



On The Trajectory of Boko Haram Terrorism in Nigeria: Socio-Economic Challenges and Intervention Strategies for Conflict Resolution

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Abstract: Approximately a decade of Boko Haram catastrophic enterprises in Nigeria has described the Islamist terrorist group as an anathema to sustainable development as well as the nation's most protracted stand-off of recent times. The study employed a qualitative methodological approach of in-depth interviews to examine the multi-faceted challenges of the crisis in Nigeria. The study unfolds a great deal of deplorable effects associated with gradual underdevelopment of the Nigerian state, particularly in the areas of socio-economic, political, religious, educational, agricultural, and health advancement of the country. With Boko Haram's persistent enterprise flourishing in Nigeria and no lasting solutions hitherto in sight, the study recommends peaceful negotiation as an immediate response to the crisis and pre-emptive legal measures as a remote solution to address such problem should it arise in the nearest future.

Keywords: Boko Haram, Conflict resolution, Extremism, Intervention strategies, Socio-economic, Terrorism, Trajectory

1. Introduction

Boko Haram terrorism arguably remains one of the biggest threats to global peace and stability in contemporary times [1]. Since the dawn of this millennium, the incidence of terrorism has been on a steady rise worldwide with the manifestation of terrorism most evident in Africa, and in Nigeria in particular where the phenomenon has found expression in the emergence of Boko Haram terrorism [1]. Since its advent, this particular sectarian insurgency has wreaked immense havoc in the country, especially because explosives and firearms are used with gruesome and fatal consequences

[2]. A critical corollary of this violence is dire humanitarian crisis that threatens human security in Nigeria, where acts of terrorism are perpetrated by a Nigerian sect of militants popularly known as Boko Haram fundamentalists.

Approximately a decade of Boko Haram catastrophic enterprises in Nigeria has described the Islamist terrorist group as an anathema to sustainable development as well as the nation's most protracted stand-off of recent times. The ten-year-old standoff is hitherto no close to being resolved but continues to plague the progress and peace of

the most populous African country through its virulent activities of destroying lives and property by techniques of bombings and killings of innocent citizens. The height of insecurity experienced on daily basis from the egregious activities of the sect has bestowed upon the nation a host of setbacks that may linger on the progress of the nation forever, if urgent actions are not taken to arrest the awkward situations. The aftermath of these terrible situations has magnificently produced a great deal of adverse effects on the socio-economic, political, religious, educational, agricultural, and health advancement of the country. Consequently, there is currently a gradual breakdown in the country's fiscal policy and national development because most resources have been channeled towards resolving the problem; which, in turn, has bounced back to affect other important sectors of our economic growth. The study employed a qualitative methodological approach of in-depth interviews involving forty participants to assess the multi-faceted challenges of the crisis in Nigeria. With Boko Haram's persistent phenomenon progressing in Nigeria and no lasting solutions yet in sight, the study recommends peaceful negotiation as an immediate response to the crisis and preemptive legal measures as a remote solution to address such problem peradventure it arises in the nearest future. To achieve the aim of the research, the study employed a qualitative methodological approach of in-depth interviews involving forty participants from different stakeholders in society in order to obtain high quality data information that helped describe the subject under discussion.

A panoramic and chronological overview of Boko Haram activities in Nigeria

Boko Haram has been described as a dynamic phenomenon and a persistent societal problem that ravages the Nigerian state. The activities of this organisation have

resulted in one of the worst holocausts and greatest calamities of cataclysmic proportions in human history [3]. Since 2009, the Nigerian Joint Task Force (JTF) has been deployed to the north-eastern parts of Nigeria to quell Boko Haram violence. Unfortunately, the role of and abuses by this security force have conspired to worsen the dire security condition in the area. In addition to the failure of the JTF to protect lives and property, it has also lost the trust of the people (which is an important resource in the battle against the insurgent group), as communities have also been abused by this armed force. Also, the high-handedness with which members of the JTF have prosecuted the fight against insurgency has helped diffuse membership of the group from urban centres to the rural areas, which has exacerbated collateral damage [3].

At the closing quarter of 2009, mass graves were discovered across the north-eastern regions of Nigeria. Some of these graves held hundreds of shallowly buried corpses. Moreover, Nkwede et al. (2011) found that over three million Nigerians had been displaced, thousands had been abducted, and over a 100 000 were killed within a couple of years of Boko Haram's insurgency in Nigeria. The rise of Boko Haram has therefore heightened the state of insecurity in Nigeria and beyond, triggering deadly bomb attacks on police forces, government officials, places of worship, public institutions and innocent civilians.

Following its re-emergence, Boko Haram carried out its first terrorist attack in Borno state in January 2010, claiming the lives of four people with many people injured. In June of the same year its new leader, Abubakar Shekau, instructed members of the group to commence retaliatory attacks of security forces and traitors but to spare civilians. This dramatic change of events was the watershed of a chain reaction of suicide attacks that extended beyond Borno state for the first time.

In September 2010, Boko Haram broke 105 of its members out of prison in Maiduguri along with over 600 other prisoners. This later transcended to several areas of northern Nigeria [4, 5, 6]. Since then, Boko Haram has increased the frequency and intensity of its attacks with increased suicide bombings and assassinations. Many believe that Boko Haram is leading an armed insurgency against corruption, abusive security forces and economic disparity in northern Nigeria and feeding off tension that has existed between the Muslim dominated north and the Christian dominated south of Nigeria.

In 2011, with improved operational capabilities, Boko Haram launched a series of attacks against both soft targets and security posts. For example, in June six police officers were killed at the Abuja police headquarters. However, the group's attack on the United Nations building in Abuja in which 11 UN staff members and 12 other people died, with more than 100 injured, seemed at the time to suggest that the group's ambitions were broader than initially believed [7]. In fact, the group carried out a further 115 attacks in 2011, killing 550 innocent citizens. At the end of 2011, Boko Haram had maintained a steady rate of attacks with individuals, groups, security forces and religious leaders as their prime targets.

In 2012, the implementation of the emergency rule in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states in Nigeria marked a turning point in Boko Haram terrorism in the country. A few days after the state of emergency had been declared, the group embarked on a series of small-scale attacks on Christians and 'strangers' (non-indigenes) resident in northern Nigeria [7]. Members of the police force who had been drafted in by government to protect fleeing southerners became prime targets. In Kano, Boko Haram carried out a deadly assault on the police building on 20 January, killing 190 members. Given the upsurge of their 'success' against security

forces, many began to question the loyalty of the members of the Nigerian security force. This came to a head on 8 January 2012, when the Nigerian President, Goodluck Jonathan, announced that Boko Haram had infiltrated the army and the police as well as the government [5]. The year 2012 thus marked the significant progress of Boko Haram terrorism into even more terrible and catastrophic ventures than ever before.

The year 2013 witnessed the introduction of a new dimension of terror as Boko Haram terrorists engaged in transnational insurgency. Early in that year, the conflict spilled over the Nigerian national borders to involve all four geographically contiguous countries in the sub-region, namely Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria. Added to this innovation is the fact that Boko Haram, in association with its splinter group Ansani, was linked to a number of kidnappings. The group kidnapped on different occasions seven French nationals in the north of Cameroon in February, a French priest and a further eight French citizens and obtained ransom payments for their release [8]. Furthermore, the increased insecurity in north-eastern Nigeria led the government to extend the state of emergency in May 2013. This development was welcomed by increased tension in the three affected states (Adamawa, Borno and Yobe) as Boko Haram heightened the tempo of its insurgent activities. As such, the total number of internally displaced persons increased from 250 000 to 650 000 – an increase of 309% – with thousands of others fleeing the country [9].

The most notorious act of Boko Haram so far took place on 15 April 2014, when about 276 girls from Chibok town in Borno state were kidnapped [10]. Although over 50 of them managed to escape, the incident brought the group pervasive global attention. The girls' plight featured on 'Bring Back Our Girls' posters all over the world. Within the same period, Boko Haram announced the formation

of Islamic Caliphate which included Gwoza, a strategic town in north-eastern Nigeria. The town of Bama, 70 kilometres from Maiduguri, was also captured, which increased the reach of the new caliphate. Despite the aggression of the Nigerian security forces against Boko Haram and its alleged collaborators since 2009, the group has continued to recruit new members to this day. The upward trend in violence suggests that the more the security forces intervened, the worse the crisis became.

At the dawn of 2015, Boko Haram grew in magnitude and controlled about 20 local government areas in north-eastern Nigeria (a territory the size of Belgium). Assisted by its foreign allies, the Nigerian army declared in recent times that it had pushed back the insurgent group out of all but three local government areas in Bornu state [11]. President Jonathan was criticized for not doing enough to tackle the insurgency in the north-east. In a pre-election campaign, his main challenger, Muhammadu Buhari's chance was boosted by a reputation for toughness gained when he was a military ruler in Nigeria between 1983 and 1985 [11].

Indeed, more than 13 000 people have been killed and some 1.5 million made homeless in the Boko Haram conflict since 2009 [12]. In addition, cross-border attacks launched from Boko Haram strongholds in Nigeria have threatened to destabilize the neighbouring countries of Cameroon, Chad and Niger in the sub-region with increased security threats. To combat this menace, a sub-regional coalition force supported by the African Union Force was created. After a series of negotiations, on 30 November 2014, a coalition force made up of soldiers from Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria was formed. Its task was primarily to fight Boko Haram terrorism in the sub-region [12].

Apart from the foregoing, on March 6 in 2015, the African Union endorsed the creation of an additional regional force of up to 10 000 soldiers to join the fight against Boko Haram.

This regional force claimed a series of successes in rebel-held territory as part of an operation to clear and control north-eastern Nigeria in time for the country's general elections rescheduled for March 28 after an initial postponement from March 14. These were particularly active in the Gamboru area of Nigeria on the border with Cameroon. A parallel joint Niger-Chad offensive retook Damasake from the insurgent group on March 27 in 2015 [13]. This came in the wake of the announcement by the Nigerian military that its troops had recaptured the town of Gwoza from Boko Haram on March 20, 2015. Gwoza is important to the extent that it was in this town that the terrorists declared their caliphate in 2014.

As the onslaught against Boko Haram intensified, Abubakar Shekau pledged allegiance to the Islamic State (IS) on 7 March 2015. While on the one hand the declaration could be seen as an attempt by the group to rescue its sinking ship (given the fact that its previous allegiance was with al Qaeda), on the other hand Boko Haram has the potential to raise the spectre of violence and a stronger propaganda campaign that the Nigerian army, even with its influx of new weapons and African Union support, is much less equipped to combat [11].

President Jonathan's optimism about the recapture of towns initially seized by Boko Haram within a month passed for a swift victory after six years of bloody conflict. Two weeks before the rescheduled elections in Nigeria, Boko Haram was said to have suffered more than it had for years [11]. Though there was public relief that the insurgency was being blunted by the change in fortune for the group, it was unclear how effective the military operation had been. The rapid chains of success by the Nigerian army in partnership with its allies left many Nigerians wondering why it took until the final days of the election campaign to begin submerging the insurgent group. Many questions were asked how the

government managed to repress the insurgent group within a few weeks as it could not accomplish this in the previous several years [11].

An important lesson should be learnt from the experiences of the Nigerian armed forces in dealing with Boko Haram. One lesson is that, after the declaration of the state of emergency in the north-east, Boko Haram went underground only to re-emerge later with more sinister tactics. Once again, the coalition forces should be mindful of a repeat performance. While the efforts of the multi-national forces should be applauded, it should be borne in mind that because none of the group's leaders has either been captured or killed, the campaign of the multi-national force ran the risk of breaking the group into splinter units. The argument is that each sub-unit could resort to guerrilla warfare to promote the ideology of the group. Consequently, Boko Haram may retreat from rural areas (where it currently faces intensive bombardment by the allied forces) to infiltrate urban areas where it may regroup as multiple cells which will eventually become conduits for insurgency [14].

At the opening of 2016, the threat posed by Boko Haram loomed larger, not only over Nigeria's national security, but also over the Nigerian citizenry and its neighbouring countries, with people having their daily lives subjected to frequent incidents of stress, danger, fear and death. However, with the advancement of a multinational task force in the wake of 2016 under the administration of General Muhammadu Buhari, the strength of the terrorist sect dramatically waned, with many members of the sect killed while the most powerful and notorious kingpins of the sect were arrested in a swift military operation by multinational troops [15]. Moreover, the appointment of Abu Musab Al-Barnawi as the new leader of the sect by the Islamic States (IS) on 5 August 2016 precipitated an unprecedented dichotomy within the group,

which resulted in a split in the group and thus a further weakening of the terrorist force [16].

However, at the beginning of 2017, the 7 January Boko Haram attack on the Nigerian army base in the Buni Yadi area of Yobe state in which five soldiers lost their lives debunked the fast-spreading rumour that the sect had been submerged in Nigeria [17]. There has been no concrete evidence hitherto that Boko Haram has been defeated in Nigeria. In fact, as it is driven out of some territories, it establishes colonies in new geographical areas. In the past, Boko Haram managed to melt into the countryside and the slums of urban centres where it regrouped and eventually resurfaced. Therefore, although regional onslaughts by a multinational task force might have truly turned the tide against Boko Haram, the truth is that it still poses a significant threat to designated sub-regions in Nigeria. Realistically, before there could be any evidence of Nigeria winning the war against Boko Haram terrorism, Boko Haram's most notorious leader, Abubakar Shekau and his deadly guerrilla force must be apprehended and the last of the Chibok girls must be recovered from captivity.

Clearly, the Boko Haram era of terror outbursts shows no signs of abating, despite Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari's New Year address which claimed that Boko Haram had been 'beaten' [18]. However, the overarching focus of the current study is not on the activities of the sect, but on the evil effects of the insurgency on the socio-economic development of the Nigerian State.

Methodology

The study adopted a qualitative methodological design involving an ethnographic method of in-depth interviewing using semi-structured interviews as the research instrument. An audio recorder assisted in the procurement of oral and institutional data that were collected directly

from the field as sources of information relevant to the study of Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria. It was argued that the chosen method would give greater leverage to the study due to its in-depth and qualitative nature. In the secondary data collection phase, relevant published scholarly literature, journal articles, newspaper reports, the electronic media, and various other print media were scrutinized and analysed. The secondary data were juxtaposed with the primary data for credibility, dependability and trustworthiness. Questionnaires were not administered to the participants. The study also did not involve any testing of hypotheses due to the nature of the research questions and the methods chosen for the investigation.

The choice for the adoption of an in-depth interview method was to gather a large body of credible and dependable primary data, which may not have been possible through a mere survey method. Moreover, most research inquiries into Boko Haram insurgency have engaged in a review of literatures and a cross-sectional survey approach according to which most of the findings may either have been manipulated, over-emphasized, undermined, or altered in some way, or the data may not have been adequately corroborated by empirical data due to the nature of the research instruments used. Therefore, the adoption of a qualitative approach in this

study was deemed suitable for in-depth probing into the research problem by generating detailed and nuanced data that helped throw more light on the evil effects of Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria.

The study population covered two different categories of stakeholders (including male and female) with the age bracket ranging from the penal age of 18 and above. The participants were selected across a wide range of stakeholders in order to give the study a more comparative research approach. This virtually helped in enhancing the trustworthiness of the research findings. This is more illustrated in the table 1.1 below.

Because the data that were purposively generated in the study were solely qualitative, a process referred to as ‘thematic content analysis’ was utilized to analyze and explain the data that had been compacted into manageable chunks.

In this process, the recordings of the in-depth interviews were transcribed and translated from a local language (i.e., Yoruba, Hausa, Nupe, Gwari, Igbo and Pidgin) to the English text. The responses to each question were read and re-read for familiarization in order to ensure data reduction. This process was followed by identification of the major themes.

Government Officials	Civil Society Organization
(a) Security Operatives comprising officers in the following arms: 1.the Police Force 2.The Nigerian Army 3.State Security Services (DSS) 4. The Prison 5.Customs and Boarder Protection (b) Political Office Holders	1.Business men and women; 2.Students from tertiary institutions 3.Religious leaders (both Christian and Muslim) 4.Abuja Metro Police Community Relation Committee members

The themes were then coded and indexed, arranged and re-arranged into main headings and sub-headings by method of charting. The range of responses, central themes and shared perceptions as well as dissenting viewpoints were mapped out, condensed and interpreted. Significant quotes expressing the emerging themes were noted, highlighted, and then summarized and important quotations were reported verbatim for the sake of authenticity and to validate the findings of the study.

Socio-economic Challenges of Boko Haram Terrorism

On the state of the country, when people feel insecure, their appetite to invest, buy or rent from the product of investment reduces; and that is why all over the world today, any country that radiates an environment of insecurity naturally repels investment initiatives from both the international community and its own local investors. Every society across the globe has its peculiar problems and challenges in which Nigeria is not an exception [19]. Today, Boko Haram insecurity is one of the greatest problems bedeviling the Nigerian societies in varying degrees; and it has affected government policies, economic growth and also retarded development in all its phases. The study shares a relatively similar view with Ifijeh's submission by describing Boko Haram insurgency not only as a threat to the economic, political and social security of Nigeria but also as a significant factor affiliated with gradual underdevelopment of the continent; because it has apparently discouraged both local and foreign investments thereby waning down the socio-economic development of the Nigerian state. More specifically, it has reduced the quality of life and standard of living by exacerbating the conditions of poverty, wretchedness,

unemployment and health risks across the populace, caused educational disruptions across different levels of academic pursuits, created religious misconceptions and loss of trust of one another, promoted the phenomenon of kidnapping, unwanted pregnancies and teenage motherhood, generated day-to-day panic, loss of property, deaths of millions of people and incidents of internally displaced persons (IDPs), destroyed human and social capital, lowered agricultural productivities in affected areas, produced political instability by truncating the relationship between citizens and the political states, undermined democracy and the rule of law, as well as the capacity of the country to promote growth and development. Findings of this study have apparently shown the adverse effects of Boko Haram terrorism have hampered the socio-economic development of the Nigerian state by truncating all prominent sectors of the economy which could have influenced the positive growth and development of the country. However, when questions were asked on the socio-economic consequences of Boko Haram terrorism, the following excerpts were obtained from an Army Officer and a 53-year old business woman:

It has produced a lot of adverse effects on the country. Especially in the economic and agricultural sectors. So many times, the affected areas would lack some particular types of food or the other. It has greatly discouraged foreign investors, reduced fiscal policy in the Nigerian government, causing educational disruptions due to everyday closure of institutions, health problems, loss of loved ones, food scarcity, cultural discrimination, incidents of internally displaced persons, political instability religious misconceptions, causing increased number of refugees in the neighbouring countries, deaths of many innocent people, destructions of government and private, property, joblessness due to many people leaving the Boko Haram

areas for a safer part of the country, unnecessary fear and national threat, to mention but a few

It also affects the educational system as it is difficult for students in the north to go to school and affect the business generally as citizens can no longer go out to purchase their needs thereby turning the economy of the north to 0%.

Insights into the above data show that the effect of Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria is multifaceted and it has, from time to time, devastated all areas of our development and endeavor, and as well hinder us from achieving the objectives of the national development plans on economic growth.

Political Instability

Political instability has been acknowledged as the most serious adverse effect of Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria. This is because politics is the backbone of all nations which determines the faith of progress and development that any nation could achieve within a time framework of democratic era. It is established that when the political situation of a country is in a state of collapse and chaos, definitely all other areas of the nation's economy are on the verge of being collapsed. The day-to-day activities of the sect have destabilized democratic movement in all the Boko Haram-affected zones in Nigeria. The northern situation is so worse that people now hardly come out to showcase their political enfranchisement at national and state elections because of the fear of not being killed and bombed by the Boko Haram sect. Since Boko Haram stepped up its operations in 2010, the northern region has never been the same, but desolate and dry; and there is a report that Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into Nigeria has crashed down owing to the political instability that the country has confronted with terrorism in recent times. According to the World Investment Report

(WIR) 2013, FDI that flows into Nigeria dropped by 21.3 percent within a year — from \$8.9 billion in 2011 to \$7 billion in 2012. This has dealt a great blow to the development of Nigeria as the giant of Africa, upon which so many neighbouring countries' economy depends.

Furthermore, the political insecurity in northern Nigeria has already impaired the service industries and foreign organizations, particularly those that have the bulk of their operations located in the region. The study reveals that the financial services sector is the most adversely affected as banks and other financial organizations such as telecommunication companies and big factories are closing down their branches while insurance premiums are rising vice versa.

Political instability in the north has also called for mass emigration of foreign investors and Nigerian citizens, particularly those from the south-west, south-east and south-south, causing a good number of them to leave their jobs and businesses for fear of falling prey of untimely demise in the hands of dangerous Boko Haram terrorists. Findings from the study have also proved that the exodus of people from the northern region has not only constituted a depletion of economic affairs in the north, such that was experienced in the Basque country of Spain but has thrown those who are facing the unplanned and sudden departure from the north into financial and psychological traumas. A statement adapted from an interview with a 67-year old Christian leader confirms the findings on the question of adverse effects of Boko Haram terrorism on socio-economic development:

Very well. Boko Haram has a lot of negative effects in Nigeria in terms of poor Economy, political instability, unemployment, unplanned departure of people from the region, infrastructure stagnation, poor health services, family breakdown, loss of jobs, closure of private and government institutions, destruction of

Nigeria's and foreign property, deaths of innocent people, incidence of Nigerian refugees in neighbouring countries, health challenges , trauma to those who lost their jobs, businesses and loved ones to Boko Haram, Kidnapping here and there, abuse of girls and street rape ,phobia of insecurity, affecting foreign investment and so on. Talk of any sectors in Nigeria today, Boko Haram has by one way or others affected them.

To buttress this point, a political office holder had this to say:

Of course, boko haram has cost us a lot in this country. Millions of our children that are leaders of tomorrow have been killed and those involved were frustrated to leave the region for safety of their other children and their own lives; the psychological stress it has caused cannot be measured. More so, the country is suffering the hardship that Boko Haram inflicted on them because most big organizations in the affected areas have folded up tail! Tail.

Health Problems

The advent of Boko Haram terrorism has worsened the health status of the northern region as both private and government hospitals have not been functioning properly as they used to be because of the threat of Boko Haram operations on the streets of northern states, particularly the Boko Haram's most deadly region of the north-east. The worst part of the situation was when Boko Haram played into actions of kidnapping anybody suspected to be a nurse or medical practitioners to take care of some of their captives, including the sick abducted girls, pregnant women abducted as well as their warriors who were injured on the battle field. Subsequently, the information came through the U.S Embassy in Nigeria to alert the State Chairman of National Association of Nigerian Nurses and Midwives (NANNM,2014) and the

Nigerian Medical Associations (NMA) Headquarters in Abuja [20]. This information created a great deal of fear in the hearts of nurses and medical doctors in the region, which caused an appreciable number of medical practitioners to resign their jobs and run away for their dear lives. Consequently, there appears a high incidence of mortality and morbidity rates, such as unabated increase in maternal and infant deaths at various hospital premises of the region. There is also day-to-day news on the televisions and radios about undue and uncontrollable spread of communicable diseases across the region because many Primary Health Centres (PHC) who are in charge of this scheme have long closed down due to the invasion of Boko Haram menace . The streets of the north-eastern region are full of motherless children whose mothers have died during their labour as a result of unavailability of nurses and doctors on call to attend to their agonies of childbirth. Another pathetic aspect of the health hazards created by Boko Haram is an incidence of many people that died of minor health problems that could have been well taken care of if doctors and nurses were on call . Second to this is the high rate at which victims of accidents (fire, auto crash, drowning, poisoning etc) are losing their lives in the region because of lack of competent health workers to give them an immediate medical intervention. The health hazards of Boko Haram terrorism have also produced a negative impact on our socio-economic development as many foreign investors are afraid of coming to the region because of fear of health security and insurance. This occasion has also contributed to the migration trend of people in large numbers out of the northern region to areas where the health of their people particularly children and parents can be guaranteed. The study has established that as people are forced to move out of the region, their employment statuses are also at stake and this creates some psychological and emotional pressures on the affected

individuals who have suddenly left their jobs and property to unplanned relocation. The negative effect of people's migration from the north is overpopulation experienced by other regions of the Nigerian state where the Boko Haram insurgency has not reached. This present health situation of the northern Nigeria must have dealt a great blow to international organizations whose primary mission statement is to ensure an acceptable level of health for all the people of the world so as to fulfil the World Health Organization's objective of Alma Ata Declaration of 1978. This is indeed a bad reputation for Nigeria among its contemporaries in the global village. When questions were asked on the health challenges of Boko Haram terrorism, the following excerpts were taken during an interview with the following participants:

A-24-year old student of the University of Abuja narrated this:

The negative effects of boko haram in Nigeria are many. No good medical services....people in the region are dying on daily basis from diseases and accidents because no doctors and nurses to attend to them
Interviewer: Why? **Respondent:** *some of those hospitals are no more stable and some of their staff have resigned because of Boko Haram attack and road block, no health development, properties and lives were lost on daily basis and there is fear everywhere.*

A successful business man was of this opinion:

If we started analyzing the negative effects of boko haram in Nigeria, two days cannot be enough but I will just mention the most serious ones. It has caused health hazards because there is high incidence of health workers resigning road block and hospital attacks by boko haram nurses kidnapping absence of drugs and medical facilities to take

care of sick people salaries of Health practitioners are not paid regularly which in turn caused regular strike and deaths of many patients. Many people lost their shelter and all their properties including their precious ones. A lot of children in school that supposed to be the leaders of tomorrow were killed and some may not be able to think straight again in their life because of scary incidents they have witnessed.

The above data information displays the highest level of health havocs that northern Nigerians have experienced since the intervention of Boko Haram terrorists in the socio-economic affairs of Nigeria.

Educational Disruptions

Education is the bedrock of all nations and indeed the most powerful weapon that can be used to change the world (Stated by Nelson Mandela: 1918- 2013).It is one of the most important indices to measure the development of any nation. However, since the evolution of Boko Haram terrorists in Nigeria, the educational system has remained epileptic with day by day closure of educational institutions from primary school level to the tertiary level. The situation became worse with the abduction of about 276 secondary school girls from Chibok, Borno north-eastern part of Nigeria- an event that generated a global concern tagged "#Bring back our Girls#" and catapulted Boko Haram's status to be one of the deadliest terrorist organizations in the world according to the declaration of Global Terrorism Index (2015) [21]. This miserable incident has changed the perceptions of most parents in the northern Nigeria towards education, thereby making a good number of parents withdraw their children from schools because of the fear of unprecedented return of Boko Haram terrorists to the region. The attendant consequence of this situation is nothing but high rate of school drops-out in the region. The teaching and research productivities of most tertiary institutions

around the northern region have been greatly affected due to incessant bombing of university campuses, maiming and killing of students and academics, blocking of roads by the sect; all of which have resulted in day-to-day closing down of academic institutions in the north. This study has also established that the effect of educational disruptions in the region has lowered the standard of education and the height of development at which the northern society much have attained by now. Another formidable effect of Boko Haram terrorism on the educational status of the northern Nigeria can be felt in the area of National Youth Service Corps(NYSC). Since Boko Haram has stepped up its aggression on the northern communities, the NYSC scheme has been having problems with the deployment of new graduates to the region because in recent times, many university graduates had lost their lives to Boko Haram crisis when they were posted to the region to serve their father land as an integral part of their educational requirements, as enshrined in the Bill of Rights and Constitutions of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Since fresh graduates have refused to be deployed to the northern communities to fulfil their one year mandatory primary assignment of serving their land, the northern communities have experienced a magnificent setback on their primary and secondary schools education because the northern societies have long relied on annual deployment of youth corps to put their children through a sound education. More importantly, tertiary institutions in the region have also lost their funding relationships with international organizations that give out loans and grants for the advancement of educational potentials of the developing countries so as to accomplish the objectives of the Millennium Development goals (MDGs) on education. When questions were asked on the educational challenges of Boko Haram terrorism, the following excerpts were taken during an interview with the following participants:

According to a clergyman:

It has caused setback for youths in their education due to frequent closing down of their universities due to Boko Haram crisis.

To a custom officer:

It caused setback in the standard of education especially in the northern part because students from the north were moved to the south west and south east and it really affects them. It has also caused many people to be internally displaced and some ran to neighboring countries

A-22-year old student of private university expressed this

Honestly, this boko haram terrorism is a very bad thing that ever happened in Nigeria because it really affects everything. Students are not graduating in some places, they get transfer and some students have to waste one year because of boko haram. Our parents in business can no longer get textiles and jewelries they usually buy from kano and kaduna because of insurgency. No one is willing to travel to the north.

To a political office holder:

*The negative effects are many. Children are no longer safe going to school while some have abandoned school totally. Government and international organizations have stopped granting financial aids to the northern institutions because of educational instability of the region. **Interviewer:** why?. **Respondent:** Because the region is under crisis now...so pumping funds to them would just be like waste of resources....the targets of governments and those international organizations are to resolve their crisis with Boko Haram first before they can think of anything education now.*

A member of Abuja Metro Police Community Relation Committee declared:

Low standard of education. Some parents have even withdrawn their children from boarding schools because of the incident of chibok girls held in Boko Haram's captivity.

A comparative data analysis and interpretation of the above findings shows that Boko Haram's existence in Nigeria has dealt a great blow to the northern educational system and the effects of this awkward situation of their threats on the region are keenly felt across the entire Nigerian societies.

Low Agricultural Productivities

The adverse effect of Boko Haram terrorism is also keenly felt on agricultural productivities in the region. Most lands that were formally used to farm and grace animals for the development of the nation have been claimed by Boko Haram terrorists and converted to war zones for both the Armed Forces and the Boko Haram insurgents. Many local and professional farmers have abandoned their farmlands to ensure security and safety of their lives. Consequently, agricultural productivities are adversely affected with the farmlands turning barren as a result of loss of fertility due to soil destruction by the militants and the armed forces. Many farmlands have been affected by the chemicals produced from the fighting weapons and animals, particularly cattle are wasted in large numbers during the course of fire for fire operations between the military and the Islamist terrorists. Sometimes some farmers lost their lives while working on the farms during the course of the battle. Consequently, there is a radical decrease in farm produces in the region, and which has extended to other regions, such as south-west and south-east, of the Nigerian state .In as

much as the northern Nigeria is an agrarian society where most people's occupation is farming and gracing of animals that supplies food crops and dairy products across the entire country, it is important to know that all other regions of Nigeria have now equally been affected by this trend of low agricultural productivities in the north. In light of this, it is no overstatement to argue that hunger and anguish which have taken over the entire communities of northern Nigeria have begun to extend its tentacle to the other parts of the country. The effect is so bad that we now have to depend on importation for the supply of some food products, which Nigeria was producing long before the emergence of Boko Haram terrorism. It is also noteworthy to add that agricultural schemes put in place by the World Bank and African Development Bank to help farmers through adequate loan facilities have been averted since Boko Haram commenced its supremacy of destruction in the north-eastern Nigeria. When questions were asked on the effects of Boko Haram terrorism on the agricultural development of the affected region, the following excerpts were taken during an interview with the following participants:

A member of Abuja Metro Police Community Relation Committee is of this opinion:

The negative effects are so many that some family can no longer feed their children not to talk of paying their school fees because of bad level of Nigerian economy and naira depreciation

A political office holder stressed that:

Government has started importing fresh garri (cassava powder) now from Indian because of shortage of food and those schemes put in place by World Bank and African Development Bank to help farmers through

adequate loan facilities have been stopped since boko haram's arrival in Nigeria

At this juncture, based on the various data analyzed, this study has considered it most pressing to express that the Boko Haram menace on agricultural productivities is not only restricted to the northern region as many people think but also spread and felt across all other geo-political zones of Nigeria in terms of shortage and scarcity of food products to the populace.

Religious Misconceptions

The Islamic fundamentalism of Boko Haram terrorists has made an appreciable number of people across the global continent believe that the terrorists are Muslims. This study has refuted several thousands of assumptions that religion is the cause of Boko Haram terrorism and that Boko Haram terrorists are Muslims whose activities are in accordance with the will of God as stated in the holy Quran. Findings of this study have empirically proved that there is no religious tenet anywhere in the world that condones illicit termination of lives and destruction of property [22]. Based on the findings of this study, the fact that the Boko Haram terrorists were seen on the streets of the northern communities killing fellow Muslims and setting mosques and other Islamic centres ablaze has found enough evidence to argue that these people are not original Muslims. Through the research study, it is discovered that these people may have one particular kind of background affiliation to the Islamic religion rather than other religious denominations, because on most occasions they speak the language of Islam and accord their atrocities to the will of Allah during the course of executing their evil objectives. This is the highest level of confusion these people have created about Islam as a religion that upholds violence, radicalization and termination of human life and property. The situation has also given

birth to religious segregation between the Christians and Muslims associations of Nigeria. Until we can re-examine our religious conceptions based on the findings of this study, our relationships with one another as one Nigeria will continue to experience daily threats from religious misconceptions and many religious believers, both Christian and Muslim fellows, will wallow long in the doldrums of ignorance of religious teachings. Empirical evidence in support of this finding is expressed in the statements of the following participants highlighted below:

A community police member stressed that:

Another more prominent effects include religious segregation and racial discrimination as people now see anybody coming from the north or Muslim population as Boko Haram.

He argued further that:

Whatever cause/reason they may be fighting for should not warrant killing fellow human beings. Besides, they are political instruments who advanced to become Boko Haram...Never think they are Muslims, they are not according to Islamic doctrines. That is why I said the other time that by the time they turned terrorists, they are no more Muslims. But the fact that they speak the language of Islam has confused a lot of people making them believe they are Muslims. I must tell you the pioneers and founding fathers of Boko Haram cannot control them any longer because they have turned to a mad dog in their hands.

To a -67- year old Christian leader:

we thought their intention was to reduce the Christian population by their Islamic state declaration but when they now started to attack their fellow Muslims and Islamic centres, we got confused....and with this we began to

doubt if they are truly Muslims. As for the cause of the problem... I don't really think it is an Islamic crisis...it is more political.

To a-72-year old Islamic leader

If I won't be biased Boko Haram are Muslims but they are not good Muslims. Because I don't think any religion in the world could condone killing of fellow human beings.

A Police officer is of this opinion:-

I don't know who they are except that they showcase their ideology to be of Muslim fellows. They preach Islam and demonstrate Islamism each time I listen to their leader-Shekau on video tapes. But I don't believe they are Muslims. Initially I thought they were Muslims but with their mode of operations and activities, it shows clearly that they are not Islamic faithfuls. We have seen them kill Muslims, destroy Islamic centres and kill people regardless of their religious denominations. In fact, nobody can say actually anything about their religion. But it is unfortunate that they hide under Islam to do evils. Nobody can say they are Christians as they have nothing to do with Christianity since they began their evils in Nigeria. To me, they are neither Christians nor Muslims. They have their own ideology which has nothing to do with Islam that they claim they are.

An officer in the Nigerian prison shared that:

They are not Muslims...but frustrated northerners. Interviews with some of the BH inmates in Kuje prison confirmed that these people are not Muslims because majority of them are illiterate and can't even cite the Qur'an, yet they say they are doing 'jihad'. "Few of them are learned... they have read the Qur'an and the Hadith, but they don't really understand Islam. I guess they are controlled by the devil.

Interviews with them also show that Boko Haram terrorists are mostly men with little formal education, with hand-to-mouth jobs on the urban margins...they are people commonly "looked down upon even by Muslims in their own community as 'riff-raff". They are angry because of their miserable lives and religion is the platform to express that anger.. : I can describe them as frustrated beings hiding under religion to perpetrate evils.

A comparative analysis and interpretation of the above data reveals that Boko Haram terrorists have a specific ethno-religious link with Islamism but this does not suggest that the Islamist terrorists are Muslims and that the spate of their terrorist activities in Nigeria has a root in Islamic doctrines as laid down by Prophet Mohammed.

Taking a comparative look at the findings of (Adesoji, 2010; Ifijeh, 2011;Aro, 2013; Peterside, 2014), as well as the narratives of participants in the present study, one might conclude that Boko Haram has recorded an untold number of adverse effects which have enormously hampered the economic growth of the Nigerian state [19, 23, 24, 25]. Other most prominent effects include the destruction of viable institutions such police headquarters, recreational and sports centres, schools and universities ,mosques and churches, private and public organizations and so on. Their existence in the northern region has given the country a nomenclature of bad reputation as one of the world's deadliest terrorist countries. The bombing of the United Nations (UN) building in Abuja, abduction of foreign expatriates and foreign ambassadors to Nigeria are prominent symbols of bad nomenclature that Boko Haram has caused Nigeria. They have destabilized economic development, lowered educational standard, caused food scarcity in affected areas, created health hazards, deaths of many innocent souls, phenomenon of rape and unwanted pregnancies, incidence of

adolescent motherhood and parentless children, increased the number of Nigerian refugees in neighbouring countries, created ethno-religious segregation, cultural discrimination, unity dissolution, religious misconception, loss of confidence and threat to national security. It has obviously hindered foreign investment, truncated economic development and facilitated the recent economic recession that Nigeria is currently facing.

Intervention Strategies to Combat Boko Haram Terrorism in Nigeria

Up to ten years of Boko Haram sovereignty in Nigeria has aroused a number of questions from scholars and policy makers. One common question they all ask centres on why the crisis has defied all possible solutions for its resolution in the northern Nigeria. Based on the findings obtained from the narratives of the participants of this research inquiry, techniques that can possibly be adopted to resolve the on-going problem do exist. One solution may be found in the development of more appropriate culturally acceptable conflict resolution strategies. The study thus suggests two basic approaches that may be used to resolve the crisis in Nigeria.

Peaceful Negotiation Approach

The study has identified peaceful negotiation as a new paradigm shift in addressing the Boko Haram crisis in Nigeria. This approach to Boko Haram terrorism is what Agbiboa (2013e) has earlier described as “soft-hand approach”, which Nigerian government had once attempted to resolve the crisis, but due to the negotiation committee’s insufficient memorandum of understanding in their negotiations with the group, the negotiation failed to see the light of the day [26]. Shortly Nigeria turned to a military approach to resolve this problem, which

Agbiboa has also referred to as “heavy-hand approach”. As we have seen, more than half a decade of the so-called heavy-hand approach (otherwise regarded as “fire-for-fire” approach) adopted by the Nigerian government to submerge the Boko Haram terrorist group has hitherto not produced a desired result. Taking a comparative look at the findings of this research, one could contend that this study has found enough evidence to dish out message not only to Nigeria but also the world at large that terrorism cannot be fought by means of deploying conventional weapons alone. The question is: Are we winning the war against terrorism? Or is the world safer after the execution of Osama Bin Laden of Saudi Arabia? If everyone’s answer to this question is “NO”, then the war against Boko Haram terrorism can only be won by a diplomatic adoption of psychological and ideological struggles through peaceful negotiations on equal terms. In as much as this study has confirmed Boko Haram’s affiliation to other international terrorist organizations, this study suggests that all countries of the world must first unite before terrorism can be defeated something which the United Nations has failed to achieve for over 50 years of its inception. However, if violent approach against terrorism had been so efficacious from time immemorial, then the starting point would be to answer the Palestinian question and resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict after which such an approach can be adopted to resolve the Boko Haram crisis in Nigeria.

By going down the memory lane, the effectiveness of peaceful negotiation as a better option to resolve the on-going crisis in Nigeria took root. In April 2014, when militant Islamist group Boko Haram abducted 276 schoolgirls from Chibok—a town in Borno State, northeastern Nigeria—making global news [27]. Widespread concern generated by the incident soon culminated in a global social media campaign, “Bring Back Our Girls,” with an accompanying Twitter hashtag,

#BringBackOurGirls, that featured Tweets from notable world leaders and international celebrities. The Nigerian security forces have been attempting to neutralize Boko Haram since 2009. The largest of these efforts was the government's establishment in June 2011 of a special Joint Task Force (JTF), codenamed Operation Restore Order (JTORO) to submerge the terrorist group but failed with time [28]. JTORO's eight thousand soldiers were deployed to the region in a direct military offensive against Boko Haram members—the largest deployment of troops since Nigeria's Civil War [29]. In spite of these efforts, Boko Haram and its suspected collaborators remained active and persistent with their insurgency in regions of Nigeria bordering Niger, Chad, and Cameroon [30].

In January 2015, Goodluck Jonathan, Nigeria's then-president, vowed to take all necessary action to halt the impunity of insurgents and terrorists by targeting every suspected enclave of Boko Haram [31]. The need for Nigerian government to search for solutions to this problem from another dimension other than the military approach arose with the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari at the last quarter of 2016.

Subsequently, in September 2016, the newly-elected President Muhammadu Buhari expressed his willingness to work with the international community and local interlocutors to negotiate with a faction of Boko Haram for the release of the Chibok girls. Speaking during a meeting with the United Nations secretary-general during the seventy-first UN General Assembly in New York, President Buhari expressed the Nigerian government's willingness to negotiate but was struggling to get "credible and bona fide leadership of Boko Haram to discuss with." He stated that the "government had reached out, ready to negotiate, but it became difficult to identify credible leaders. We will welcome

intermediaries such as UN outfits, to step in" [32].

The two-week negotiation between the Nigerian government and Boko Haram—brokered by officials from the International Federation of the Red Cross and Swiss government, among others, arguably led to the release of twenty-one of the Chibok girls on October 13, 2016 (Al Jazeera, 2016); and as the negotiations continued, another cohort of eighty-two chibok girls was released on May 7, 2017 [33]. This success serves as a point of hope that all the girls will be released as negotiations progress in the right direction with the continued intervention of international organizations as mediator [28]. An empirical evidence in support of the position on which of peaceful negotiation and military approach would be a better option to resolve the on-going problem of Boko Haram in Nigeria was captured during an in-depth interview with the following participants.

An officer in the Nigerian Army declared that:

Well, I'll say it's possible to resolve the issues through peaceful negotiation, but it may be long. Anyway, the governments are on it and we can see that it is yielding some results, especially with the release of those chibok girls. So I will encourage our governments to continue with the negotiation since it is presently producing some positive results unlike when we engaged them in war battle. Let's wait and see the end of the negotiations. I believe there is no crime in trying an alternative option if one is failing. The most important point is to resolve the problem in Nigeria. Well, may be because I'm a soldier, I believe those people need iron hands.

To buttress the point on peaceful negotiation as an option to resolve the Boko Haram crisis, an officer in the Department of State Security (DSS) added that:

Yes, it will, if well managed. I want you to know that terrorism cannot always be fought by violence...sometimes, we may try the other option, which is peaceful negotiation. So let's try it this time around and see where it will end us. No crime in trial. As we can see now no news of boko haram attack during the continuance of the negotiation. This means that if both parties could reach a consensus, the crisis would end.

He probed further that:

Negotiation could still be the best with the present situation of Nigeria, I think we should continue with the negotiation approach currently in progress since it appears to be more effective within few weeks of execution. Look! Over seven years of the military approach has not resolved the crisis. So, it would be best to try another option for solution before our people are wasted away by the deadly group.

He argued that, to a large extent...they need to invite the international organizations that are better than us in security prowess and intelligence gathering. This is part of what the International Federation of Red Cross and Swiss government is doing for us as a mediator.

According to a successful business mogul:

The military approach has failed Nigeria already ...over seven years of their struggle with the Boko Haram yielded no good results than what we hear on the news everyday Soldiers killed 25 Boko Harams today, tomorrow they kill 90, yet they are still tormenting the country, going on shedding innocent blood...the media report is also political and corrupt with their fake report...and this is due to nothing but the Nigerian system which is now corrupt beyond control.

He stressed further that Peaceful negotiation approach will be better now that it is giving us positive results...Since the military has been fighting no single chibok girl was released...can you see?

A-60-year old clergyman had this to contribute:

Yes. Peaceful negotiation should be made with Boko Haram leaders and Hausa leaders as well. However, we are already in the line of negotiation with them and it has been yielding some good results compared to the seven years of military approach with no positive result ...so let's pray it works out well....However, in this kind of situation, any alternative may be consulted...Nobody knows which one will work...but with prayers all things are possible.

A-61-year old Islamic university scholar argued that:

Government should continue the peaceful dialogue with them to know what exactly they want. Government should put in place programmes that will reduce corruption and poverty among people, particularly the northern zone.

He stressed further that military approach is not good because they kill innocent people in the course of fighting against Boko Haram. Even for over 7 years of our military approach, we have not won the fight, so let's try the dialogue approach going on with President Muhammadu Buhari May God give him a good health to continue what he started. I think there is hope in this dialogue direction.

A political office holder disclosed that:

Military has failed to corruption so let us try another approach which is currently going on with some good results. As we can see now news of boko haram attack throughout the process of the negotiation. This means that if both parties could reach a conclusion, the crisis would end.

He stressed that peaceful negotiation is making a good progress my brother except that we don't want to be sincere. It is not a sin if we

try any approach the most important thing is for us to solve the problem.

A university postgraduate student contributed to the discussion in this way:

Yes! Solution could come through peaceful negotiation if it were done through the right channel because that is what "bring back our girls" groups are talking about.

Moreover government should negotiate with the real boko haram and meet their requests so that the killings can stop. The initial negotiation attempt failed due to government injustice and corruption by those who spearheaded the negotiation I even heard that government was negotiating with fake boko haram then. Now that an international organization is involved ...we can see that the trend is making a good progress. I think partnering with international organizations is a good idea since we have helped some in the past.

A comparative data analysis and interpretation of these findings shows that Nigerian government should continue with the on-going negotiations with the sect until a final positive end is reached. It ascribes the failure of the first round of negotiations with the sect to political corruption, injustice, difficulty experienced in identifying the credible leaders of the group, as well as failure of the government to involve the intervention of international organizations as a go-between. On the basis of these findings, there is need for Nigerian government to continue engaging the Boko Haram members in political negotiations and dialogue so as to unearth the exact causes of their rebellion and suggest what can be done to bring the insurgency to a dead end in Nigeria.

The release of over hundred of the chibok girls does not only represent a modest achievement for those campaigning for their

release, but also show that negotiations with moderate elements within Boko Haram offers one option, among several, in engaging with the group and similar extremist organizations in the world [28]. The release of the girls arguably marks a starting point for exploring forms of peaceful engagement with such groups.

Pre-emptive Legal Measures: Enactment of Draconian Laws against Terrorism and Terrorist Sponsors

This study has found out that most terrorist activities have been difficult to submerge because of their affiliation to some powerful group of people and reputable organizations in society, who have volunteered to be terrorist sponsoring reservoir in terms of making financial and information resources available to the group. This study has proved that with terrorist group still in connection with their sponsors, terrorism will always progress to remain intractable and continue to eat deep the social and economic fabric of our society. On this account, this study suggests that some draconian measures are enacted against anyone suspected to be sponsoring terrorism in Nigeria. Such measures may include: Pronouncing a death sentence or life imprisonment on anyone caught with the act of sponsoring terrorism, Criminalizing the financing of terrorism across the six geo-political zones of Nigeria, Freezing without delay any funds related to persons involved in acts of terrorism both home and abroad, but this will have to be done with the assistance of international organizations peradventure the funds are lodged in foreign accounts, Denying all forms of financial support for terrorist groups. This can be best achieved through government efforts, institutional ability and community engagement, Suppressing the provision of safe haven, sustenance or support for terrorists. This can be best facilitated through community policing and government

efforts, sharing information with governments on any groups practicing or planning terrorist acts. This can be best facilitated through community policing, Co-operating with other governments in the investigation, detection, arrest, extradition and prosecution of those involved in such acts. This can be best facilitated through community policing and government efforts. Taking such positive steps would discourage terrorism, terrorist sponsors and those who are still planning underneath to finance terrorism in order to achieve some selfish goals.

Conclusion

On the whole, the agglomeration of socio-economic consequences of Boko Harm terrorism has pioneered an immanent ecosystem of underdevelopment across a wide range of Nigerian societies. From the stand point of rational choice theory, this study has considered the evil effects of Boko Haram terrorism as a punishment reward for the political state and the governments for their failure to fulfil their social contract with the civil society in respect of making provision for the needs of all citizens. To accomplish these ends on the remedy agenda, first, there should be need for community sensitization by creating awareness programmes about terrorism and the adverse effects of such acts in society. The level of awareness of the implications of terrorism should be heightened. There should be more enlightenment programmes by the government, international organizations like United Nations, European Union, African Union and NGOs emphasizing the extent to which terrorism can bring a nation and her future to ruin. The media, schools, churches, mosques, market centres, and relevant associations should be actively involved in this campaign. Electronic devices such as cell-phones, tablets, I-pad, which are portable, fast

and reliable means of disseminating information across the global continent should be adopted in creating awareness about terrorism and its perilous effects on sustainable development. Lastly and more importantly the Nigerian administration must not portray the success of the negotiations as a political triumph to boost its power and legitimacy, nor manipulate the negotiations over the release of the Chibok girls remaining in captivity as a form of political propaganda. The fight to free the remaining Chibok girls and rid the country of Boko Haram extremists must continue until these aims are fully achieved, and the painstaking processes of reconstruction, reconciliation, and peace are able to take root in the traumatized region.

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