



## Effects of Boko Haram Insurgency on the Socio-Economic and Political Development of Northeast Nigeria: A Critical Analysis

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### Abstract

This study interrogates The Effects of Boko Haram Insurgency on the Socio-economic and Political Development of North East Nigeria: A Critical Analysis. The objectives of the study are: to ascertain the effects of book haram insurgency on the economic development of North East geo-political zone in Nigeria, to ascertain the effects of book haram insurgency on the political development of North East geopolitical zone of Nigeria and to proffer solution to the menace of book haram insurgency North East geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The researcher applied frustration-aggression theory and adopted qualitative research methodology. The researcher made the following findings, that the activities of Boko Haram Insurgents affected the economic development of North East geo-political zone in Nigeria, that the activities of Boko Haram insurgents affected the political development of North East Geo-political zone of Nigeria and that the activities of Boko Haram insurgents affected the social development of North East Geo-political zone of Nigeria. The researcher also made the following recommendations; Federal Government should seek external security support to clampdown on Boko Haram insurgents to return peace that will enhance the socio-political and economic growth of North East Geopolitical zone of Nigeria, the sponsors of Boko Haram should be fetched and brought to justice and Federal Government should rebuild all that were destroyed in the North East including markets, houses, churches and mosques.

**Keywords:** Boko Haram, Economic Development, Insurgency, Political Development, Security, Social Development.

**Citation of article:** Otu, E.C., *et al.* (2022). Effects of Boko Haram Insurgency on the Socio-Economic and Political Development of Northeast Nigeria: A Critical Analysis. *African Journal of Politics and Administrative Studies (AJPAS)*, 15(2):314-328.

**Dated Submitted:**13/09/2022 **Date Accepted:** 30/10/2022 **Date Published:** December, 2022



## Introduction

Terrorism and insurgency is globally becoming word as there is no nation that is completely absolved from its effect. This is the reason why Rourke (2015) observes that war, terrorism and other forms of translational political violence are many ways more threatening today than ever before as civilian casualty has been on increase. It is however difficult to evolve a single definition for the term “terrorism”. The difficulty emanates from the lack of consciousness or unified perspective among nations or scholars as to what could be regarded as terrorist act. Hence, terrorism has been described variously as both a tactic and strategy; a crime and a holy duty; a justified reaction to oppression and inexcusable abomination since it is a function of whose point of view is being represented.

Terrorism which has become a global phenomenon is a deliberate and systematic use of violence to destroy, kill, maim and intimidate the innocent in order to achieve a goal or draw national/international attention or demands which ordinarily may be impossible or difficult to achieve under normal political negotiation or on the battle field against a government army. Terrorism whether internationalized or localized is always politically motivated. Though it may also show other auxiliary motives include religion, economic or social reasons. These motives constitute the ideology of a case for which terrorism seeks solution or sympathy of all terrorist groups that have ravaged Nigeria. The Boko Haram is undoubtedly the most blood thirsty and destructive both in terms of its demonic brutality, mindless savagery and increasingly in scope of operation (Obioma, 2009). From Harmless group of 12 has in recent times increased to more than 10,000 violent members (Akpan, 2012).



According to Innocent and Ibietan (2012) “Boko Haram is an indigenous salafist group which turned itself into a Salafist Jihadist in 2009. The group was founded by Mohammed Yusuf in 2002 in the city of Maiduguri with the aim of establishing a Sharia government in Borno State under former Governor Ali Modu Sheriff. He established a religious complex that included a Mosque and a school where many poor families from across Nigeria and from neighbouring countries enrolled their children”. From the beginning, the group made its manifest known: Rejection of western education, institutions, and agencies that go with it, including government institutions. It prefer to have a Sharia law applied all over the country, but if that is difficult to grant, they would rather have a separate Islamic state carved out Government saw these demands as treasonable, unreasonable and unacceptable and in an attempt to purge the group of its excesses their leader Mohammed Yusuf died in 2009 from that year onwards under the assumption of a new leader named Abubakar Shekau, Boko Haram reinvented violence and began what can best be described as the bombardment of Northern Nigeria with such frequency and intensity that are quite unprecedented in history of violence in Nigeria. Those who escape death by day, sleep with one eye open by night.

Indeed, the worldwide manifestation of terrorism and insurgency has been evident in Africa, but also in Nigeria. With particular reference to Nigeria, the phenomenon has found expression in the emergency of Book Haram insurgency (2001-date). Since its advent, the sectrain insurgency has wrecked immense havoc in the country, especially by “using explosive and firearms with gruesome, fatal” consequences (Awaka, 2006).



## **Historicizing Boko Haram**

The group was founded by Mohammed Yusuf in 2002 in the city of Maiduguri with the aim of establishing a Sharia government in Borno state under former Governor Ali Modu Sheriff. He established a religious complex that included a mosque and Al-Majiri School where many poor families from across Nigeria and from neighboring countries enrolled their children, (Shehu 2012). Prior to this time, Mohammed Yusuf was born in Girgir village of Yobe state.

The Boko Haram group started as Sahaba group in 1995. The main leader of the Sahaba group then was one Abubakar Lawan who later left to study in university of Medina, when he left, the older cleric conceded the leadership to young Yusuf who was young and versatile. But immediately Yusuf took over, the doctrine of the sect changed and he abandoned the older cleric view and came up with extremist Boko Haram doctrine (Shehu 2012). Mohammed Yusuf, because of his brilliancy was a favourite student of Sheik Jafar Mohammed, the highly influential and well known preacher who was shot dead in Kano by gun men while leading the dawn prayers in his mosque on the eve of 2007 Nigerian general elections. Yusuf later fell out with his mentor Sheik Jafar, even before his death. (Shehu 2012) stated that “available information indicates that the group emanating from an orthodox teaching slightly resembling that of Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The school of thought considers anything western as an aberration or completely Unislamic. The group views the western influence on Islamic society as the basis of the religion’s weakness. Hence, their declaration that western institution and westerners are infidel and as such must be avoided by Muslim”.

## **Political Effect of Boko Haram Activities in Nigeria**



According to Rawlings (2013) noted that since the rise of Boko Haram, the Islamic sect in spreading terror in the last three years, spreading clouds of fear across the country, and especially in many parts of the north where law and order has collapsed. Different murderous gangs roam the nooks and crannies of the cities, streets and villages day and night exploding bombs, shooting and killing innocent people. They set homes and business premises on fire, destroying places of worship, and attacking security agents and institutions. The process has promoted anarchy by causing confusion and widespread panic among people in Nigeria. The civil rights of individuals and even their more basic civil liberties as guaranteed by the Constitution has been jeopardized. While the Islamic sects unleash terror on the people, the activities of the security agents have become deplorable as well hence the abuses of people's liberty have become the order of the day. They have deployed an unconventional and extra-judicial method of shoot at sight which is usually adopted by the government to tackle widespread public disturbances and terrible crimes. The security agents stop people at will, restrict people's movement by the day and especially at night and kill anyone at the least suspicion. The sects' activities have spread fear across the length and breadth of not only northern Nigeria but the entire country especially among the political elites. Given the ethnic sensitivity of the country, it has pushed further its political polarization and raised the existing suspicion and distrust especially between the North and South.

Although, recently election were held into local government offices and by-election in Nangere house of assembly constituency, but the security situation (if not improve) may not allowed some people in other location of the state to perform their civic right in future election, especially those in Gujba local government area, because a lot people have relocating from Buni



yadi, Goniri, etc. to other part of the state. Another effect is that the insurgence of Boko Haram in state has drastically reduced government of the day's performance in the affected area. Although it is trite fact that Nigerian politicians are fond of promising heaven and earth for the purpose of gaining people's mandate; the social effect of Boko Haram activities is that it have made some Non-Muslim who have not be privilege to mingle with Muslim in their life to belief that all Muslim are fundamentalist while some of them were mischievous with their opinion with little exclusion about few Muslims from Yoruba Part of Nigeria.

### **The Effects of Boko Haram on the Economic Development of North East Nigeria**

The impact of the heinous activities of Boko Haram terrorism on the social economic and political structure of in Nigeria is over-whelming and devastating. Many businesses in the state have been affected by the activities of the insurgence. Some shops have been taking over by the military personnel who have made it their base, forcing the businesses owners to either relocate or abandon it totally. Small businesses that use to thrive in the night like Tea selling, Restaurants, are no longer operating as a result of the security situation. Banks can no longer travel to local government council to pay salaries due to frequent attacks along the way, staff of the local council have to come down to the state capital for their salaries which is very risky.

According to Rawlings (2013) opined that violence repels rather than attracts business investors as in the case of the activities of Boko Haram. When human, material and financial resources are channeled into the advancement of sectarian ideology, economic development is retarded. The violence afflicted in northern Nigeria has affected business and economic activities have slowed down. Moreover, the movement of people to these zones that would have buster economic



activities has been stalled. Terrorism has already worsened the development space of the region as it has scared foreign and local investors alike and limited the earnings from tourism. Jos the capital of Plateau State that was once the pearl of tourism and a dream home for most people across Nigeria has become a shadow of itself. There is no doubt that wars, terrorism had led to political instability which in turn have a significant negative effect on the economies in which they take place. Terror attacks are known to cause decrease in aggregate private investments. The orchestrated attacks on vital government installations, infrastructure and investments have sent northern Nigeria to the brink of development. One of the most obvious effects is the distress it has caused to local businesses and the people who reside in that part of the country. The violence has caused the destruction of lives and property in the north thereby paralyzing economic activities in the region in spite of its natural endowment in agricultural productivity.

It has succeeded in creating fear and terror that has hunted everybody and the productivity of people has been stalled. Most economic activities have come to a halt due to uncertainty in the country. It has paralysed economic activities especially in the northern parts of the country where these incidents are prevalent, thereby worsening the already bad situation. It also has disrupted economic activities because people fear to go to the markets to transact business because they do not know where the next attempt will be. Furthermore, according to the minister of information Mr. Labaran Maku while speaking to journalists in Abuja after the Federal Executive Council Meeting on February 9, 2012 said that the North is losing heavily due to the violence. When you destabilize Kano, which is the commercial nerve centre of the North, you are threatening the socioeconomic well-being of the North”, he said “Kano is the economy of Chad, it is the economy of Niger Republic, and of northern Cameroun, so when you destabilize peace in Kano,



you threaten the foundation of economic and social well-being of that region. It makes no sense to attack innocent people and destroy the North”. Reduction of people’s patronage of product from Northern Region because of rumour that member of Boko Haram are planning to send poisonous product from their region to other parts of Nigeria.97 per cent of businesses were negatively affected by the security problem. Some of them had to close down, some of them had to retrench their workers, and others had to cut down in the number of hours of operation. Also the insurgencies of Boko Haram have reduced drastically government derivation from the affected region due to restiveness in those places as well as reduced investment and growth of business in the affected places without excluding government executed project. Insecurity in Adamawa, Borno, Yobe, Kano alone has cost the Nigerian economyN1.3trillion (\$6 billion) as a result of attacks by the Boko Haram group.

### **The Effect of Boko-Haram on the Social Development of North East Nigeria**

Terrorism has had a negative impact on the people regardless of status and the society at large. It has disrupted and offset the normal social life and a good number of innocent lives have been lost. Terrorists’ activities have dislocated people from their usual bases to different unintended locations. The mass movement of people creates refugee problems with substantial costs to the individual, host communities and the government. In addition, these episodes of violence has hit strongly against and disorganized the socio-cultural tranquility, the fragile religious tolerance among the people and polluted the serene and spiritual based of the environment. The human costs in terms of lives and properties can hardly be valued and quantified since the upsurge of the violence began.





The insecurity situation created by the Boko Haram sect is threatening the existence of NYSC scheme, which is regarded as a unifying factor in this country. For instance, out of the 4171 members of the corps that were posted to serve in Adamawa state and later trained for the Adhoc electioneering in 2011 by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), about 1041 of them fled the state before the conduct of the general elections, due to lack of inadequate security in the country (Egburonu et al, 2012:21). Following the massacre of many corps members in some of the northern states in the same year (2011), many of them besieged the NYSC Secretariat in Abuja demanding the reposting to states outside the Northern States. Today, the members of the scheme are still protesting vehemently against posting corps member to any of the crisis – ridden states in the north until peace is restored. Some of them have even vowed to quit the scheme should they be forcefully posted to such areas only to die in the waiting hands of Boko-Haram sect.

In a swift reaction to the Federal government’s decision not to post NYSC members to some Northern States, Governor Kashim Shettima of Borno State lamented the impact the decision will have on their affairs, and therefore, pleaded with the federal government to reconsider the decision as the state’s health and education sectors could be negatively affected. (Musa, Akhaine and Abdulsami, 2012:1). This is because corps members that have been serving in the state provided over 65 per cent of the required healthcare delivery and education services at the grassroots level where about 75 per cent of the citizens live. According to Mohammed (2014) noted that the activities of Boko-Haram have makes some Nigerian who are not from Boko-Haram affected State to be avoiding affected State to the extent that some Nigerian Graduate who are serving the Nation under the scheme of National Youth Service Corp (NYSC) are



seriously rejecting being posted to some part of Northern Nigeria. The social challenges posed by insurgence of Boko-Haram can also be attested to by the mass movement of residents who are from other States of the federation; out of the North Eastern part of the country, especially Maiduguri, the state capital Boron and other state area such as Damaturu, the capital of Yobe State. And not only have that, insurgence of Boko-Haram had reach the extent that suspicious and rumour of attack is the easiest information to spread within state.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study is anchored on the frustration-aggression theory. This theory will be a major plank on which this study is anchored. This is because we perceive it as being of utmost relevance to the subject matter of the study. The frustration-aggression model was propounded by Dollard et al (1939), and in their view, the primary source of the human capacity for violence rest on frustration-aggression mechanism. According to them, anger induced by frustration is a motivating force that disposes man to aggression. Furthermore, the interference with goal directed behaviour creates frustration which in turn leads to aggressive responses usually directed against the reported frustrated agents.

Expatriating further, Gurr (1970) in his book titled “Why Men Rebel” opined that relative deprivation is a necessary condition for violence; relative deprivation being a perceived discrepancy between man’s value expectations and their value capabilities. He maintains that value expectations are the goods and conditions of life to which people believe they are rightly entitled, while in the other hand, according to him, values capabilities are goods and conditions they think they are capable of attaining and maintaining, given the social means available to



them. He suggests some variables that affect the intensity of emotional response to the perception of deprivation. The first proposition is that man sees between what he seeks and what seems to be attainable, the greater his anger and consequent disposition to aggression. The second proposition boards on the greater the intensity of man's expectations, the greater their anger when they meet unexpected or increased resistance.

Furthermore, Davis (2012) opines that the outbreak of violence is a function of frustration that results from a short term decline in achievement, following a long-term increase that generates expectation about continuing increase. He is of the opinion that violent revolutions do not occur during periods of prolonged, abject or worsening situation, contrary to the Marxian expectations or even the assumption of Alexis de Tocqueville, rather revolution occurs during periods of relative prosperity and improvement. Prosperity offers opportunity for comparative analysis of progress of each component of the society. Thus, the idea of inequality is often muted. To this end, Okanya (2009) argues that it is inequality perceived as inequality on the basis of power, status and wealth, and predicated by ethnic, religious, class or political configurations, in turn, become basis for resentment.

By and large, Moyer, (2016) avers that normal tendency towards violent aggression is increased by frustration of desire. According to him, when a goal presumably attractive to two or more individuals is made available in such a way that it can be obtained by one of them, the end product is frustration for the loser. These frustrated actors in the political system can become political terrorist. Therefore, an individual or group resorts to violence or terrorist act out of frustration in order to create publicity or at best to be heard.



Whatever the case, frustration-aggression theory could be gainfully employed and form the basis for analyzing and explaining the socio/political roots of terrorists bombing that greeted the country since 2000. To this end, the terrorists' bombings witnessed in the country is a dependent variable, while the religious fundamentalism and presidential power shift are independent variables that are the main causative factors to the terrorist bombing. Thus, the easily indoctrinated and unemployed youths in the state that were aggrieved and frustrated took the nearest option to them – terrorism. Besides, the act was equally reinforced by the utterances of their political elite and presidential contenders cum religious leaders who perceived the emergence of the southern president as a ploy to oust them in Nigeria's political spheres.

### **Findings**

The researcher made the following findings:

1. The activities of Boko Haram Insurgents affected the economic development of North East geo-political zone in Nigeria.
2. The activities of Boko Haram insurgents affected the political development of North East Geo-political zone of Nigeria.
3. The activities of Boko Haram insurgents affected the social development of North East Geo-political zone of Nigeria.

### **Conclusion**

From the various aspects of this work, this paper concludes that without calculating measure to check terrorism in Nigeria socio-economic development will continue to suffer. An overwhelming majority of problems identified in this study can be tackled, but only by a



capable government that is seen by its citizens as legitimate and trustworthy. There is need for Nigerian government to take a step that can reduce alienations and build trust and legitimacy among its citizens particularly in the northern region and address other enablers of terrorism described in the study.

It is clear that terrorism has had drastic negative economic and social impact on the residents of North Eastern region as a whole. While majority of the residents are not responsible for the menace, the perception in Kenya has been that terrorism is mainly carried out by people of Somali decent who are natives of these regions. The consequence has been that people of North Eastern region have often faced prejudice and been associated with negative effects of terrorism. The core problem is perceived government inability to provide basic socio economic indices to its citizen, the lack of this provides opportunities for non-state actors like Boko Haram to capture loyalties, hearts, and minds in pursuit of their radical vision of the future.

## **Recommendations**

In view of the findings, the researcher made the following recommendations:

1. Federal Government should seek external security support to clamp down on Boko Haram insurgents to return peace that will enhance the socio-political and economic growth of North East Geo-political zone of Nigeria.
2. The sponsors of Boko Haram should be fetched and brought to justice.
3. Federal Government should rebuild all that were destroyed in the North East including markets, houses, churches and mosques.



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