

Boko Haram Terrorism and Military Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Borno State, Nigeria (2009 – 2016)

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Abstract: This study examined Boko Haram Terrorism and Military Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Borno State, Northeast Nigeria by beaming the searchlight on the social, economic and psychological effects of the military approach. Boko Haram has launched menacing and catastrophic attacks on many civilians and military personnel and installations, amongst others, resulting in several deaths and casualties. Military strategy of fire-force has been adopted to counter the terrorists, but which also has resulted in several deaths, arrests and other human rights abuses. The study, therefore, focused on Borno State in the northeast of the country from the period 2009 – 2016. The rationale for choosing the period is that it was the height of the Boko Haram attacks with attendant consequences; and also it was when the military exercised professionalism despite the short-comings stated above. The study relied on secondary sources such as journals, newspapers, thesis, agency's publications, government publications and books and content analysed them based on the study objectives. The study concluded that the military made appreciable gains in its counter-terrorism campaign against Boko Haram, however much still needed to be done judging from the pain suffered by the people as a result of the military exercise. The study recommended the adoption of the soft approach by which the ex-terrorists could be offered opportunity to acquire skills in hope that this would encourage the fighting members to lay down their arms, and also dissuade potential youths from joining the terrorist organisation.

Keywords: Boko Haram, Terrorism, Counter-Terrorism, Military Strategy.

I. INTRODUCTION

The event of September 11, 2001 in the United States of America launched a new chapter in the history of terrorism. Morgan (2004), has noted the catastrophic effect of terrorist attack in September, 2001 on both the "American strategic consciousness and the international security environment". According to him, the unexpected attack opened the eyes of the global community to the emergence of the new terrorism, the kind that raised the terror bar from being a means to an end, to becoming the end in itself; and which Al-Qaeda, IS, and Boko Haram terrorist groups clearly typify. According to Bakker and Boer (2007), the emergence of Al-Qaeda in the late 1980s introduced a fresh phase in contemporary terrorism. Since then, Al-Qaeda has become the launch pad for current terrorist organizations such as Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM); Islamic State of Iraq and Lavent (ISIL) and Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) (together referred to as IS); Al-shabaab of Somalia, and Boko Haram of Nigeria. Statistics have shown that these contemporary terrorist organizations have caused more damages and deaths than all the previous or ancient terrorist groups before them. On this score, Morgan (2004), citing R. James Woolsey, stated "today's terrorists don't want a seat at the table; they want to destroy the table and everyone sitting at it." This shows the level of the change that characterizes modern terrorism. Today's terrorists attack large numbers of people using modern and sophisticated gadgets. For example, the year 2014 marked a high point in terrorist attacks in five countries, with more than 70 percent more deaths compared to the previous years. The countries are Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Pakistan, and Nigeria. The highest number of victims was recorded in Nigeria, in Borno State, during the last eight years since Boko Haram began its violent campaign (Schmid, 2016).

The current study beamed the searchlight on Boko Haram, a terrorist organization birthed in Nigeria, specifically in the northeastern fringe of the country; as well as the military counter-terrorism strategy of the Federal Government of Nigeria aimed at curbing the Boko Haram menace. Boko Haram terrorism has posed a serious and to a larger extent underlying social problems to Nigeria's population in general and Borno State in particular to the extent that it now constitutes a challenge to the government. The government has taken several significant steps to address Boko Haram terrorism, especially in Borno State, since 2009 when the group launched a fresh and devastating campaign of terror in the State. Yet Boko Haram continues its attacks unabated. It is against this backdrop that this study on military counterterrorism strategy on Boko Haram was conceived.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Since 2009, when the Boko Haram terrorism became violent, the group has been waging asymmetric war on the Nigerian state and her citizens. It has carried out numerous violent attacks that have left scores of people wounded, dead or displaced in Borno State. Research has shown that Boko Haram continues to bomb, kill, and abduct children, women and other persons in Borno State. For instance, in 2014, Boko Haram abducted 276 girls from their school in Chibok, in Borno State (Shuaibu, Salleh and Shehu, 2015; Agbiboa, 2013). Citing the National Counter-Terrorism Strategy (NACTEST) terror incidences in 2014, Idahosa (2015) observed that, Boko Haram carried out devastating attacks in Borno State, in which more than 700 hundreds people died, and a little over 400 hundred injured.

The Nigerian government has responded to the Boko Haram menace by employing military strategy that involved the application of force; an approach that has recorded limited success. Findings from few researches conducted by academics and Non-Governmental Organizations (Osakwe & Audu, 2017; HRW, 2013 & 2016; Umar, 2013, etc), showed that the military performed creditably well in some areas, but also got involved in some unwholesome practices or actions such as rape, torture, arrest and, on occasions, extra-judicial killings of members of Boko Haram and other innocent civilians in Borno State. Previous studies on Boko Haram focused on aspects such as the origin, causes, modus operandi, etc of the terrorist organisation. The current study examined the strategy adopted by the Military in Nigeria to tackle the Boko Haram terrorism particularly in Borno State and the consequences of the Military operations particularly on the people of Borno State.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general objective of the study was to examine the military counter-terrorism strategy on the Boko Haram Terrorism in Borno State. The specific objectives include:

- i. To investigate the causes, frequency and extent of the Boko Haram terrorist attacks in Borno State.
- ii. To examine the strategy employed by the military in tackling Boko Haram terrorism.
- iii. To assess the social, economic and psychological effects of the counter-terrorism exercise of the military on the people of Borno State.

IV. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

4.1 Conceptual Analysis

4.1.1 Terrorism

Terrorism is a contested concept, with no consensus on a definition. The concept of terrorism is defined differently by different scholars, politicians, regional and international agencies, media practitioners, civil societies, etc. with each doing so from their individual or organizational perspective.

The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1556 of 2004 defines terrorism as:

Criminal acts, including against civilians, committed with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury, or taking of hostages, with the purpose to provoke a state of terror in the general public or in a group of persons or particular persons, intimidate a population or compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act (United Nations, 2004).

The United States (U.S) Department of Defence defines terrorism as “the calculated use of unlawful violence, or threat of unlawful violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological.” (as cited in Omale, 2013). The Federal Bureau of Intelligence (FBI) defines terrorism as “the unlawful use of force and violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives” (as cited in Omale, 2013). This definition combines three core elements of violence, fear, and intimidation, with intent to cause terror in its victims.

From the academic angle, Enders and Sandler (2002) have put forward this definition of terrorism:

The use or threat of use of ...violence or brutality by sub-national groups to obtain a political, religious or ideological objective through the intimidation of an audience, usually not directly involved with the policy making that terrorists seek to influence.

Paul Pillar, while defining terrorism, surmised that it has four major characteristics: (1) It always has a political character, thus ruling out violence in conjunction with financial interests; (2) the target choice is non-random, thus involving preparation and planning phase; (3) terrorism strikes the civil population intentionally, affecting non-combatants; and (4) the terrorist network itself is composed of non-state actors (as cited in Sandler, 2013). Hence, for Pillar, the phenomenon of terrorism has become “a challenge to be managed, not resolved” (as cited in Odeleye, 2013). Further, Merari, Schmid and Jongman identified differences between the official and academic definitions of terrorism, arguing that official definitions had more in common with each other and possessed three similar elements of the use of violence, political objectives, and the intention of creating fear in a target population (as cited in Shaeffer, 2010).

Similarly, the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) provided three essential criteria for an act to qualify as terrorist. They are: (i) The act must be aimed at attaining a political, economic, religious, or social goal. (ii) There must be evidence of an intention to coerce, intimidate, or convey some other message to a larger audience (or audiences) than the immediate victims. (iii) The action must be outside the context of legitimate warfare activities, i. e. that act must be outside the parameters permitted by international humanitarian law (particularly the admonition against deliberately targeting civilians or non-civilians (as cited in Liolio, 2013).

Odeleye (2013) emphasized that common to all forms of terrorism is the infliction of fear, terror and mental, psychological or physical harm. For the purposes of this study, terrorism is defined as a criminal act and politically motivated violence by individuals or sub-national groups involving preparation and planning, intentionally targeted at civilian population and non-combatants with the objective of inflicting fear, terror and mental, psychological or physical harm. This definition actually encompasses both academic and official definitions and descriptions of terrorism provided thus far.

4.1.2 Counter-terrorism

Sandler, 2014 stated that:

Counter-terrorism as a concept “corresponds to actions to ameliorate the threat and consequences of terrorism. These actions can be taken by governments, military alliances, international organizations (e.g., INTERPOL), private corporations, or private citizens. Counterterrorism comes in two basic varieties: defensive and proactive measures.

Further, counterterrorism is defined as “an instrument of state policy that actively seeks to degrade and manage risk of terrorist attacks against national interests, particularly (although not exclusively) against national territory” (O’Neil, as cited in Messa, 2015). Ganor viewed counterterrorism in light of addressing terrorism root causes aimed at eliminating or minimizing the motivations of terrorist groups and discouraging would be terrorists (as cited in Messa, 2015). In the Oxford English Dictionary, counterterrorism is defined as “political or military actions or measures intended to combat, prevent, or deter terrorism, sometimes (in early use) with the implication that the methods utilized resemble those of the terrorists” (as cited in Ahmed, 2014). Additionally, Udoh (2016) stated that, Counter-terrorism incorporates the practice, tactics, techniques, and strategy that government, military, law enforcement and intelligence agencies (or citizens) use to combat or prevent terrorism. The definitions of counter-terrorism like terrorism are in-exhaustive. Therefore, this study proposes a working definition of counter-terrorism as, the strategy utilized by a country’s military and intelligence agencies to prevent or combat terrorism aimed at restoring normalcy.

4.1.3 Military Strategy

Different definitions of “strategy” have been provided by scholars. Clausewitz defined strategy as “the employment of the battle as the means towards the attainment of the object of war” (as cited in Woke, 2014). Woke noted that Hart (1967), disagreed with Clausewitz definition as it narrowed the meaning of strategy “to the pure utilization of battle, therefore conveying the idea that battle is the only means to the strategical end.” Thus, Hart defined strategy as “the art of distributing and applying military means to fulfill the ends of policy” (as cited in Woke, 2014). Woke stressed that two important points were derived from Hart’s definition, that is, first, it is possible to apply strategy in peace time and war. Secondly, it underscored the subordination of war to politics (Woke, 2014). Woke’s submission in a way agrees with Moltke who defined strategy as “the practical adaptation of the means placed at a general’s disposal to the attainment of the object in view.” Hence, by Moltke’s consideration, “military strategy is clearly a means to political ends” (Nickolas, 2016). According to Yarger (2006) strategy at the highest levels of the state, “is the art and science of developing and using the political, economic, socio-psychological, and military powers of the state in accordance with policy guidance to create effects that protect or advance national interest relative to other states, actors, or circumstances”

As Bowdish (2013) stated, “the term ‘strategy’ originally referred to what we now know as ‘military strategy.’ Its original meaning in Greek means *strategia*, which denotes as *generalship*. Military strategy, therefore, according to Osgood, means “... the overall plan for utilizing the capacity for armed coercion in conjunction with the economic, diplomatic and psychological instruments of power to support foreign policy most effectively by covert, overt and tacit means” (as cited in Woke, 2014). In addition, military strategy involves the application of “armed coercion” alongside all the apparatus of state power to achieve a set objective. For Hart, military strategy simply means “the art of distributing and applying military means to fulfil the ends of policy (Nickolas, 2016).

The military counter-terrorism strategy employed by the Federal Government of Nigeria, is a Military option which objective is to decimate the Boko Haram terrorist group operating currently in Borno State, North-East of the country. Against this backdrop, the Nigerian Army, in 2009, was drafted in to assist the Police in incapacitating the Boko Haram terrorist group after it was discovered that the Police alone was ill-equipped to handle the challenge. Consequently, the Nigerian government established a special Joint Task Force (JTF), code named “Operation Restore Order (ORO)” with emphasis on Maiduguri, Borno State capital. The joint security task force comprised personnel from the Nigerian Armed Forces, the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), the Department of State Security (DSS), the Nigerian Immigration Service (NIS) and the Defence Intelligence Agencies (DIA) (Mustapha, 2013, p. 148). Immediately after the establishment of the JTF, 8,000 troops were deployed to the aforementioned states; a move described as the largest military deployment since Nigeria’s Civil War (Agbibo, 2013a, 2013b).

V. EMERGENCY OF BOKOHARAM IN NIGERIA

Boko Haram is an Islamic sect that came into existence around 2002-2003. The term *Boko Haram* means “Western Education is forbidden” (the name by which it became know world-wide). However, the group has rejected this name, preferring instead “Western culture is forbidden” (Agbibo, 2013). The difference as explained by a senior member of Boko Haram, is that “while the first gives the impression that we are opposed to formal education coming from the West . . . which is not true, the second affirms our belief in the supremacy of Islamic culture (not education), for culture is broader, it includes education but not determined by Western education” according to Onuoha (as cited in Agbibo, 2013). The US Department of State stated that Boko Haram was known by its official name as Jama’atul Alhus Sunnah Lidda’wati wal Jihad, that is, “People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet’s Teaching and Jihad” (as cited in Agbibo, 2013).

Boko Haram emerged way back in 1995 in Maiduguri, the Capital of Borno State in present-day North-East under the name “Sahaba” and leadership of Abubakar Lawan. He later relinquished leadership of the then group to Mohammed Yusuf, to pursue a study programme in the University of Medina, Saudi Arabia (Asfura-Heim & McQuaid, 2015). Mohammed soon after assuming leadership of the Boko Haram, treaded a different path as he introduced new and radical Islamic religious teachings that included a complex of school and mosque that enrolled children of the poor from Nigeria and neighbouring countries, who received the new doctrines. The complex duo of school and mosque has branches in other states of Yobe, Gombe, Katsina, Bauchi and Kano (Asfura-Heim & McQuaid, 2015; Chothia, 2012, as cited in Liolio, 2013). Later on Mohammed Yusuf moved the headquarters of the new Islamic sect to his hometown in Kanamma, in Yobe State, Nigeria, at the border with Niger Republic. There, he formed a militant base known as “Afghanistan” (Liolio, 2013).

According to Asfura-Heim & McQuaid (2015), in 2008, Yusuf's hitherto peaceful religious sect started a campaign of militancy or terrorism against the government of Nigeria, by storing small arms and light weapons at its base in Maiduguri and Bauchi. Consequently, on 11th June, 2009, during a funeral of one of its members, Yusuf's group defied a government law which introduced the use of Motor cycle helmets in the city of Bauchi. The Police, who saw it as a challenge to their authority engaged the group in a show of force which resulted in the death of about 800 members of the sect members, and the subsequent arrest, torture and execution of Mohammed Yusuf, along with his father-in-law and some Boko Haram members. Ostebo asserted that the demise of Mohammed Yusuf, a new leader named Abubakar Shekau emerged. Shekau's leadership led to the recognition of Boko Haram as an international Jihadist terrorist group which employed terrorist tactics such as suicide bombings, the use of Improvised Explosives Devices (IEDs), target assassinations, as well as kidnapping and hostage taking (as cited in Asfura-Heim & McQuaid, 2015).

VI. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study adopted the Relative Deprivation and the Routine Activity Theories as anchor.

6.1 Relative Deprivation Theory

Relative deprivation theory first enunciated by Gurr in the 1970s (Victoroff, 2005), assumed that economic disparities predispose an individual to violent act. It argued that there is a "perceived discrepancy between value expectations and value capabilities". Therefore, deprivation would usually occur when an individual's value expectations (such as welfare, security, self-actualization, and self-esteem) exceed his value capabilities. Gurr maintained that the intensity and scope of relative deprivation strongly correlate the potential for collective violence. Towards this end, Gurr concluded that frustration aggression accounted for "primary source of the human capacity for violence (Hastings, 2008, p. 15). In relation to terrorism, it has been argued that even though poverty, unemployment, low educational attainment, and other socio-economic variables may play a role in some political or religious violence, relative deprivation was not enough to explain terrorism acts or why individuals join a terrorist organization (Victoroff, 2005). This fact, therefore, has made counterterrorism a rather challenging or difficulty campaign as steps taken to pacify the terrorists through dialogue have failed because of the subjective feeling of being deprived held by the group. The refusal to dialogue with the government has made the military to continue to apply its coercive apparatus to try to combat the Boko Haram terrorists in Borno State.

6.2 Routine Activity Theory

Routine activity theory is a sociological approach that seeks to explain crime "as a product of the combined result of three essential elements" which include, *potential offenders or persons who are motivated to commit crimes; suitable targets, that is, the presence of things that are of some economic value and which can be easily transported; and absence of capable guards or persons who can prevent a crime from taking place* (Igbo, 2008). The proponents of routine activity theory have argued that these three critical elements must come together under one given situation for crime to actually take place; the absence of any of which might inhibit or prevent crime. According to Igbo (2008), routine activity theory is concerned not with the factors or conditions that make a person to commit crime, but rather is about how the normal, every-day, lawful and routine activities of an individual or group may increase the probability of criminal activities or actions. However, for this situation to arise, the *presence of suitable targets* and the *absence of capable guards* or persons who would prevent or put a check on the criminal agent must be present together. This implies that crime is preventable if there is *presence of capable guards* and *absence of suitable targets*, in addition to *potential offenders or person who are motivated to commit crimes*. Going by the assumptions of Routine Activities theory, terrorists are potential offenders who rationally choose their targets as they find them available or lying around, and then strike accordingly and proportionally. The absence of suitable guards or persons (such as the military) enables them to easily succeed in their missions. Thus, the application of maximum force by the Nigerian military to tackle Boko Haram terrorism became an option. It is the view of this study that both theories above do not sufficiently address the subject matter of the study.

VII. CAUSES OF BOKO HARAM TERRORISM

The causes of terrorism have been undergoing rigorous debate with differing opinions. However, there are combinations of factors that cause terrorism. Some of the causes include religion, ethno-nationalism, alienation/discrimination, socio-economic status and political grievances. Ani (2014) contended that religion (especially Islamic fundamentalism) remains a strong cause of terrorism in the 21st century, not minding the argument that it might not be the major cause of terrorism.

Seul (as cited in Agbiboa, 2014) argued “religion is not the cause of religious conflict; rather for many... it frequently supplies the fault line along which intergroup identity and resource competition occurs.” Relative socio-economic inferiority occasioned by globalization may also play a role in causing terrorism. This happens whenever citizens of underdeveloped countries tried to compare themselves with their Western or developed counterparts who appear to be relatively comfortable. This sort of scenario exacerbates tension and hostilities which ultimately result in terrorism. Nonetheless, Ani reckoned that grievances against a certain political arrangement in terms of political exclusiveness may drive terrorism from opposing groups intended to change the existing status-quo.

In the case of Boko Haram, Ani (2014), opined that a clear understanding of the root causes of the on-going Boko Haram terrorism is paramount to efforts aimed at successfully combating it. Thus, Sani (2010) has identified 13 factors responsible for Boko Haram terrorism. Some of the most evident factors include manipulation of religion, as when Boko Haram manipulates religion for radical purposes; disconnect between government and the governed, that is, the leaders and the led, which has allowed for a vacuum to be filled by violent extremists to propagate their ideology; social and economic injustices bordering on inequality and lack of equity; collapse of public education, where children could go to learn good morals were being replaced by “bad places” where people went to learn extremist ideas or ideologies; unemployment of the youths especially, has resulted in their taking to extremist organization such as the Boko Haram; under-development of the north and economic collapse of same as a consequence of bad governance over time, has paved the way for Boko Haram emergence.

Sani (2010) added another factor which is capitalism. According to him, capitalism breeds terrorism. Not many would agree with him on this point but a closer look reveals that one of the planks on which Boko Haram hinges its ideology is abhorrence of Western style of life in all ramifications. For example, Shekau, upon assuming leadership of Boko Haram in 2009, declared that the group would reject everything that has to do with orthodox or western system including capitalism (see Leadership Newspaper, as cited in Agbiboa, 2013). Sani maintained that “capitalism breeds terrorism,” stating that it was a system that was based on master-servant relationship (the same position canvassed by conflict theorists). More so, that it was “unjust, unfair and unconcerned about the state of the poor,” thereby leading people to adopt illegitimate means to survive. Sani’s submission has found support in Bappah, and in Ameh (as cited in Woke, 2013) who stressed that poverty, ignorance, joblessness, frustration, hopelessness, anger, arrogance by official corruption, insensitivity, impunity and generally bad governance, are causes of terrorism, as well as economic deprivation, political oppression, government suppression, ethnic and religious persecutions. Mu’azu (as cited in Woke, 2013) viewed this situation in light of the environment Nigerians live in coupled with their displeasure with government policies that are usually unjust and unfair to them.

Agbiboa (2013) pointed to a similar line of argument by Kwaja who opined that “religious dimensions of the conflict have been misconstrued as the primary driver of violence when, in fact, disenfranchisement and inequality are the root causes.” On this score Awojobi (2014), surmised that the foot soldiers of Boko Haram were youths who had been frustrated by their unemployment status and lack of income, in addition to being abandoned by the political class who had used them as “stepping stones” to power. He went further to pinpoint the argument canvassed by Cook, Awojobi, and Onuoha, that the youths’ desire to join Boko Haram was precipitated by the prevalence of poverty in the north.

Research indicated that the poverty-conflict argument has failed to explain why some poor people or regions do not employ violence to press for change or recognition. After conducting a research on what causes terrorism, Krieger and Meierriek concluded that “there is only limited evidence to support the hypothesis that economic deprivation causes terrorism... poor economic conditions matter less to terrorism once it is controlled for institutional and political factors” (as cited in Agbiboa, 2013). Hence, Agbiboa (2013) noted “despite the above socio-economic explanations, it is important to emphasize that the link between terrorism and poverty remains unclear and the debate unsettled.” But Woke (2013) held that although Boko Haram lacks the ability to address these challenges (of general poverty in the north-east), they however, cash into the frustration and disillusion of the general population to perpetrate their violent attacks.

VIII. FREQUENCY AND EXTENT OF BOKO HARAM ATTACKS IN BORNO STATE

Frequency and extent here refers to the number of attacks in time, space and reach which were perpetrated by the Boko Haram terrorist group in Borno State during the period of the study (2009 to 2016). Against this backdrop, therefore, the study deems it fit to discuss these attacks in terms of day, month and year, though in no particular order. Also, it should be stated that it will be difficult to catalogue all the attacks of Boko Haram in Borno State. However, attempts have been made to capture some of them in this study.

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Most of Boko Haram's attacks occurred in two main modes, that is, armed assaults and bombings (Faustina, 2015). Further, the attacks were on security agents and their formations, top government establishments as well as officers, schools, Mosques, Churches, recreational or relaxation centres, and the general populace.

The Boko Haram terrorist group has its own objective that it set out to achieve. This was clearly spelt out by Shekau in the following statement he made, after becoming the new leader, which the Leadership Newspaper has recounted below:

We want to reiterate that we are warriors who are carrying out Jihad (religious war) in Nigeria and our struggle is based on the traditions of the holy prophet. We will never accept any system of government apart from the one stipulated by Islam because that is the only way that the Muslims can be liberated. We do not believe in any system of government, be it traditional or orthodox, except Islamic system which is why we will keep on fighting against democracy, capitalism, socialism and whatever. We will not allow the Nigerian Constitution to replace the laws that have been enshrined in the Holy Qur'an, we will not allow adulterated conventional education (Boko) to replace Islamic teachings. We will not respect the Nigerian government because it is illegal. We will continue to fight its military and the police because they are not protecting Islam. We do not believe in the Nigerian judicial system and we will fight anyone who assists the government in perpetrating illegalities, - Boko Haram statement (as cited in Agbiboa, 2013).

Thus, since Shekau assumed leadership of the group, and based on its "ideology and philosophy", the attacks which it promised to embark upon have intensified and increased in frequency. Their attack is precise, devastating and frequent (Woke, 2014). They adopt various tactics such as suicide bombing, use of Improvised Explosive devices (IED). According to Woke (2014), the upsurge in violent attacks by Boko Haram since 2009, has posed serious challenge to the military counter-terrorism operations. This has resulted in observers wondering if the military has the capability to tackle the menace.

On Friday January, 28, 2011, the group assassinated a gubernatorial candidate and his brother, and four police officers. On April 15, 2011, Boko Haram bombed the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) Office in Maiduguri. On June 26, 2011, bombing of a beer parlor in Maiduguri, claimed 25 lives. August 12, 2011 was the killing of a prominent Muslim Cleric, Liman Borno. In November, 2011, Boko Haram carried out attack on the convoy of Borno State Governor, Kashim Shettima as he was returning from a trip abroad.

According to Amnesty International Index of 24 September, 2015, based on information obtained from eye witnesses, victims and media reports, Boko Haram attacks claimed a total of about 3,500 civilians in 2015 alone (Amnesty International, 2015). Similarly, findings by ACAPS Secondary Data Review of 24 August, 2015 revealed an increase in the frequency of Boko Haram's violent attacks (ACAPS 2015).

A closer look at the above statistics shows that the Boko Haram terrorist group has perpetrated a lot of heinous atrocities especially since adopting a violent approach to its quest. The statistics shows that the highest number of attacks was in 2011, but more people were killed in 2015. The frequency of attacks by the Boko Haram terrorists in Borno State has demonstrated the group's capability to undermine national security and pose a threat to the corporate existence of Nigeria. Further, as seen above, in addition to increasing frequency, Boko Haram's attacks had wide geographical reach. Initially, the attacks were concentrated in villages around Maiduguri. By the time Boko Haram's former strongholds such as Gosa, Kunduga and Sambisa Forest were overrun by the military, the group focused on Maiduguri, the State capital. The frequency and extent of Boko Haram's area spread indicated the lethality of their attacks. This reality necessitated the employment of military strategy by the Nigerian Government to combat the terrorists' attacks; although not without some negative effects as this study will argue.

IX. MILITARY COUNTER-TERRORISM STRATEGY ON BOKO HARAM IN BORNO STATE

According to Udounwa (2013), the Nigerian government began to develop a coherent strategy that involved hard (military) power of kinetic operations to combat the Boko Haram terrorism after the violent attacks in Borno, Yobe and Bauchi States in July 2009. In addition the government established the National Focal Point on Terrorism (NFPT) in 2007, comprising a dozen security agencies as well as government departments whose duty was to implement Nigeria's national security agenda. However, the NFPT became operational only in 2012.

Against this backdrop, the Nigerian Army, in 2009, was drafted in to assist the Police in incapacitating the Boko Haram terrorist group after it was discovered that the Police alone was ill-equipped to handle the challenge. Consequently, the Nigerian government established a special Joint Task Force (JTF), code named "Operation Restore Order (ORO)" with emphasis on Maiduguri, Borno State capital. The joint security task force comprised personnel from the Nigerian Armed Forces, the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), the Department of State Security (DSS), the Nigerian Immigration Service (NIS) and the Defence Intelligence Agencies (DIA) (Mustapha, 2013). Immediately after the establishment of the JTF, 8,000 troops were deployed to the aforementioned states; a move described as the largest military deployment since Nigeria's Civil War (Agbibo, 2013a, 2013b). In a renewed effort to fight Boko Haram, the Federal Government of Nigeria under the leadership of Mohammedu Buhari had in June, 2015 moved the Military Command and Control Centre (MCCC) to Maiduguri (Daily Independent, 8 June, 2015). Since the establishment of the JTF, with its headquarters in Maiduguri, the Borno State capital, and the subsequent relocation of the Military Command and Control Centre to Maiduguri, the military has continued to carry out joint operations in Borno State in an attempt to dislodge the Boko Haram terrorist group and to return the State to its lost glory.

What then constitutes "military strategy" as employed by Nigeria to combat terrorism of the Boko Haram? To address this core question, Umar (2013) noted that JTF's operations involved mounting of road blocks, checkpoints, arrests, cordon and search, and armed patrols. Others include guarding of key points, surveillance, protection of very important persons (VIPs), raids, etc. (pp.39&41). Further, Serrano and Pieri (2014), argued that "the JTF operations have included imposing rigid curfews, mass arrests, door-to-door searches, destruction of homes, and prolonged detentions and/interrogations of anyone suspected of being associated with Boko Haram" (p.203).

Umar (2013) argued that while these specific strategies have helped to curb the mayhem visited on the people by Boko Haram in Borno State, they have also met with disapproval from the public. To buttress this assertion, he observed that the check points operation produced little results due to lack of adequate personnel and needed screening equipment. Similarly, the armed patrol exercise which meant to gather intelligence had exposed some of the soldiers to attacks by Boko Haram members, who might have laid ambush.

Serrano and Pieri (2014) like Umar (2013) also maintained that JTF's actions have made the public support for them to plummet as demonstrated one time in the public protests in Maiduguri, Borno State capital. The entire mishandling of the security situation according to Serrano and Pieri (2014) has increased the on-going terror attacks by Boko Haram. Continuing the debate, Serrano & Pieri (2014) argued that since after the crackdown on Boko Haram members in 2009, by security forces, the group had stepped up their attacks in a retaliatory fashion in Borno State. These attacks suggest that the Nigerian security and intelligence services lack the requisite ability to fathom the extent of Boko Haram threats, coupled with the inability to determine the best options for handling the security threats posed by Boko Haram.

Similarly Onuoha (2014) while acknowledging the efforts of the federal government in establishing the Joint Task Force (JTF) in June 2011, as a response to the Boko Haram threat, noted that the exercise was partly successful. He argued that the JTF's was able during its operation to arrest and kill Boko Haram operational commanders and strategists. However, in his view, the successes recorded were met with "criticism for harsh tactics that have injured civilians and damaged property" (p.175). Onuoha argued further that the alleged excesses by the JTF had undermined public support in terms of providing information on Boko Haram members or their hideouts. He buttressed his point, quoting Sampson who held a similar view:

[As] a result of these human rights abuses, the JTF has been severely criticised by a section of the Nigerian public over its violent counter-terrorism operations. Its use of disproportionate force has forced people, otherwise critical of the sect's activities, to renege on their earlier endorsement of military deployment (as cited in Onuoha, 2014, pp.175-176).

X. SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF MILITARY COUNTER-TERRORISM STRATEGY

According to Udounwa (2013), the Nigerian government's strategy has recorded some successes. The military was successful in destroying many of Boko Haram's bases including IED-making facilities; as well as having killed many members of the group and its top leaders. Despite this achievement, the military has recorded several negatives in its operations particularly as it affects the people it was supposed to protect or defend.

Onuoha, and Nossiter (as cited in Serrano and Pieri, 2014, p. 202) have commented on the widespread human rights abuses and indiscriminate crackdowns in Borno State, by the Joint Task Force (JTF). They argued that the JTF's actions have created doubts in the minds of the people of Borno State and other stake holders as to the real intentions of the military exercise. It has also complicated any attempts to address the challenges posed by Boko Haram (as cited in Serrano and Pieri, 2014). Onuoha's, and Nossiter's assertions were supported by the Human Rights Watch report of 2012, which claimed that "JTF abuses have created growing resentment in communities, making community members more unlikely to provide information that could help curtain Boko Haram;" stating that "abuses by the JTF have created more distance between the people and the government." Idris, and Ugah (as cited in Serrano and Pieri, 2014), averred that the claims by Human Rights Watch was reechoed in the frustrations expressed by the JTF as it lamented lack of public support in Borno State for Operation Restore Order, established to 'protect the people'

The following statement by Schmid (2016) has succinctly captured the grim reality of the fallouts from military tactics against a terrorist group like the one Boko Haram: "The effects of state over-reaction to insurgent terrorism have, sadly, often been worse than the damage done by insurgent terrorists" (p.47). To buttress his assertion, Schmid cited one example of American military intervention in Afghanistan and attacks beyond the border into Pakistan after 11 September, 2001(9/11) which led to the death of 26,000 and 21,500 civilians respectively. The Afghan refugee population in Pakistan stood at 1,500,000 documented refugees and about one million more undocumented ones, as at when Schmid made this remark.

Similarly, some Nigerian scholars have commented on the military counter-terrorism strategy under the banner of Joint Task Force (JTF). One such scholar was Odomovo. He cited Lawan, and Amnesty International to argue thus:

Ideally, JTFs operations are intended to protect civilians from violence, and their presence often creates the expectation among host communities that they will be protected from violence and human rights abuses. However, internal security operations of JTFs have become notorious for bombing insurgents in civilian populated areas thereby killing innocent people and destroying human habitations and sources of livelihood (Odomovo, 2014).

This study argues that these attacks are evidences of the social, economic and psychological effects of the military operations on the Borno populace. Further incidences under specific headings, as presented and analysed below, will give weight to the above assertion on the consequences of the military actions on the people of Borno State.

Odomovo (2014) emphasized that the terrorism of the Boko Haram in Borno State has caused forced displacement, human fatalities, famine and epidemics on the one hand, while on the other, the counter-terrorism efforts of the military have exacerbated the already humanitarian crisis in the State. Odomovo's assertion found support in one report by the Nigerian Army which stated that "while recording numerous successes, military activities have also contributed to the deterioration of the humanitarian situation" (ACAPS Briefing Note, 27 January, 2017, p. 6).

In light of this, the study assessed the impact of the military exercise in the following specific humanitarian situations: refugee and internally displaced persons flow; food and nutrition insecurity; The coordination and management of refugee camp; vulnerability of women and children in the State; health, education, and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). All these indicate the social, economic, and psychological effects on the people of Borno State, of the military counter-terrorism on Boko Haram.

Refugee and Internally Displaced Persons Flow:

Reports have indicated the massive and continuous flow or movement of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) across the Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Borno State, as a result of increased attacks from Boko Haram as well as the counterterrorism activities of the JTF. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) reported in November 2016, that some of the newly accessible LGAs have witnessed an increase in IDPs numbers between October and December 2016, with Ngala having 24,333, Dikwa 14,282, and Monguno 8,960, respectively. This movement was attributed to movement of IDPs from Maiduguri Metropolitan Council (MMC), Jere and Konduga; as well as improved security situation in some areas, and the need to restart farming, and to meet their desired needs (as cited in ACAPS Briefing Note, 2017, p. 2). The IOM report further indicated how 200,000 people in newly accessible areas who had congregated in 'satellite' camps at the Borno LGA capitals, including Bama, Dikwa, Monguno, and Damboa, are in severe emergency conditions that needed to be addressed (IOM, June, 2016).

Food and Nutrition Insecurity:

The conflict between Boko Haram and the JTF, has impacted on the food and nutrition of the civilian population in the State. As at December 2016, the IOM reported that Bama, Damboa, Dikwa, Gwoza, Konduga, Kukawa, Monguno and Ngala had experienced food insecurity resulting in at least one in five households who had faced food consumption shortages. It concluded that as of October of the same year, there were more than 3 million people in Borno State in need of food assistance. This situation according to the report had led to the available food being controlled and rationed by the government so as to deter Boko Haram from gaining access to food supplies that were met for the IDPs needs (IOM, June, 2016).

The shortfall in food supplies meant a cut in the nutritional needs of the IDPs. IOM (June, 2016) report showed nutrition emergencies in Monguno, Konduga, and Ngala including other newly accessible areas. It stated that “the proportion of children indicating global acute malnutrition (GAM) ranged from 20 to 50%, reflecting an “Extreme Critical” situation and significantly increased risk of child mortality. It cited a case in Magumeri where, 5% of children suffered from severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM), and an additional 25% suffered from Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM).

Similarly a report by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) revealed that as of November of 2016, 46% of IDP households in eight of the newly accessible areas mentioned above lacked sufficient livelihoods. For example, in Baga, Kukawa LGSSs, farming and fishing activities were restricted because of the prevailing military activities. It noted that the military actions have significantly reduced crop production, thereby limiting income generating opportunities of the IDPs and impacting on their economic and social lives.

The Coordination and Management of Refugee Camp:

This is usually in the hands of the security personnel. Sometimes security high-handedness impinged on the free movement of the inmates. The IOM citing a report by United Nations Charter on Human Rights(UNCHR), noted that “there is continuous military screening for all those entering camps and those suspected of either being insurgents or associated with them are interned without legal due process or access to legal services” (IOM, June, 2016, p. 4).

Vulnerability of Women and Children in the Camp:

On the vulnerability of women and children various reports have indicated how this group was prone to abuses by security personnel in the camps. IOM cited a report by UNHCR, which showed that among the displaced population in newly accessible areas, in Borno State, 53% were female and 69 were children under 18 years. It also added that as at the time of the report, 15% IDP households in newly displace areas were female-headed and 7% were female widows. It noted that patriarchal culture of the people put women at a socioeconomic disadvantage therefore compounding their situation (IOM, June, 2016).

Health:

The consequences of the military counterterrorism strategy on Boko Haram on the people, has caught the attention of the government, local and international agencies, especially the International agencies. For example, the IOM 2016 report observed that lack of qualified personnel, drugs and inadequate medical facilities have affected the delivery of quality healthcare to the IDPS in Borno State. Reporting on the health status of the population, it indicated that 11% of the displaced households in the newly accessible areas reported cases of chronic illnesses such as diabetes, HIV/AIDS and hypertension, and some critical health conditions associated with being displaced (IOM, June, 2016).

Education:

The counterterrorism exercise of the JTF has impacted on education in Borno State. For example, the military made use of schools as their base, and when Boko detected the presence of the military, they went there to attack, leaving scores of people killed and injured. In what might appear as support for the military’s action, Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported that some local persons justified the presence of the military in the schools as it helped to dispel their (students’) fears of Boko Haram attacks (HRW, 2016).

However, it was also reported that the conduct of the security forces defeated this objective as it was discovered in some cases where the military personnel would enter the village, get drunk, and took women to the school to sleep with them. Eye witnesses testified that Boko Haram members saw this despicable act and went to attack the schools in a bid to get at the soldiers (HRW, 2016). This scenario, it appears could be viewed as “conflict within conflict”. While the Nigerian State through the military is involved in one conflict with the terrorists, the soldiers too were engaging in human rights abuses as reported above by HRW, in contravention of their mandate as well as conventions on human rights. The findings by Osakwe and Uudu (2017) on the negative actions of the military during operations on Boko Haram supported this line of argument.

Additionally, HRW (2016) reported “In operations to counter Boko Haram, government security forces have also been implicated in abuses against civilians, including teachers in formal and religious schools . . .” In a report submitted to the *Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women*, in November 2016, Human Rights Watch noted:

The use of schools for military purposes disproportionately affects girls and women negatively. In addition to disrupting the right of children to education, troops occupying schools expose students and teachers to risks such as unlawful recruitment, forced labor, beatings, and sexual violence. Furthermore, girls are particularly vulnerable as fear of sexual violence often causes girls to drop out of school (HRW, 2016).

XI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is the view of this study that the arguments above have demonstrated that even though poor socio-economic conditions are not entirely the cause of terrorism, they contribute significantly to the root causes of the Boko Haram terrorism that has been going on in Borno State. It has emerged from this study also that the consequences of the entire military counterterrorism campaign has brought more pain rather than succour to the people. The study recommends the adoption of the soft measure by which the ex-terrorists could be offered opportunity to acquire skills in hope that this would encourage the fighting members to lay down their arms; and also dissuade potential youths from joining the terrorist organisation. Overall, the Federal Government of Nigeria should look into the socio-economic conditions of the people of Borno State in particular and the northeast generally.

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