Policy Response and Strategy (NCCPRS); and Nigeria's National Adaptation Plan Framework (NNAPF).

We used the feedback method to confirm the informants' point of view by presenting our preliminary results in some of the informants in a seminar. To maintain the anonymity of the informants, we invited both the interviewee and other experts. We also obtained new information during the seminar and added this information to our results. We adopted an inductive and data-oriented approach, seeking to identify and categorize strategies as they appear in the data. The data was then uploaded and coded using Nvivo 11.

Theoretical perspective: securitization theory and climate change adaptation

We employ securitization theory to understand the link between a security narrative and climate change adaptation in Nigeria. A security framing was initially employed in climate politics to encourage countries to address climate change through mitigation. However, as climate impacts continue to increase in developing countries without any consensus on mitigation criteria, the security narrative is increasingly used to frame climate change adaptation.

Securitization theory challenges the traditional narrow military aspect of security to include economic, social, and environmental issues that can lead to a security issue. This theory argues that security threats are socially constructed through the intersubjective process between securitizing actors and audiences (Wæver 1995, Buzan *et al.* 1998). The Copenhagen School of securitization initially views the state as the referent object and places securitized issues beyond normal politics through discursive practices and limited to state actors in authority. With the widespread nature of transboundary risks, the view of the referent object has been extended from the state to other referent objects at other levels (Buzan and Hansen 2009).

According to Buzan *et al.* (1998) securitization is the speech act where a securitizing actor designates a threat to a specified referent object and declares an existential threat implying a right to use extraordinary means to fend it off. They argue that, an issue is securitized if the relevant audience accepts this claim, which grants the securitizing actors the right to use emergency measures they deem appropriate. They further argue that some issues presented as security issues, end up being politicized due to the lack of extraordinary measures that accompany such claims.

Guzzini (2000) suggests that intersubjective rules and norms guide how actors designate security threats. Intersubjective belief is often activated through language, which operates as a mediating and communicative instrument (Côté 2016), and established through social and group interaction with such power as to be able to facilitate interpretation, create social reality, and inform behaviour (Guzzini 2000). Hence, Guzzini (2011) warns against the mistake of assuming what securitizing actors present as security is, in fact, a geopolitical reality.

The securitization approach outlined above has attracted some criticism that raises an important dilemma of securitization. From a sociological standpoint Balzacq *et al.* (2016) argue that securitization should not be reduced to speech acts only, as one must consider other conditions. One condition is the textual meaning as well as the constitutive language through which the plot of security is constructed successfully. Another condition is the social capital that may be cited as supporting evidence of a threat, the context in which meaning is socially produced and understood, as well as the audience, which can contribute to the success or failure of the securitization process. Floyd (2015) argued that the requirement for securitization success is not solely on security practice. Securitizing actors might consider their responses as a security policy even without addressing a threat with extraordinary measures. Others argue that securitization often takes place behind closed doors (Neal 2009), and in more common routinised day-to-day practice rather than through specific exceptional speech acts and events (Booth 2005, Bigo 2008, McDonald 2008, Salter 2008). However, other scholars have warned against the performative role of security, mostly when it is employed as a political technology to re(order) society, preserve power relations and oppress or exclude some groups or opposition (Booth 2005, Huysmans 2006). This is because securitizing actors often define threats with legitimate authority, following a circular logic of defining a threat to counter such threat politically and practically (Warner and Boas 2017).

Applying securitization to an environmental and political issue such as climate change adaptation has its challenges as climate security lacks an intentional external enemy that can be defeated through high politics (Buzan *et al.* 1998). To overcome this challenge, Corry (2012) suggested the use of risk mechanism to overcome the indirect link of climate change to security issues. He argues that the language of risk legitimates

taking measures to reduce the harm directed to the referent object as risk issues are more conducive to being managed, in contrast to being eradicated, with a premise built on the precautionary principle.

The objective of securitization is to protect a referent object which is often the state. However, in climate security, von Lucke *et al.* (2014) identified three referent objects, territory (threat to the territorial boundaries of a state), individual (threat to human livelihood and survival) and the planet (threat to the ecosystem and the planet as a whole). Different referent objects, in contrast to only the state, creates a paradox for climate security (Balzacq *et al.* 2016). Günay *et al.* (2018) argued that one of the paradoxes lies in the increasing reliance on ecologically destructive methods of production, which has a socio-ecological effect seen through environmental deterioration that threatens the industrial economy that it underpins. Another paradox with having the state as the referent object in climate change is due to the global nature of climate security. National security framing suggests a micro-level analysis where climate change is directly responsible or will aggravate existing problems such as resource scarcity, social tension, and state stability (Rashid *et al.* 2011). Such a framing demonstrates an assumption that the nation-state plays a crucial role in governing adaptation as the national government is central in providing adaptation policies and practices. National security is the ability of the country to pursue the development of its internal life without serious interference from foreign powers (Ikenberry and Slaughter 2006).

Thus, the state-centric climate security framing fails to account for justice and equity concerns in climate change adaptation, where states might not be capable of protecting themselves in isolation, especially for those countries that have contributed minimally to climate change but are most impacted. The issues in state-centric climate security have led to the adoption of international climate security. International climate security centres on the global binding obligation to deal with both the causes and effects of climate change with a sense of urgency (Khan 2014). Such a framing demonstrates an assumption of governing climate risk beyond the state (Bulkeley *et al.* 2012, Dalby 2013) and leads to global financial accountability for adaptation, especially for countries like Nigeria that are expected to be hit the earliest and hardest, although this financial accountability is not yet binding (Khan 2014). Despite all the value of international institutions in climate change issues, Mearsheimer (1994) argues that international institutions have minimal influence on state behaviour.

In contrast to the high politics of military threat and emergency measures, climate adaptation is complex in terms of who formulates security, the audience to be accommodated, and how those who formulate security can do so. Adaptation takes place at the local level, while the politics underlying such practices are often formed at the national or international level. The different actors have different expectations and different methods of

operation. For instance, whereas United Nations members and intergovernmental agencies institute treaties, agreements, technological and financial support, it is national governments that formulate adaptation policies, and local governments, civil society and individuals that implement adaptation actions.

Findings: securitization of climate change adaptation in Nigeria

In this section we use securitization theory to analyse: (1) if the logic of securitization is fulfilled in climate change adaptation in Nigeria; (2) who the audiences of climate security narratives are; (3) what action has been taken; and (4) the impact of securitization on other socio-political issues.

We start with a qualitative analysis of the threat narrative in Nigeria's climate security by examining political speech acts, national news media, and official government documents. We assess the threat narrative along two dimensions: securitization approach/audience and referent object (Table 1).

The use of securitization narrative in climate change

Our results show that frequently identified referent objects used by securitizing actors in Nigeria. The referent objects that mostly relate to speech acts are territorial threats and individual threats. Individual threats are referred to when people's daily food and water supplies are threatened, while territorial threats referred to an increasing threat of civil and interstate war due to the long-term effects of climate security. These threats often play into each other, as expressed in the following example from President Buhari in 2017 at a climate change summit. In front of an audience comprising the head of states, state representatives, policymakers, environmental activists, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, civil societies, climate change experts, and the general public, Nigeria President, Buhari, delivered one of the most notable speeches in framing climate change in security terms. His speech expressed climate change as the major cause of livelihood insecurity, forcing millions of Nigerian citizens into migration and asserting that climate change is the major cause of deadly attacks between Fulani herders and local farmers. President Buhari's assertions are supported in the literature, which for example demonstrates how climate change is causing livelihood insecurity as many communities are heavily dependent on natural resources for their well-being (Nte 2016). As drought and desertification increase in the North, the Fulani herdsmen migrate to the South, where they often engage in conflict over fertile land with farming communities in Southern Nigeria (Nte 2016, Oke and Olawale 2019). Indeed, the conflict between the farming communities and the Fulani herdsmen claimed the lives of at least 1,229 people in 2014 and was labelled the second most significant security challenge confronting Nigeria

Table 1. Securitization narrative on climate change in Nigeria.

Securitizing actor	Securitization approach & audience	Referent object
Speech act	International speeches to international audiences often comprising heads of state, other government officials, intergovernmental organizations and NGOs. 　　a) Climate change conferences 　　b) Climate change summit 　　c) Security meetings Internal official speeches to audiences comprising stakeholders, policymakers, local organizations and civil actors: 　　a) Media interview 　　b) political rallies	Territorial threat Individual threat
Media	The use of pictures and texts in showing damages caused by sea-level rise floods, droughts and erosions to national audiences comprising of experts, local politicians, stakeholders, policymakers, NGOs and general public The use of videos to show disaster risk damages	Individual threat Planetary
Official documents	The government uses official documents such as National Adaptation Strategy and Plan of Action on Climate Change for Nigeria (NASPA-CCN) of 2011, INDC of 2016, Nigeria's National Communication: Under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (NNC–UNFCCC), NEMA and NNAPF of 2020. These documents attract audiences comprising intergovernmental agencies, policymakers, experts, NGOs and general public	Territorial threat Individual threat Planetary threat

(Nte 2016). Further, between January 2016 to October 2018, Amnesty International recorded 310 attacks between the Fulani herdsmen and local communities, resulting in at least 3,641 deaths in 56 villages in 5 states within the Middle Belt and Southeast region (Amnesty International. 2018).

At the same summit, President Buhari told his audience that shrinking Lake Chad and the parching of fertile arable lands around the Lake Chad basin caused by climate change has taken jobs and rendered people poor and vulnerable. Buhari reminded his audience that shrinking Lake Chad is the major cause of terrorist insurgencies of Boko Haram around the Lake Chad Basin, which is leading to inter-related political exclusion, a breakdown in the social contract, and insecurity around the area. Buhari's speech reflects earlier assertions that communal conflicts triggered by climate change can engender state failure (Nte 2016) and/or threaten traditional livelihoods thereby forcing some individuals to explore membership of armed groups, such as Boko Haram (USJFCOM 2010). Buhari assured his audience that lives would be saved, and wars averted if adaptation support were to be provided by the international community (Buhari 2017).

Media in Nigeria mainly uses a securitization frame that points to the security of individuals, groups, and the planet as referent objects of climate security. For example, in 2015, The Guardian newspaper analysed how climate change is intensifying floods with negative impacts on the security and welfare of millions of Nigerians (Adeoye 2015). The Nigeria National Broadcasting Television Station (NTA), the national news network, declared climate change a food, water, and health security problem by linking it to the devastating Benue flooding in 2017 (Solomon 2017). In emphasizing the use of the planet as a referent object of climate security, Herbert *et al.* (2013) show that the dominant frame of climate security in Nigerian media is deforestation, gas flaring and environmental degradation, which can be mitigated through emission reduction and alternative energy use.

Finally, in official documents, we found the three referent objects, the territorial threat, the individual, and the planetary threat. The 2013 Nigeria National Climate Change Policy Response and Strategy (NCCPRS) has the objective of helping Nigeria implement mitigation measures that will promote low carbon and strengthen national capacity to adapt to climate change. According to National Emergency Management Agency, as reported in 2013 Nigeria Post-Disaster Needs Assessment, the 2012 flood severely impacted 30 of 36 states in Nigeria, causing 363 deaths, 5,851 injuries, destruction of 597,476 houses, displacement of over 21 million people and an estimated loss of USD 19.6 billion (The Federal Government of Nigeria. 2013). Nigeria's official INDC report emphasizes the livelihood security issues of climate through soil erosion, severe landslides, sea surges, tidal waves, sea-level rise in the South as well as degradation of habitats, and desertification in Nigeria. The document also indicates that climate change poses a significant

Table 2. Securitization of climate change in Nigeria: Actors, strategies, challenges, and responsibility.

Actors	Security perspectives on climate change	Adaptation strategies	Challenges of adaptation strategies	Perceived adaptation responsibility
Federal government experts (FCE) and State government experts (SGE)	climate change having a direct impact on security issues such as: • conflict, migration, national and international security.	• Raise awareness about low adaptive capacity • Institutionalization of adaptation policies • Attract international support through funds, bonds • UN council Lake Chad resolution 2349 • Attract adaptation funding. • Direct attention is paid to underlying issues causing vulnerability to climate-related risks.	Lack of immediate counter action measures	External actors: International and non-governmental organizations
NGO experts (NGE) and Research institute experts (RIE)	Climate change has non-linear link to security: • Variability-oriented perspective where climate security is often connected to climate-related risks such as: • flooding, drought, and erosion. • Vulnerability-centered perspectives where climate change is often connected to risks and vulnerabilities such as: • poor development, socio-political issues, physical exposure.		Neglect of local adaptation actors.	Federal, state and local government responsibility.

threat to the achievement of development goals, especially those related to eliminating poverty, hunger and promoting environmental sustainability (INDC 2016). According to NASPA-CCN (2011), the negative impacts of climate change in many rural areas can be expected to contribute to increased migration, which may lead to social conflicts and create a new class of environmental refugees. Nigeria's National Adaptation Plan Framework (NNAPF) explains that climate change is causing damage to infrastructure and ecological systems, and stresses that the scarcity of biodiversity resources, especially in marginal places, as a contributing factor to the current communal conflict and a high degree of insecurity in the northern region (NNAPF 2020).

The impact of securitization narrative on climate change adaptation in Nigeria

Our results further illuminate the differences in security-driven adaptation perspectives, as well as the differences in how informants describe adaptation-security links depending on whether they work within or outside the public sector (Table 2).

Our findings indicate that the securitization narrative in Nigeria acknowledges two different adaptation perspectives. While the FGE and SGE participants mainly recognize adaptation where vulnerability is seen as resulting specifically from climate change, the NGE and RIP recognize adaptation where vulnerability is affected by socio-political problems.

The various climate security issues identified by FGE and SGE informants are conflict, migration, national security, and international security. FGE and SGE participants explained that climate change is affecting most of the Nigerian population through the threats it poses to natural resources and infrastructure security, such as poor agricultural yield, food security, and damage to roads and houses. One participant stated, "*Flood disasters in the Southwest and drought in the North caused by climate change are affecting agricultural produce which our people rely on for survival and economic growth*' (ASGE 2). Another participant argued, '*climate change-related floods are causing transportation problems, damage to infrastructures such as houses, roads, and power grids*' (ESGE 1). FGE and SGE participants also portrayed climate change as the major cause of conflict between the Fulani herdsmen and local communities in the South. A conflict that, at present, is increasing food insecurity. As one participant opines, '*crop farmers produce the majority of Nigeria's food; the interference from herders is affecting the food security as well as the livelihood of farmers who constitute the majority of the informal economy*' (FGE 8).

All the FGE and SGE participants are of the opinion that the industrialized societies caused climate change and should therefore be accountable for adaptation. According to one participant, 'Nigeria needs help to cope with climate change challenges as Nigeria as a country has not contributed to it' (FGE 2). FGE and SGE participants explained that the link between climate change and an increasing security threat is not just affecting international politics but also national environmental politics. One participant noted, 'Nigeria since when the president of the country became vocal about the security implication of climate change, has instituted few adaptation policies including mainstreaming climate change into relevant sectors' (FGE 3). Nigeria has instituted different policies, including Nigeria's Drought Preparedness Plan, National Policy on Erosion, National Water Policy, National Forest Policy, National Health Policy, National Policy on Drought and Desertification; Flood Control and Coastal Zone Management, and National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan. As a result of the climate security argument, Nigeria has attracted some Clean Development Mechanism projects and projects financed by the Adaptation Fund (INDC 2016). Also, following the relaunch of a task force that was established in 1998, Nigeria is currently prioritising regional cooperation, particularly with the neighbouring Lake Chad Basin Commission Countries, namely Cameroon, Chad, and Niger, as well as Benin, in the operationalization of Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) (Mohammed 2016).

As illustrated in Table 2, the NGE and RIE participants identified climatic extremes such as flood, drought, and erosion as physical events that can lead to security issues when people exposed to these issues lack economic resources and socio-political resilience. These participants are mostly opposed to the use of securitization narrative on the basis that such a framing obscures how socio-political vulnerabilities and adaptive capacities exacerbate climate security issues. They explain that climate security impacts in Nigeria are linked to non-climatic factors such as poverty, social inequality, weak social security, negligence of citizens' welfare, poor governance, and injustice. They claim that the most vulnerable people are often more at risk of climate-related hazards and that a more equitable sharing of resources can reduce people's exposure to climate security impacts. As one participant opines, 'the main victims of climate-related disasters are the poor, jobless, and vulnerable population with less access to good livelihood resources due to lack of basic amenities to live a meaningful life' (NGE 3). The NGE and RIE participants view reflects the position that in the absence of a disaster risk management effort aimed at reducing flood and drought risk, and failure to promote adaptation, climate change will lead to damage to the ecological system and built infrastructure, as well as loss of life and property (Ogbo et al. 2013).

According to NGE and RIE participants, blaming the conflict between the Fulani herdsmen and local communities solely on climate change ignores the political and economic motivations for the conflict by pushing natural factors to the forefront. As one interviewee argued, *'the current problem between the Fulani herdsmen and local communities'* rests more on the *political tension between the North and the South rather than on scarce resources'* (NGE 4). Nigeria consists of different cultural and ethnic groups merged as one political territory where ethno-religious politics influence the distribution of resources and often leads to conflict between the different groups (Ajodo-Adebanjoko 2017).

They argue that climate security arguments as put forward by the federal and state experts seem to be an attempt to deflect attention away from the underlying developmental issues that cause human insecurity in Nigeria and the socio-political tensions causing conflict between different ethnic groups. As one participant asserts, *'politicians and government agents are merely playing politics by making certain claims about climate change. I think that these people do not care for the Nigerian population'* (RIE 5). They claim that the government employs any favourable narrative to attract global attention, support, and adaptation funds. Another participant claims, *'climate change has become so political that the mere mention of it attracts attention globally'* (NGE 2). Another participant argues that *'once you mention that you want to carry out an adaptation project, funding from international agencies is almost guaranteed'* (NGE 1). As of 2015, Nigeria has received 25 million USD in aggregate funding and 227.5 million USD in aggregate co-financing from Climate Investment Funds (CIF) (AFDB, 2015).

All the NGE and RIE participants suggest that climate change adaptation requires the effort of all stakeholders (the government, nongovernmental organizations, and civil society) for effective action. As Nigeria, like other postcolonial societies, is characterised by weak institutions, corruption, and poor governance, coordination between policy planning at the federal and state level and implementation at the local level is difficult (Olajide *et al.* 2018).

The NGE and RIE participants argue that the adaptation challenge lies in the application of the top-down approach, which creates a gap between the national level where adaptation policies are formulated and the local communities where adaptation implementation takes place. As one participant noted, *'adaptation policies and decisions are often made without involving all the people vulnerable and affected by climate change problem'* (RIE 2). Another participant claims, *'my people have survived some of the hardest flood disasters in this country, yet the federal and state often act as if they know our territory more than we do'* (ASGE 2). These participants suggest that the majority of the Nigerian population excluded from adaptation decision-making have an essential contribution to adaptation policies and practices. *'When disaster strikes, it is the communities and the affected individuals that*

bear the burden. These communities should contribute to adaptation policies' (RIE, 1). Federal and state actors should utilize local knowledge and expertise of affected communities for inclusive adaptation policies and practices. A participant asserts, '*Federal and state institutions need local input and knowledge in institutionalizing adaptation policies, but there is no hope that this will happen anytime soon*' (RIE 4). The participants argue that securitizing actors often lack knowledge of the local problems they securitize. However, these actors want to maintain existing power structures, status, and position.

Discussion

Our qualitative analysis of the securitization narrative in Nigeria reveals a complex process where security framing takes place through speech acts, media, and official documents by different securitizing agents. The official documents covered climate security in reference to territorial, individual, and planetary threats. In the speech act, the individual and the territory are the referent objects, so the speeches have the potential to elevate the state-centric security agenda even though there were claims of international security as a concern. On the other hand, the media paid less attention to territory threats while emphasizing livelihood security and ecosystem security. Nigeria's climate security arguments are not made in isolation since they coincide with the endogenous effects of global climate change predictions concerning vulnerable countries (IPCC 2014).

Balzacq *et al.* (2016) argue that the constitute language used to construct security, context, setting, and the social capital that may be cited as supporting evidence of a threat can alter the conduct and process of securitization. We find that climate securitization narratives used in a particular setting can generate a feedback loop that is more likely to encourage deeper engagement with climate change adaptation. Some of these securitization narratives are presented during conferences, meetings, interviews, and news with language and videos containing a great deal of conviction and attitude, which operates as a mediating and communicative instrument (Côté 2016). Securitizing as an issue in such settings is possible, as inter-subjective belief is often established through social and group interaction with such power as to be able to create social reality and inform people's behaviour (Guzzini 2000). This might be the reason the issue of Lake Chad has attracted attention even though some scholars have argued that the contested shrinking Lake Chad is not the problem; instead, people's lives and livelihood are being undermined by climate change that is aggravating the political and economic conditions that gave rise to the violence in the first place (Vivekananda *et al.* 2019).

Through various securitizing approaches in Nigeria, climate change was defined as a security threat. A plea was made by President Buhari to constitute political responsibility, and the construction of means to adapt to the threat was proposed. The above analysis highlights an important question regarding how the settings that allow climate security claims are created. By taking a view of the audiences as active participants in the securitization process, the answer to how the setting that allows climate security can be found in the audience participating in international climate change summits and meetings where Nigerian policymakers could easily lay claim to climate security without questions. If the acceptance of the validity of climate security claims by audiences depends on the setting, a climate security claim made at a climate change meeting might attract positive interest. At these international summits and meetings, Nigeria's climate security concerns are mostly presented to international audiences that play little or no role in local adaptation practice. However, adaptation is a local practice that requires the participation and effort of the local audience to ensure that the means to adapt are successfully implemented. This suggests that discussing climate security issues at conferences and summits at the grassroots with a local audience may be a productive way to influence adaptation action.

Using media and official text raises a further issue. Employing a security narrative in specific climate problems does not necessarily equate to its significance as a security issue, especially when such issues are not open to public scrutiny (Williams 2008). Securitizing moves are apparent in political speech, the media, and the official document; however, the logic of securitization did not continue as the narrative anticipated. Apart from the Lake Chad Joint Task Force and few adaptation projects, the policies pursued were ordinary with little contention.

The differences between the FGE and SGE participants and the NGE and RIE participants are visible in relation to the impact of climate security on adaptation. FGE and SGE participants echoed the securitization narrative employed by the government through political speeches, national media, and official documents. In FGE and SGE's view, developed countries responsible for climate change are also responsible for the adaptation of countries like Nigeria. More specifically, NGE and RIE participants emphasized poor development, socio-political issues, and other vulnerabilities as the major contributing factor to Nigeria's security concerns and think the federal government is accountable for adaptation. These participants also differ in their views regarding the limits to adaptation in Nigeria. FGE and SGE participants blame adaptation capacity specifically on lack of financial and technological resources as the country's resources are dedicated to more urgent and pressing developmental issues. The NGE and RIE participants

pointed to the neglect of the local communities in policy creation which can open the issues of climate change adaptation to debate and include the voices of the vulnerable groups. Specifically, pointing to socio-political and developmental factors can enable the underlying issues to be discussed, which can play an essential role in de-escalating tension between different groups as well as help to reduce people's vulnerability. The neglect of local communities reflects the performative role of security when it is employed as a political technology to preserve power relations and oppress or exclude some groups or opposition (Huysmans 2006). It is not surprising to note that FGE and SGE participants have been utilising a security narrative to refer to adaptation in a way that is not balanced, as the representation of an issue as security can serve as a tool to limit participation in decision-making. Our application of a securitization narrative to climate change adaptation reveals that the role of the audience is marginalized in certain situations, especially in regard to the vulnerable groups that are most impacted by climate security. This is problematic as the audience is fundamental in the inter-subjective process of securitization, and their limited participation might be significant in the lack of urgent adaptation actions.

Despite the dominant use of securitization narrative, the adaptation policies that have been instituted were rather typical in terms of the regular dynamics of Nigerian politics. The need for adaptation in Nigeria has not resulted in urgent and exceptional action that the logic of securitization would expect; instead, the predominant practice is risk management, which is applied to reduce the harm directed to the referent object as risk issues are more conducive to being managed, in contrast to being eradicated (Corry 2012). The securitization narrative at the political level has done little to impact practical adaptation as adaptation is a complex process that mostly takes place at the local level. However, we are warned by Floyd (2015) against setting the requirement for securitization success too high by placing the threshold of its success purely on security practice.

Furthermore, securitization narratives tend to deflect attention from existing socio-political issues and other vulnerabilities that contribute to security issues in Nigeria. Even the INDC report recognizes adaptation as an integrated component of sustainable development, which contributes to reduced vulnerability, disaster risk reduction, and enhanced resilience and adaptive capacity (INDC 2016). In any case, the data reveals that the existing conflict in Nigeria is caused mainly by the failure to share limited resources, which implies that the growing shift in temperature, rainfall, storms, and sea-level rise, if unaddressed, could throw already scarce resources such as land and water into shorter supply and thereby increase conflict that dots the country's landscape (Lekwot *et al.* 2014).

Conclusion

Climate change adaptation in Nigeria and the more general question of security in adaptation practice reveals the limits of urgent action even when a securitization narrative is employed. Politics and the structural dynamics of climate change adaptation are too complex for securitization narratives alone. In traditional security issues, there is often a focus on who construct security and where they construct security, as well as what the security practices being constructed are. This is not the case in a non-traditional security issue such as climate change adaptation, especially as it relates to our findings. In climate change adaptation, security construction is not done by a specific actor but by different actors to various audiences through different channels such as speech acts, the media, and textual documents. In the case of Nigeria, the most crucial audience (the local public) is often not included in the discussion especially by the media. The media is a contested space, often devoid of deliberative interaction, where the most powerful group can establish a dominant specific message (Happer and Philo 2013). Few people are included in the formulation of media content which brings into focus the power relations that are embedded in the securitization process. This means that the attempt to apply a securitization narrative to climate change adaptation has resulted in few practical actions. Much of what is being done in the name of climate change adaptation in Nigeria is risk-related. Apart from the recent prioritizing of the regional corporation in the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) with the neighbouring Lake Chad Basin Commission, and the support for some Clean Development Mechanism projects and projects financed by the Adaptation Fund, adaptation practices are carried out by ordinary government and non-governmental institutions, civil society and individuals. Adaptation processes and practices in Nigeria are driven not merely by a logic of crisis, emergency, and exception, but also through risk principles which seek to regulate and manage climate-related risks. Climate security must therefore be considered in the context of the numerous other institutions that take part in climate change adaptation.

This study has shown that although securitizing moves are easily identified in climate change in Nigeria, the implications for policy and practice is much harder to discern. This is partly because of the complexities of climate change adaptation as well as the numerous interest groups required. Our findings do not discount the importance of securitization in climate change, but it problematizes the claims that securitization narrative affects adaptation practices, especially at the local level. The complexity of adaptation far exceeds that of the political theatre of securitization and should be concerned with processes that are both effective and not controversial. We conclude that the use of

securitization narratives run the danger of doing little to address underlying issues that affect people's vulnerability and exposure to climate security issues. This is because the political theatre of securitization narratives often ignores the socio-political dynamics that determine people's vulnerability and exposure to climate security.

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