

# THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF BOKO HARAM TERRORISM IN THE 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY: THE CASE OF NIGERIA

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## Abstract

*Boko Haram terrorism has posed a significant threat to Nigeria since 2009. Despite efforts by various administrations to address the issue, little progress has been made. The academic community has also studied the problem, focusing on political and religious aspects, while the socio-economic consequences have been overlooked. Therefore, this study explores Boko Haram terrorism and its impact on Nigeria's social and economic progress. The research utilized a historical approach involving archival research and scholarly sources such as journals, books, and periodicals. Both the Nigerian government and the international community are deeply concerned about Boko Haram's continued bombings, killings, kidnappings, and destruction of property. Nigerians, likewise the country's economy are both suffering as a result of these activities. The implications of Boko Haram's terrorist actions in Nigeria are examined in this study article. The study's findings show that Boko Haram's crimes have a significant negative impact on Nigeria's economic and social structure, particularly in the densely populated regions of the North East where the group is most active. The paper suggests several actions to stop these terrorist activities, including giving young people in the nation employment opportunities, starting a dialogue with the Boko Haram group if necessary, and giving the military cutting-edge technology to effectively fight the Boko Haram foot soldiers.*

**Keywords:** Socio-economic, Boko Haram, Terrorism, Nigeria, Poverty, Northeast

## INTRODUCTION

After more than 16 years of military tyranny, a democratic government was established in Nigeria in 1999. The general people hoped that with the advent of civilian rule, democracy's benefits would be seen throughout all of Nigeria. The latest developments in Nigeria, however, have crushed their dreams. After fifteen years of civilian administration, the country's security situation is so bad that no one is secure from terrorist strikes, kidnappings, armed gangs, or militant attacks. The security situation in Nigeria has become hazardous for habitation due to electoral and communal violence. The Nigerian government and the international community have been deeply concerned by the activities of the dreaded Islamic terrorist group Boko Haram because, to date, the group has killed more than 10,000 civilians despite the security measures put in place by the Nigerian federal government to put an end to the sect's heinous crimes against humanity and millions displaced. The number of people who have been internally displaced as a result of the Boko Haram insurgency is unknown. Still, it is reported that in 2013 alone, 300,000 people fled the states of Born, Adamawa, and Yobe, with 70% of those people being women and children (HRW, 2014). Boko Haram terrorists murdered 13 people in two separate strikes in northeast Nigeria, according to local media on Sunday, October 15, 2023. On Saturday (the day before the death on Sunday), the terrorist group carried out a predawn attack on a military base in the hamlet of Wulari in Borno state, killing three troops in a gun duel. They picked up ten farmers and shot them dead as they were working in their fields in the Borno community of Maiwa. Since 2015, the group has also carried out assaults in neighboring Cameroon, Chad, and Niger. (Berker, Merve, 2023).

Additionally, it is known that the Boko Haram insurgency and associated humanitarian crises caused 470,500 people to be uprooted from their homes in communities throughout several regions of Nigeria in 2013 alone (HRW, 2014). In response to the government's counterterrorism campaign's failure, youngsters in the country's northeast formed the "Civilian JTF" youth anti-terrorism organization to support the government's counterterrorism approach. "Boko Haram's issue in Nigeria is not simply about the ferocity of its terror operations or the sect's ostensible objective to impose Islamic law on the country," according to Alozieuwa



(2012) as cited by Anyadike (2013), "but about the confusion regarding the exact cause(s) of the violence." The social, political, and religious aspects of Boko Haram's insurgency in Nigeria have all been implicated as contributing reasons. However, according to Awojobi (2014) and Onuoha (2014), the prolonged battle since 2009 is due to the high level of poverty in Nigeria, which has caused young people to join the ranks of Boko Haram foot soldiers. The North-East of Nigeria is where the group focuses most of its efforts.

The Federal government proclaimed a state of emergency, yet Boko Haram's murders, bombings, and kidnappings went on as usual. In the North-East of Nigeria, where the Boko Haram group has a significant presence, its operations have had an impact on the economy, society, and mental health of the region. This study's goal is to analyze the effects of the Boko Haram insurgency in northeastern Nigeria. The problem was exacerbated further in 2014 with the kidnapping of 276 schoolgirls, and the ramifications of Boko Haram's actions have had a serious impact on all elements of Nigerian society, including the socioeconomic, political, religious, educational, and health sectors. Furthermore, the international dimension of Boko Haram's terrorism has contributed to the crisis's complexity, providing a tremendous problem for Nigeria and its neighbors. Despite efforts to address the situation, finding a long-term solution remains difficult.

### 1. Statement of Research Problem

The proposed research project attempts to investigate the socioeconomic backdrop of Nigeria's Boko Haram problem, focusing on its core causes, maintenance patterns, socioeconomic implications, and viable remedies. Since July 2009, Boko Haram, sometimes known as the 'Nigerian Taliban,' has carried out violent acts such as bombings, kidnappings, and killings mostly in northern Nigeria. The problem was exacerbated in 2013 when various northeastern states declared a state of emergency. The organization uses more advanced weaponry and munitions, causing substantial displacement inside Nigeria and into neighboring nations.

The study is motivated by the conviction that trustworthy responses to research questions concerning the core causes and relevant elements are critical for discovering solutions to Nigeria's Boko Haram conflict. The goal is to get a better knowledge of the elements that contribute to the crisis's persistence and, eventually, to contribute to the development of viable solutions. To address the issue, the study poses the following questions:

1. What are the socio-economic consequences of Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria?
2. How can Nigeria resolve the issue of Boko Haram terrorism?

### 2. Objective of the study

- To assess the effects of terrorism by Boko Haram
- To assess its activities in Northeastern Nigeria
- To offer suggestions on how to halt the sect uprising
- To investigate the impact of Boko Haram's terrorism on Nigeria's socio-economic conditions

### 3. Theoretical Framework

The Frustration-aggressiveness theory, presented by Dollard et al. in 1939 and built on by Miller et al. (1941) and Leonard Berkowitz (1969), contends that animosity and aggressiveness are caused by impediments that frustrate an individual's attempts to attain a goal. When the root of the dissatisfaction cannot be addressed, the anger may be directed against an uninvolved or innocent target. It became clear over time that the early assumptions that frustration always leads to aggression and aggression always follows frustration were far too broad. The improved idea is that dissatisfaction may produce a variety of responses other than hostility. Frustration is seen as a necessary but not sufficient condition for hatred and aggression.

The Frustration-Aggression theory has been employed in the context of Boko Haram's insurrection in Nigeria to explain how unhappiness, particularly owing to economic and social inequities, contributes to the growth of violent behavior. Poverty, a lack of education, political insecurity, and government corruption are viewed as sources of irritation that can lead to aggressive and violent conduct in reaction to unmet needs and expectations. This discontent is reflected in the group's philosophy, anti-authority stance, and complaints against the government.

In essence, the dissatisfaction-aggressiveness hypothesis contends that aggressiveness arises from dissatisfaction when an individual's demands are denied, either directly or indirectly as a result of social causes. This viewpoint has been used to examine the development and acts of Boko Haram in Nigeria, connecting frustrations caused by socioeconomic and political causes to the group's violent behavior. Several researchers, including Gaitan (1995), Rubio (2000), Sanchez and Nunez (2001), and Sanchez, Solimano, and Formisano (2005), disagreed with the concept that grievances and dissatisfaction are the fundamental causes of confrontations. They were opposed to the concept. Instead, a collection of empirical data given by Collier and

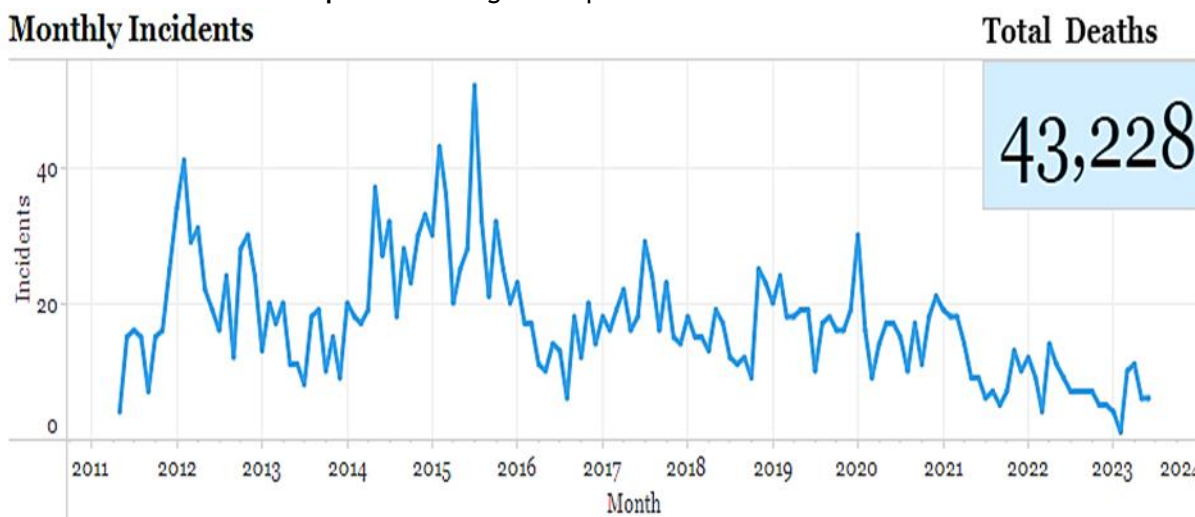
Hoeffler (2002), Bellows and Miguel (2006), and Ford (2007) revealed that poverty is a substantial source of war in Africa. Collier and Hoeffler's study on African conflicts found a link between economic levels and the prevalence of conflicts. Rice et al. (2006), Fearon (2004), and Walter (2004) all agreed that poverty can exacerbate existing conflicts. Furthermore, research by Collier and Hoeffler (2004), which included specialists from Oxford University, Stanford University, and Yale University, added weight to the premise that a drop in income might spark or reignite conflict.

**BOKO HARAM TERROR ACTIVITIES IN NIGERIA**

Boko Haram is seen as a volatile and deadly group with widespread public issues in Nigeria that is causing political instability. The organization's efforts have culminated in one of the most catastrophic disasters in human history. Since 2009, the Nigerian Joint Task Force (JTF) has been combatting Boko Haram's atrocities in northern Nigeria. However, the JTF's presence and abuses have exacerbated the region's already perilous security situation. Their aggressive tactics have widened Boko Haram's reach from urban to rural regions, resulting in significant collateral damage.

In northern Nigeria, mass graves including hundreds of partly buried corpses were discovered in 2009. Boko Haram's insurgency has displaced over three million Nigerians, abducted hundreds, and killed over 100,000 people in just a few years. The advent of Boko Haram has exacerbated security worries in Nigeria and throughout the world, resulting in the deaths of police officers, government officials, worshippers, and innocent bystanders because of bomb attacks. The resurgence of Boko Haram in 2010 signaled the start of a wave of terrorist attacks, with the group's new commander ordering retribution strikes against security forces while sparing civilians. Suicide attacks outside of Borno state were a watershed moment, and Boko Haram engineered the release of terrorists from Maiduguri Prison, increasing its power throughout northern Nigeria. The group is thought to be conducting a violent insurgency against fraud, harsh law enforcement officials, economic injustice, inequality, and escalating tensions between the country's Muslim and Christian-dominated regions. The kidnapping of 276 Chibok girls in 2014 drew international attention. Boko Haram also declared the formation of an Islamic Caliphate and asserted control over key towns. Notwithstanding the efforts of Nigerian law enforcement agencies, the group Boko Haram continues to recruit new recruits and intensify killings, provoking criticism of President Jonathan's handling of the problem. By 2015, Boko Haram had taken control of numerous places in northeastern Nigeria. The Boko Haram conflict has claimed countless lives and forced many others to flee their homes since 2009, with bordering nations facing security threats from cross-border assaults. A sub-regional coalition army was formed to counter this danger. Although progress has been made, Boko Haram remains a persistent threat, and a genuine victory will need the release of the other kidnapped girls as well as the arrest of the group's leader, Abubakar Shekau.

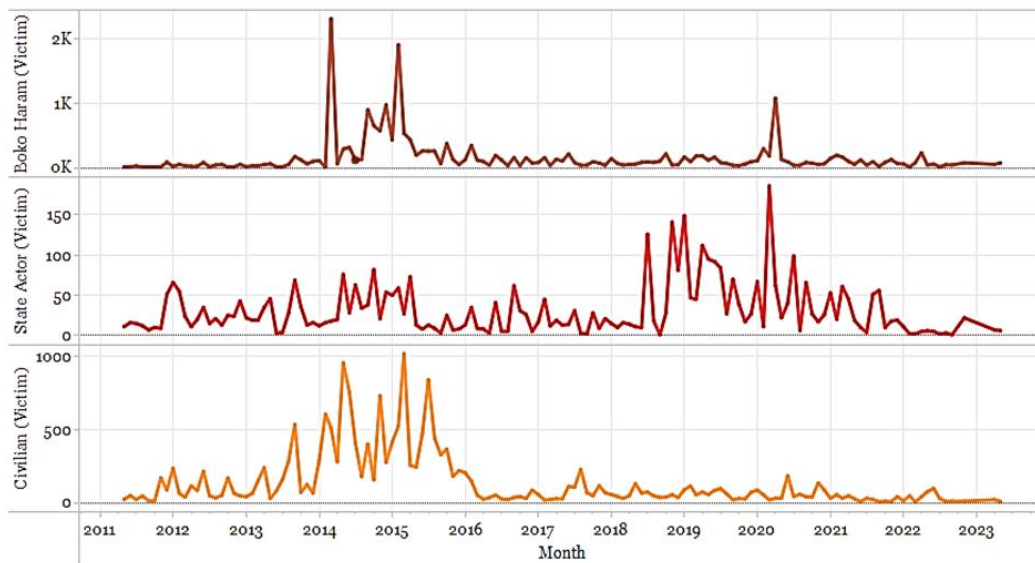
**Graph 1: Tracking the Impact of Boko Haram Conflict**



This graph depicts the evolution of Nigeria's long-running fight with Boko Haram since the Nigerian Security Tracker was established in 2011. (The beginning of the war is commonly ascribed to a fatal battle between Boko Haram and the Nigerian Military in 2009). The table displays the number of occurrences per month and the overall number of deaths in the war, including Boko Haram, state actors, and civilians.



**Graph 2: Monthly Deaths of Boko Haram and State Actors**




Source: Michelle G. (2023). Nigeria Security tracker.

The three graphs above depict the number of Boko Haram and state players killed in the fighting, respectively. Despite an apparent increase in the number of state actors murdered in comparison to Boko Haram since June 2018, the extent of the impact on each player is vastly different. Boko Haram has killed many more people than state actors.

Despite President Buhari’s vows that Boko Haram would be crushed in 2017, the terror outbursts will continue. This essay stresses several factors that contribute to Boko Haram’s terrorism, including community support, international organization help, security concerns, corruption, and military crimes against civilians, economic hardships, infrastructure woes, and dishonest reporting. Addressing these factors is crucial for significantly reducing the terrorist group’s authority and preventing disillusioned youths from turning to terrorism for survival (Maiangwa et al., 2016).

**Table 1: A comprehensive timeline of Boka Haram’s actions from 2009 to 2017**

Date	Attack Type and Location	The number of fatalities
26 July, 2009	After a nighttime attack on a police station in Dutse-Township, there was a first conflict with the security forces in the state of Bauchi.	42 persons were slain, including 2 police officers, 1 soldier, and 39 sect members.
14 March, 2010	Attack in Jos, Plateau state’s northern region	300 fatalities
26 Nov, 2012	The SARS office in Abuja was attacked.	30 prisoners were released while two police officers were slain.
1 Jan, 2003	Firefight in Maiduguri	Four persons were slain, including a soldier and 13 sect members.
22 Feb, 2014	coordinated assaults on the town of Izge	Over a hundred individuals died.
2 Jan, 2015	Invasion of WAZA Town	eleven fatalities and six injuries
27-28 Jan 2016	strike with a bomb on the villages of Dalori and Maiduguri in the northeast	There have been at least 65 fatalities.
17 Dec, 2016	Boko Haram’s devastating assault on the JTF in Sambisa Forest	During the operation, a civilian Joint Task Force (JTF) member was hurt.
29 Jan, 2017	In Borno state, Nigeria, Boko Haram assaulted a caravan of drivers on a freshly secured roadway.	causing at least 7 deaths and several injuries



11 July, 2017	Four Boko Haram suicide bombers detonated four bombs in Maiduguri, northeastern Nigeria, in a public strike.	Nineteen persons were murdered, 23 were wounded, and eight villagers were executed.
3 Jan, 2020	The Kidnapped and execution of Reverend Lawan Andimi by Boko Haram	1 chairman of the Christian Association of Nigeria
7 Jan, 2021	Boko Haram Attack in Gamboru	3 people killed
27 June, 2023	Boko Haram murdered civilians at Damboa, Borno	Seven were killed on the 26 and the next day the 27, six killed

Source: Michelle G. (2023), Nigeria Security Tracker

Enumerating every instance of Boko Haram violence in Nigeria would be a nearly impossible task due to the sheer number and ongoing nature of these incidents<sup>1</sup>. The provided table only highlights some selection of the Boko Haram crisis in various parts of Nigeria (Okpaga, Chigiote, Innocent 2012, pp. 82-85; Dauda 2014, pp. 251-257).

### BOKO HARAM’S ROOT CAUSES

Inadequate governance inside Nigeria has led to widespread poverty, allowing criminal gangs to form in quest of cash. The dearth of economic prospects for young Nigerians adds considerably to the Boko Haram problem in the country's northern area. The current scenario in Nigeria reflects Karl Marx's forecast that when machines and humans replace human labor are left without work, they would rebel. According to Idowu, the government's failure to meet the population's fundamental infrastructural demands has resulted in fresh confrontations. Opportunistic politicians use the hardship of the impoverished to address the government's inadequacy to satisfy its citizens' genuine expectations. As a result, numerous angry groups feel alienated and turn to violence. As a result, numerous unhappy groups feel disenfranchised and turn to violence to express their frustrations to the administration.

It is vital to highlight that many Nigerian teenagers between the ages of 20 and 40 still rely on their parents for survival; otherwise, a sizable proportion of them might turn to violence to topple the government. When an adult awakens without food or money, the conclusion is predictable. Such people are more likely to join the military to protect themselves against those they hold accountable for their poor living conditions and uncertain future. The late Yusuf, the late founder of Boko Haram, underlined that the government was to blame for the people's poverty and suffering, urging for the construction of an Islamic state to assure a high standard of life free of the governing elite's extortion and incompetence. This article clarifies how the organization is against the government as well as bitter of years of poor leadership which have impoverished the populace. According to the group, officials educated in the Western system squander public finances for personal gain, extending the people's poverty. Because of the immense poverty, lawful individuals are compelled to commit atrocities that include kidnapping, vandalism, and forgery. The same officials are also accused of imprisoning and punishing impoverished individuals who are compelled to commit crimes in order to survive after embezzling public monies intended for public projects.

Former President Olusegun Obasanjo once warned that Nigeria was sitting on a ticking time bomb, implying the possibility that the federal government wasn't acting fast to give job prospects for the unemployed majority of young Nigerians who will be tomorrow's leaders, severe violence and a breakdown in law and order would follow. As a result of weak administration, Nigeria's society has become very impoverished, with the wealthiest increasing richer and the poor becoming poorer. Poor Nigerians witness politicians vacationing abroad, spending in the city of Dubai, and even enrolling their kids in expensive Foreign universities, according to Danjibo and Oladeji (2007, p. 15)<sup>2</sup>. This growing divide between leaders and followers, between groups with and without political representation, has allowed violent extremists to exploit the situation. This expanding chasm between

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<sup>1</sup> A. Okpaga (2012). Chigiote, U.S., and E.O. Innocent. 2012. Boko Haram activities and insecurity in Nigeria, Benue, Arabian journal of Business and Management Review (Oman), Vol. 1. No. 9.

<sup>2</sup> N. D. Danjibo and A. Oladeji. 2007. Vote Buying in Nigeria: An Assessment of the 2007 General Elections, Journal of African Elections





leaders and followers, between groups with and without representation in government, has allowed violent radicals to take advantage of the situation.

One of the causes for Boko Haram's activity is political in character. Nigerian culture is broad, with several ethnic groupings. This is reflected in the country's sociopolitical structure as well as the constitutional acknowledgement of the federal character principle. Nigerians are frequently targeted by Boko Haram militants because of the People's Democratic Party's (PDP) unofficial rotation of political power between the country's northern and southern areas. Prior to the 2011 election, northern political figures warned that if Jonathan, a southerner, won the president on the PDP platform, it would create governance problems. Lawal Kaita was adamant that such an outcome would be viewed as a repudiation of the North's legitimate role in power. Kaita further stated that if Jonathan wins the election, the north should not be held accountable for any future unrest in the country. These words demonstrate the north's determination to sow discord if a southerner wins the president through the PDP, notwithstanding the party's zoning policy (Kaita, 2010).

Jonathan's election victory in 2011 was overshadowed by Boko Haram atrocities and attacks in many parts of the country. According to Eurasia Group African Analyst De Pontet, the group Boko Haram's primary objective seems to have been to disrupt the Jonathan administration. Nigeria's nepotistic political structure has harmed the northern region (Onuoha, 2012). General Andrew Owoye-Azazi, a former national security advisor who died in April 2012, attributed Boko Haram's terrorist actions to internal divisions within the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP). He said that the emergence of Boko Haram was driven not just by religious and societal issues, but also by "politics of exclusion" and a thirst for power (Azazi, 2012). Religious extremism has long been a cause of worry in many parts of the world, particularly after the World Trade Center attack on September 11, 2001. Prior to independence, Northern Nigeria strove to establish an Islamic legal system for all Muslims. The application of Sharia law in certain northern Nigerian districts aids Boko Haram's objective of establishing the State of Islam. The organization's painstaking attempts to implement Sharia rule across Nigeria have specifically targeted Christians and places of worship, intending to destroy them through Jihad (holy war). Some prominent Nigerians see Boko Haram as a religious movement intent on converting Nigeria into an Islamic state by executing Christians and wrecking churches. The Catholic Bishop of Sokoto Diocese, Matthew Kukah, disagrees with northern Muslims who reject the notion that Boko Haram insurgents are genuine Muslims. He argues that the Quran prompted their actions. The killing of Rev. Sabo Yakubu and the bombing of three churches on Christmas Day in 2011 are examples of evidence. Some Nigerians believe that the sect's violence has mostly targeted Christians; however, incidents such as the bombing of a mosque, the attack on the Emir's palace, and the death of Shiite Islamic Movement members show that the sect's cruelty is not limited to one denomination. Northern Nigerian Muslim leaders have criticized Boko Haram's actions as un-Islamic and encouraged the Muslim community to identify and punish its members. Muslim communities in Yobe, Borno, and Kano states have also formed vigilante groups to assist security forces in combating Boko Haram activities. While the crimes committed by Boko Haram may have theological foundations, they affect more than simply Christians.

Sectarianism is on the rise across Nigeria as a result of ignorance. As stated by Ayantayo, religious adherents have a limited comprehension of theology, most likely owing to a lack of religious information and a reliance on the words and acts of their religious leaders (Ayantayo, 2002, pp. 1-2). The notion of jihad, or battle, has been instilled in the members of the group. This unambiguously demonstrates that northern Muslims, notably the Almajiri and Madrasas (beggars), are believed to have been raised to see people other than Muslims and Muslims who mix with non-Muslims as infidels. Their leaders convince them that these individuals are enemies of Islam, and they are willing to go to any extent to get rid of them (Soyinka, 2012).

Foreign entities' influence is also a motivating force behind the disastrous occurrences concerning Boko Haram. Concerns are developing, according to Danjibo (2010, pp. 2-19), concerning external influences wielding influence and changing religious groups in Sub-Saharan Africa, notably in Nigeria. Nigerian Muslims and Christians are connected to both the region of the Middle East and the Western world. Muslims have been influenced by the Arab world, whilst Christianity is inspired by European and American culture. Following a November 2011 White House subcommittee report titled "Boko Haram: An Emerging Warning," the terrorist organization constituted an imminent risk not just to the United States and Western interests in Nigeria, but also to the entirety of the region. "Given Boko Haram's evolution and the US Department's public advisories to US residents in Nigeria regarding the dangers in a terrorist-prone nation such as Nigeria," said the researcher (Cook, 2011, p. 3).



## THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE BOKO HARAM CRISIS

### 1. Economic Consequences

The Boko Haram conflict has had serious economic consequences for Nigeria and the northeast. According to Ayegba (2015), the group's operations have caused the economy to stagnate, resulting in the closure of enterprises, corporations, and financial institutions, as well as major job losses. Durotoye (2015) and Bakare (2016) agree, noting that the Nigerian government has also experienced losses in foreign direct investments totaling billions of dollars. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) observed a decrease in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the northeast area of roughly 21.3%. The acts of the extreme terrorist organization, most likely Boko Haram, have had enormous economic implications in Nigeria. This group's constant attacks have raised volatility and hampered a favorable business climate. These assaults have led to economic damages of over 1.3 trillion Naira (about USD 9 billion), including destruction to buildings and investments in Nigeria's northeastern region. Furthermore, the Chief of Army Staff General, Major General Tukur Buratai, stated that the economic loss caused by Boko Haram's activities in the northeastern region amounts to over USD 3.5 billion (107 billion Naira) in agricultural produce, affecting not only Nigeria but also the economy of the Lake Chad Basin (Haruna, 2017).

The economic crisis brought on by Boko Haram extremists is not exclusive to Nigeria. It has also had an impact on neighboring nations like Cameroon, Chad, and Niger. Previously, these nations enjoyed amicable commercial and economic links, but Boko Haram's operations interrupted these partnerships, resulting in business closures, job losses, and economic instability. The expected cost of repairing and rebuilding destroyed homes in the northeastern area is more than USD 9 billion. Overall, Boko Haram's operations have had a considerable detrimental influence on Nigeria's and the surrounding region's economic security.

### 2. Political Development Consequences

According to Ntamu and Ekpenyong (2014), the Boko Haram insurgency not only poses a security concern to Nigeria, but it has also become an existential challenge to the existence of the Nigerian political and legal state. Buzan characterized the notion of political security as being concerned with the legitimacy of a political system and its ability to endure existential challenges to its survival. In the absence of this crucial legitimacy, conditions for insecurity might arise (Buzan, Waever, & De Wilde, 1998). According to Okpaga, Chijioke, and Eme (2012), the operations of the Boko Haram terrorist group put Nigeria's political, legal, and legitimate sovereignty to the test. The succession of attacks on state institutions and agencies calls into doubt Nigeria's government's ability to deal with this rebel organization. Anyadike (2013) agreed, noting that Boko Haram had made demands on the Nigerian government, including the exchange of some of its members detained by the government and the immediate resignation of Alhaji Kashim Shettima, the Executive Governor of Borno State. The organization also targeted security officers, pushing them out of places like Bama and Baga in the Northeast while declaring a caliphate in conquered towns.

The operations of this rebel organization have posed a substantial challenge to the Nigerian state's whole political and national security framework. This has created questions about the Nigerian government's legitimacy and capacity to address the issue effectively. As Siollun (2015) pointed out, the acts of this rebel organization have put doubt on Nigerian government authorities' capacity to deal with the Boko Haram situation effectively. This circumstance prompted numerous narratives to be advanced by political observers and experts. Some speculated that President Goodluck Jonathan's failure to clinch the 2015 General Elections was due to his administration's apparent lack of political will to resolve the country's myriad difficulties, notably the Boko Haram situation. This setback enabled the group to solidify its authority even further by conquering cities in Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe States (BAY states) and establishing a mini-caliphate. As a result, the terrorists were successful in raiding military barracks, pushing soldiers out, and taking different military equipment (Blair, 2015). Another story contended that the regime's unpopularity was exacerbated by the existence of Boko Haram, which damaged the government's trust among Nigerians. This was owing to significant expenditures being allocated to battle the Boko Haram insurgency with little evident results. (Oduah, 2015).

The widely publicized kidnapping of the "Chibok girls" sparked international anger and highlighted the necessity for the Nigerian government to display a strong commitment to defeating this organization if it wants to recover the trust of its citizens and its partners. Because of this failure, many people saw the 2015 General Elections as a choice between "insecurity or security," with many voters choosing the latter (Maiangwa & Agbiboa 2014; Habila, 2017; Hashimu & Ancel 2017). This political implication has harmed the Nigerian government even more, putting to the test not only the government's ability to address the challenge but also the assurances



and guarantees provided by the transformed African Union (via the various RECs) that "African problems" can be solved by Africans.

### 3. Social Consequences

Nigeria's large population of over 150 million people and vast natural resources make it strategically significant for Africa and the rest of the world. Despite being the world's fourteenth largest oil exporter, Nigeria is a poor country with a GDP of around \$374.3 billion. The country is dealing with socioeconomic difficulties that are causing poverty and violence. Insufficient cultural traditions, institutions, and political systems hamper Nigeria's progress. Nigeria's civilization is diverse, with over 250 ethnic groups and just English as a common language. Different parts of the country have their languages, such as Hausa, Yoruba, and Ibo. While cultural diversity may be a source of strength, if not properly managed by the government, it can also lead to tribal and societal difficulties. Since the country's independence in 1960, Nigeria's political elites have failed to address the country's socioeconomic complexity. Religious and ethnic sentiments have been used for electoral gain, resulting in nepotism and a wide rift within the country. The political elite's self-interest has undermined popular confidence, faith, and legitimacy of government, every single one of which is necessary for a wealthy nation's growth.

The insurgent organization Boko Haram claims that Western principles have corrupted the Nigerian administration and vows to battle injustice and poverty. Their message resonates with the North's uneducated Muslim populace. Boko Haram is also upset over the selective implementation of Sharia law, which was partially enforced in 1999 by several northern governors. The organization believes that the legislation is being applied unjustly, particularly against the disadvantaged masses, who account for around 70% of the population and live in abject poverty. Corruption is rampant in Nigeria, with political officeholders profiting from public service. As a result, the impoverished no longer has access to basic health and education services. As a result of these challenges, Boko Haram emerged, combining extremist religious ideals with terrorism. Another social issue in Nigeria is tribalism, which stifles economic progress by undercutting meritocracy and dismissing good work. The revival of the economy and the building of strong institutions are important to Nigeria's growth. This requires making more effective use of the country's resources, encouraging essential utilization of products and services, including boosting the general welfare. Conflict interventions are essential to restore stability and supply the country with long-term resources.

#### ATTEMPTS TO RESOLVE THE TERRORISM OF BOKO HARAM IN NIGERIA

Since the emergence of terrorism and insurgency in Nigeria, the government has used a variety of measures to tackle Boko Haram's operations. The first strategy entails deploying military action against rebel organizations, with approximately 8,000 troops sent to impacted locations in northern Nigeria. It is vital to emphasize, however, that there is no established Military Code of Justice for these operations. An example of this is the assault of the Baga hamlet in Borno state by the Nigerian army on Sunday, April 21, 2013, during which approximately 200 people suspected of being Boko Haram members were slain in a single operation (Akande, 2013). To repress Boko Haram's operations, the federal government has lately sent highly trained anti-terrorism combat units to terrorism-affected regions (Okupe, 2015). Another plan is to acquire and develop more modern and appropriate military weaponry with African Union sanctions and collaboration with multinational coalitions. Furthermore, neighboring nations including Chad, Niger, and Cameroon have been granted authority by international authorities to send troops to Nigerian territory to battle the insurgency legally. The Nigerian military also undertakes operations outside its boundaries to chase fleeing terrorists and eliminate safe havens for them. In addition, the three most impacted northern states, Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe, have proclaimed states of emergency. Despite this, the lack of a formal Military Code of Justice to identify intended targets and protect civilians has contributed to an increase in deaths in northern Nigeria. Finally, the government solicits public and media assistance in providing intelligence about terrorist groups and their actions.

According to Agbiboa (2013a), the Nigerian government has used both soft and harsh techniques in its war against Boko Haram. Rather than examining these strategies individually, see them as complementing methods. The mild approach is attempting to include Boko Haram members in political debates and activities. The goal of this policy at the state level is to engage and reconcile with Boko Haram terrorists. For example, after their leader was assassinated in 2009, Ali Modu Sheriff, a former governor of Borno State, allegedly paid a large quantity of money to satisfy the gang. Kashim Shettima, the governor at the time, proposed discussions with Boko Haram in 2011. Datti Ahmad, President of the National Supreme Council on Sharia, who had earned Yusuf's (Boko Haram's former leader's) respect, also attempted to reach out to the group. However, once the media





reported on the talks, Boko Haram cut off contact and accused the Nigerian government of operating in bad faith.

A 26-person amnesty committee was established by Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan to promote dialogue and look for a peaceful solution to the security issues in the area. The committee, directed by Nigeria's Special Duties Minister Kabiru Tanimu, sought to persuade Boko Haram to hand over their weapons in exchange for social integration and state amnesty. Its three-month goal was to impose power over the group. The group, including past and present government officials, religious leaders, and human rights advocates, was entrusted with identifying and engaging Boko Haram's senior commanders, as well as devising a credible framework for their disarmament and amnesty.

Boko Haram commander Shekau rejected the amnesty proposals, arguing that they did not apply to his organization because they had done nothing wrong. He accused the Nigerian government of crimes and proposed that forgiveness come from his organization instead. Shekau pledged to continue Boko Haram's murderous acts to build an Islamic state in Nigeria in a video published on May 13, 2013. Boko Haram carried out two catastrophic strikes in Nigeria's north within a week after rejecting the amnesty offer. The first incident took place in Bama when terrorists armed with machine guns and moving in buses and automobiles murdered 55 individuals—such as police and security personnel—and more than 100 prisoners. The second attack occurred in Benue state, claiming the lives of 53 individuals and destroying 13 towns.

Despite the efforts of the Nigerian government, it is clear that their efforts to contain the Boko Haram crisis have failed. The Joint Task Force is making every effort to reestablish societal order and bring peace within the northern area, likewise, rescuing the abducted Chibok schoolgirls has failed. President Muhammadu Buhari has asked the UN to serve as a mediator for his administration's second-term negotiating agenda with Boko Haram. Nigerian President Buhari informed Ban Ki-moon that the country would welcome UN mediators in their resolve to exchange abducted Chibok schoolgirls for jailed Boko Haram combatants. During a bilateral meeting at the 71st UN General Assembly in New York, President Buhari declared his willingness to go to great lengths to secure the release of the Chibok girls but stressed the difficulty of locating real and legitimate Boko Haram commanders to negotiate with. Internal disagreements inside the rebel group were aggravating matters, and he stated that outside assistance, notably from UN members, would be appreciated to break the gridlock.

## CONCLUSION

Nigerians, especially those who live in the north of the nation, are concerned about the growth of the Boko Haram terrorist group. The sect's operations have resulted in multiple deaths and massive property devastation. The public has suffered because of Boko Haram attacks on businesses, stores, and institutions. Recent occurrences in northern Nigeria, such as deaths and property destruction, highlight the region's worrisome level of insecurity. Although insecurity is a worldwide concern, the government's apparent failure to identify long-term remedies is exceptional for the country. "Security danger" has practically become synonymous with "security breakdown" (Andekin, 2011, p. 80). Religion has always been a substantial barrier to the country's socioeconomic prosperity. This is due to the absence of comprehensive support for any Nigerian administration from both Islam and Christianity. To put it another way, the government has always had to deal with one or more religious disputes (Muhammed, 2008, p. 124).

Finally, it is critical to note that the Boko Haram insurgency's continuous operations may be related to the persistence of corruption, moral degradation, injustice, and unemployment. As a result, successfully adopting our recommendations will aid in reducing the sect's hostile behaviors. A thorough analysis of the difficulties confronting Nigeria today finds that researchers agree on the impact of the Boko Haram activities on both northern Nigeria's and the country's socioeconomic progress. In considering this, a few recommendations have been proposed: Both the national and state governments should have population protection as their primary objective. To do this, our security forces must be properly equipped to battle extremism within the country. It is sad to observe that monies earmarked for acquiring equipment for troops fighting the insurgency have been diverted for personal benefit, resulting in a scarcity of equipment and soldiers avoiding clashes with the cult. Ironically, Col. Sambo Dasuki (retired), President Goodluck Jonathan's former security advisor, misappropriated over \$2.1 billion intended for the acquisition of weaponry to equip security officers. Dasuki's subsequent apprehension and inquiry revealed that the fraud benefitted several powerful Nigerians. It is unlikely that ill-equipped security forces will be able to successfully combat a well-armed Boko Haram with



advanced weaponry (The Nation Newspaper, 2016). As a result, fighting the insurgency will rely heavily on eliminating corruption within the security system and improving security agencies to match modern standards.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ The Nigerian government must implement policies that will create jobs for the country's unemployed youths.
- ✓ Boko Haram has sponsors, and the government should go after those who fund the sect's operations.
- ✓ The government should establish a dialogue channel to learn about the sect's grievances.
- ✓ According to reports from the battlefield, security personnel are not being provided with modern fighting equipment. The government should make an effort to provide sophisticated military equipment to the army.
- ✓ Nigeria should strengthen its intelligence and security collaboration to effectively track, arrest, and neutralize the actions of Boko Haram.
- ✓ Border security and regional cooperation with adjacent nations can aid in the protection of shared borders and the coordination of counter-terrorism activities.
- ✓ Addressing the core causes of terrorism is vital, and Nigeria should prioritize humanitarian relief and development programs in afflicted areas.
- ✓ Improving law enforcement capacities and maintaining fair judicial procedures can aid in the maintenance of the rule of law and the prevention of radicalization within prisons.
- ✓ It is also critical to combat internet radicalization through monitoring, reporting, and counter-narrative initiatives.
- ✓ It is also critical to invest in job development and economic possibilities, particularly for underprivileged groups.
- ✓ Nigeria should seek foreign aid, like as financial and logistical support, as well as information sharing. Human rights compliance is critical in the fight against terrorism.


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