

AKSU Journal of Social Sciences (AKSUJOSS)
ISSN: 2504 – 933X
Vol.4,No.2 (September) 2024,pp.162-170
DOI:https://doi.org/10.61090/aksujoss.202.029
URL: htpp://www.aksujournal.com/vol.4.2

Received: **2nd April, 2024**
Accepted: **25th August, 2024**
Published online: **1st September, 2024**

Terrorism and Socio-Economic Development in Nigeria: The Case of Boko Haram in the Northeast Region

Tommy Enodienetuk Enodien
Department of Political and Administrative Studies
Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria
chimezieeze59@gmail.com

Abstract

The paper investigated terrorism and socio-economic development in Nigeria with an emphasis on Boko Haram (2009-2023). Boko Haram posed a serious threat to Nigeria's socio-economic development. Millions of people have lost their lives as a result of attacks by the deadly group. Also, millions of people have been displaced from their homes which has led to the loss of economic livelihood which is agriculture. A variant of realism propounded by Hans J. Morgenthau was adopted as a theoretical framework. One of the assumptions of the theory stipulated that power has a military and non-military component which includes not just military force but also the levels of technology, population, national resources, geographical factors, forms of government, political leadership, and ideology. The secondary source of data was deployed for the study; it involves the collection of data from textbooks, magazines, and conference papers amongst others. The study found that there is a huge capital flight from Nigeria's economy especially in the northeast region of Nigeria (Foreign Direct Investment) due to incessant attacks emanating from the activities of Boko Haram. Most business outfits that are supposed to contribute to the growth of the region's (northeast) economy have either moved out of the country or relocated to another safe region where their activities will not be truncated. The study recommends that Nigerian security agencies coordinating the war against Boko Haram should live- up to their responsibilities particularly in the area of intelligence gathering to enable them to bring to an end the activities of the deadly Islamist sect in the northeast. When there is no synergy among the various security agencies, it can compromise the war against terrorism in Nigeria.

Keywords: Terrorism, Boko Haram, socio-economic development, Attack, Northeast

Introduction

Terrorism has become a key policy issue among countries on both national and global fronts. The United States Department of Defense (2011: p.56), refers to 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". Goldstein and Pavehouse (2008: p.46) posit that "terrorist targets civilians deliberately and indiscriminately. It uses extreme brutality yet, remains faceless and shadowy in its irregular tactics of pursuing political objectives". The emergence of Boko Haram complicates Nigeria's security challenges. Before this period, the major security threat to Nigeria was the activities of armed agitators in the Niger Delta Region; Movement for the

Emancipation of Niger Delta People (MEND) and the Niger Delta Volunteer Force (NDVF), etc. and other pockets of insecurity such as armed robbery, cultism and ethno-religious crisis amongst others (Eminue & Dickson, 2012). The outbreak of Boko Haram in the northeast put Nigeria on the list of the global terrorist index.

The activities of this group are usually characterized by suicide bomb attacks, especially in public places, and the abduction of their victims which has resulted in the death of numerous people. Several lives and properties worth billions of naira have been lost as a result of attacks by Boko Haram. The continued attacks by Boko Haram despite national and sub-regional collaborations to nip its activities in the bud are due to the international link the

dreaded group established with other armed groups such as Alqaeda, Taliban, and Al-Shabaab, etc., and the porosity of Nigeria's borders. This point was succinctly captured by Agbiboa (2014; p. 32) when he posits that "the Nigerian government's efforts to combat Boko Haram insurgency has not yielded many gains owing to the strong international network of the organization that enables the group to have access to sophisticated weapons with which they unleash mayhem on the populace". He further stated that "the poor border security has gone a long way to aid the operation of Boko Haram which is a threat to national security" (Agbiboa, 2014; p. 32). Onuoha (2013; p.65) on his part noted that "Boko Haram has devised or used both transnational and national trafficking of arms and weapons to cause terror and fear to Nigerian citizens". It is against the backdrop of the threat posed by the activities of Boko Haram that this paper intends to examine Boko Haram and insecurity with emphasis in the northeast region of Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The unrest in the northeast region occasioned by the activities of Boko Haram cannot only be seen as a threat to Nigeria's political system but also as a challenge to her socio-economic development. The spate of multidimensional violent attacks in the northeast: attacks on security formation and civilian populace by Boko Haram have continued to escalate and assume a more worrisome trend despite claims by Nigeria's security agencies to have technically defeated the dreaded Islamist group. Ndahi (2017; p.98) noted that "in 2014, a remarkable number of local government areas in the three states in the northeast region (Yobe, Adamawa, and Bornu) were overran and taken over by the insurgents". This level of incursion has by no small measure eroded the territorial sovereignty of the Nigerian state. Searcey (2016; p.54) submitted that "by this ugly development, the earlier good image enjoyed by the Nigerian state within the comity of nations has adversely been bartered and shattered". According to an Amnesty International report (2021; p.4), "between 2014-2021, over three thousand lives and properties worth over ten billion naira in the northeast region were lost as a result of the deadly attacks by Boko Haram. The northeastern part of Nigeria such as Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe among others happens to be the greatest casualty (Amnesty International, 2021).

Several Internally Displaced Camps (IDPs) were set up to cater to displaced victims of Boko Haram. Also, several businesses and schools relocated while some shut down due to fear of attacks. The activities of Boko Haram have therefore posed a problem for socio-economic development and indeed Nigeria's national security. It is pertinent at this juncture to pose some relevant questions; what is the impact of Boko Haram on socio-economic development in the northeast region? What measures can be adopted to address the menace of Boko Haram? The objectives of the study are twofold: Firstly, to investigate the impact of Boko Haram on socio-economic development in the northeast region; and second, to proffer measures on how to address the menace of Boko Haram in the northeast region.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework adopted for this study is the realist theory. The realist theory derives its impulse from the view that the nature of man is sinful and conflictual. Realism holds that political theory must flow from observation of the history and experience of people and states and that these show a pattern of violent and aggressive behaviour (Richard and Sinclair, 1996). Thus, the highest moral duty of the state is its preservation. To accomplish this, states must utilize power. According to Hans J. Morgenthau (cited in Alfred, 1978: p.57), "The interest of the state defined in terms of power, is the primary moral guide by which policies are developed, but prudence in pursuing those interests is the primary ethical guide for policymakers. In the world of power politics, states must increase their power to guarantee their survival. According to Morganthau (1978: p. 56), "Thus, the goal of the state

has come to include the search for ways to acquire and keep power, increase power and demonstrate power. In short, in a world of conflicting states seeking power, or a world confirmed by historical experience and by the nature of man, states must engage in power politics to survive, and they should do anything prudent or otherwise to achieve that goal''.

According to Walker (1993: p.33), "There is no single tradition of realism but rather a knot of historically constituted tensions, contradictions and evasions''. There are therefore different types of realism which Timothy (1993) has distinguished into three: classical realism (up to the twentieth century), modern realism (1939 – 1979), and neo-realism (1979 to date). Timothy (1993:p.41), admits that "this periodization do not however overcome the problem of diversity since not all classical writers agree on the causes of war, or whether the balance of power is a natural state or one which must be created for the effective management of global power".

According to Ogonor (2007: p.35), realism is predicated on the following assumptions: First**,** that there is no essential harmony of interest among nations and that nation-states often have conflicting national objectives, some of which lead to war; second, the capabilities of a state are crucial for the outcome of international conflict and for the ability of one state to influence another state's-behaviour; third, power has a military and non-military component which includes not just military force but also the levels of technology, population, national resources, geographical factors, forms of government, political leadership, and ideology; fourth, that there are severe limitations in the extent to which political reforms or education can alter human nature. Man is evil, sinful, and power-seeking. Thus, human nature is not innately perfect. The task of the statesman lies in fashioning a political system or framework within which the human propensity to engage in conflict can be minimized. Fifth, that moral principles in their abstract formulation cannot be applied to political actions; and sixth, that the balance of power framework can furnish an important regulation device to prevent any one nation from achieving total hegemony within the comity of nations.

Relating and applying the realist theory in understanding Boko Haram and insecurity, it becomes imperative to state that the goal behind the activities of Boko Haram is the Islamization of Nigerian states. This has prompted the sect to wage war against Nigeria. In other to win this war, there is a need to acquire sophisticated arms which is readily available to the sect through dislodging of weapons from security agencies, illegal arms dealers, and other armed groups, etc. the use of force or threat of use of the use of force has become the basis upon which the activities of these deadly group is predicated.

Methodology

The descriptive research design was adopted for the study. According to Amara and Amaechi (2010), "descriptive research design examines and interprets ongoing processes or present state of affairs to understand their meaning, their workings, their logical underpinnings and their relevance" (p.10). Descriptive research aims to accurately and systematically describe a population, situation or phenomenon. It can answer what, where, when and how questions, but not why questions. The study would depend on data from sources such as textbooks, journals, articles, seminars, conference papers, and magazines amongst others. The content analysis was adopted as our method of data analysis.

Conceptual Review

The Concept of Terrorism

Terrorism as a concept has been variously used in literature, but the major fact about the concept is that it lacks a generally acceptable definition as there is no intellectual agreement on what constitutes the concept. The concept 'of terrorism' became a major concern in

Philosophy and Social Sciences following the early writings of Auguste Comte, Emile Durkheim, Karl Marx, and other philosophers during the Enlightenment epoch and the qualitative effects of the French Revolution of 1789 on European society. Though, none of the above-mentioned Philosophers singled out terrorism as a study each commented on it in the course of explaining other pertinent social problems at the time (Ogunrotifa, 2013). However, the complexities and ambiguity of the concept occurred from the fact that it is fond of political and emotional interpretation.

Al-Thagafi (2008) conceptualizes terrorism as the use of organized violence against innocent people to intimidate them for political reasons. This position can be questioned as it failed to explain the nature of the instigators of these violent acts and also, whether the acts of terrorism are only for political reasons as portrayed in the definition. Put differently, Enders and Sandler, cited in Antimbom (2016, p. 11), posited that "terrorism is the premeditated use of violence by individuals or sub-national groups to obtain a political or social objective through the intimidation of a large audience beyond that of immediate victims" from this assertion, the scholars think that violence is an emblem of terrorism, to the extent that some terrorist groups do engage in grisly violent behaviour to create extensive tension or revolt. Subsequently, Newman (2006) argued that while defining terrorism, it is important to consider it from the visible effects of terrorism on societies to the unexpressed motivations for committing acts of terror. The above assertions of scholars suggest that a reasonable definition of terrorism must encompass the effect of terrorism on the people affected, its implications on human society, and the major causes that ignite terrorist groups to inflict attacks on the people that result in large destruction.

The Concept of Boko Haram

Stephanie and Adebayo (2018; p.76), conceived Boko Haram "as an Islamic sect that believes politics in northern Nigeria has been seized by a group of corrupt and false Muslims". It wants to wage a war against them and the Federal Republic of Nigeria largely, to create a "pure" Islamic state run by Sharia law. Transparency International (2019; p.19) noted that "since August 2011, Boko Haram has planted bombs almost weekly in public or churches in Nigeria's northeast region". The report further stated that "the group has also broadened its targets to include setting fire to schools. In March 2012, some twelve public schools in Maiduguri were burned down during the night, and as many as 10,000 pupils were forced out of education" (Transparency International, 2019; p.19). Sodipo (2019; p.106) stated that "the tactics employed by security agencies against Boko Haram have been consistently brutal and counterproductive. Their reliance on extrajudicial execution as a tactic in "dealing" with any problem in Nigeria not only created Boko Haram as it is famous today but also endured it and gave it fuel to swell". He went further to posit that "the group will continue to attack softer targets in the northeast rather than international targets inside or outside Nigeria" (Sodipo, 2019; p.106).

Results and Discussion of Findings

The menace of Boko Haram has grave impact on socio-economic development in the northeast region and indeed in Nigeria. For instance, Agriculture remains the life wire of any society. Frequent attacks orchestrated by Boko Haram affect negatively agricultural activities in the northeast region. Boko Haram attacks have made many farmers relocate to other places where there is peace in other to save their lives, causing them to leave their farmlands behind as it is not mobile. According to Lawal (2012; p.56), "Agriculture is not limited to crop production alone. Farmers in the northeast region are also involved in animal husbandry and they are engaged in business even before the colonial era". FAO (2018; p.8) reported that "nomadic cattle rearers who have been taking their cattle out for grazing have abandoned their business, as the environment is no longer safe for them". The report further noted that

'the lives of those that are still involved in the business are also at stake because an attack of Boko Haram can occur at any moment. This has led to decreases in milk production, meat production and by extension an increase in the price of the cattle" (FAO, 2018; p.9). Poultry farmers also do not find their business lucrative anymore, as the people purchasing the goods have been displaced.

The incessant attacks by the deadly sect have increased the level of poverty in the northeast region owing to the inability of farmers to go to the farm as agriculture is the chief source of livelihood of the people in the region. Data obtained from the National Bureau of Statistics(NBS, 2023; p.6) revealed the level of poverty among the six geo-political zones in Nigeria; "north central (42.7 percent), northeast (71.86 percent), northwest (64.84 percent), south East (42.44 percent), south-south (21.28 percent), and southwest (12.12 percent)".The report further describes the northeast region "as characterized by low human capital, and poor access to key services. It further noted that in the last three decades, economic activity and household incomes have been decreasing due to the devastating impact of Boko Haram"(NBS, 2022; p.6). The northeast ranked lowest on the poverty index owing to over a decade of insurgency experience by the people of the region which has crippled the economic livelihood of the people in the region. Below is a table that depicts the various incidences of Boko Haram attacks in the northeast.

Table one: Data on the violent attacks by Boko Haram in the Northeast from 2009-2022

S/N	DATE OF ATTACK	STATE	LOCATION OF ATTACK	IMPACT
1.	July 27, 2009	Yobe	Attack on Potiskum, Yobe State divisional headquarters	4 people killed
2.	March 13, 2009	Adamawa	Mubi town in Mubi North	11 people killed
4.	Dec. 24, 2010	Yobe	A bomb attack, in Damaturu, YobeState	8 people killed
5.	Jan. 21, 2011	Borno	Attack on Borno State Governorship Candidate of All Nigerian People Party (ANPP), Alhaji Modu Gubio	7 people killed
6.	March 30, 2012	Yobe	The bomb planted by Boko Haram in Damaturu, Yobe exploded and injured a police officer	1 injured
7.	July 12, 2012	Borno	Boko Haram threw an explosive device on a moving military vehicle in Maiduguri	5 people killed
8.	Feb. 4, 2012	Yobe	Attacks on Geri dam	7 people killed
9.	Oct. 3, 2013	Borno	Boko Haram attack Baga market in Maiduguri	3 people killed
10.	Jan. 15, 2013	Yobe	Attacks by Boko Haram in Damaturu, Yobe State	150 people killed
11.	July 10, 2014	Borno	Explosion in Maiduguri	5 people killed
12.	Nov. 12, 2014	Bauchi	Bomb explosion in police station Misau	7 people killed
13	April 14, 2014	Borno	Boko Haram attacked Chibok	Kidnapping of schoolchildren
14.	Dec. 10, 2014	Bauchi	Bombing of Mubi	37 people killed
15.	March 14, 2015	Yobe	Multiple attacks in churches in Damboa	12 people were injured injure
16.	Sept. 12, 2015	Borno	bombing of the viewing centre in Maiduguri	45 were killed, and several people were injured.
17.	Oct. 14, 2015	Yobe	Bombing of Damaturu Central Mosque	Several people injured
18.	Jan. 8, 2015	Borno	Bombing of Miami market	45 people were killed and several injured.
19.	Jan. 18, 2017	Yobe	Attack on bus station in Potiskum, Yobe State	4 killed many injured.
20	March 15, 2020	Yobe	Abduction of government college school girls	Several injured
21	May 20, 2020	Zamfara	Boko Haram attacked three communities in Isafe, LGA of Zamfara state	12 people were killed

Source: Erezi (2020)

The table revealed incidences of Boko Haram attacks and their debilitating effects on people in the region. As revealed in the table, on March 15, 2020, Boko Haram abducted government college school girls, in Yobe state and several students were kidnapped and injured. Also, on Jan. 8, 2015, Boko Haram bombed Mammy market, Borno state, and 45 people were killed and several injured. On July 10, 2014, Boko Haram detonated an explosive device in Maiduguri, Borno state, and 5 people were killed. With regards to diseases, the World Health Organization reported that "the humanitarian crisis in Nigeria's

north-east region (Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe) remains protracted, with an estimated eight million people at risk of displacement, impoverishment and threats of violence" (WHO, 2016; p.12). This made the body recommend a three-level grading teleconference of the World Health Organization. The decision to maintain Grade 3 Protracted Emergency was reached, following the presentation of the situation analysis and risk assessment of the region at the 10th Joint Operations Review (JOR) in Abuja (05-06 July 2021) with participation from the three levels of the Organization (WHO, 2016).

Hunger, poverty, and disease are the cardinal features of human security according to United Nations Development Programme. According to the United Nations Development Programme (1994; p.10), "human security could be defined as protection from hidden and hurtful disruption in the daily activities, at homes, offices or communities. That is, security is the state of being safe and secure from danger, it could also be protection from chronic threats such as hunger, diseases, and repression". Security is commonly associated with the alleviation of threats to the survival of individuals or groups. Thus, security can be equated with freedom from present and future danger, harm, or anxiety (UNDP, 1994).

Aside from detonation of explosive devices, kidnapping is another tactic employed by the deadly group which has further constrained socio-economic activities in the region. Several incidents of kidnapping have been recorded in the northeast region, especially in the education sector. Many students, university lecturers, school proprietors, and principals have been kidnapped at one point or the other. The greatest among them were the kidnap of the Chibok girls in 2014 and the abduction of Government College School Girls in Yobe State in 2020. These incidences and many more force many schools in the northeast to shut down. For instance, data obtained from UNICEF revealed that between 2013-2014, many schools in Yobe, Borno, and some parts of Adamawa were shut down owing to kidnapping (UNICEF, 2015). Also, data from the same source revealed that between 2019-2020, the surge in kidnappings in Borno and Yobe led to the closure of public and private schools in those affected States (UNICEF, 2015). This perhaps accounted for the low ranking of the northeast in the area of education by UNESCO.

From the discussion, the study observed that Boko Haram is the major threat to the socio-economic development in the northeast region. Meaningful development cannot thrive in an atmosphere of insecurity. Socio-economic activities in the northeast region of Nigeria have been crippled due to attacks arising from Boko Haram insurgents. Findings also revealed that there is a huge capital flight from Nigeria's economy especially in the northeast region of Nigeria (Foreign Direct Investment) due to incessant attacks emanating from the activities of Boko Haram. Most business outfits that are supposed to contribute to the growth of the region's (northeast) economy have either moved out of the country or relocated to another safe region where their activities will not be truncated. For instance, between 2013-2014, it was reported by World Bank that several banks such as First Bank, Union Bank and Eco Bank relocated massively from Maiduguri, Damaturu, and Yola (World Bank, 2017).

Conclusion

The security situation in the northeast region of Nigeria orchestrated by the activities of Boko Haram is impacting negatively on the socio-economic activities of not only the northeast region but also that of the entire Nigerian state. This has manifested in the closure of several businesses that had earlier contributed to the economy of the region (northeast) and indeed the entire country. Most businesses and firms had either relocated to another safe region where there is no challenge of insecurity or had moved out of the country. This is the reality because socio-economic development cannot thrive in an atmosphere of insecurity. The situation is not limited to private businesses alone as it also affects other social sectors such as the education sector. Most schools had been shut down due to the activities of this deadly

sect (Boko Haram insurgents) thereby forcing students and pupils to sit at home**.** Also, millions of people have been displaced from their homes owing to violent attacks by the deadly insurgents.

This however, prompted the Nigerian government to respond as it quickly restructured its security institutional framework with the creation of the Joint Security Task Force: comprising the Police, Army, and State Security Service (SSS) to enhance inter-agency collaboration. This was followed by the establishment of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) in 2015 as a combined formation comprising units mostly military from Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Nigeria with the mandate to bring to an end the activities of Boko Haram insurgents. Though several gains have been recorded, especially regarding the fight against the Boko Haram sect, more needs to be done to completely get rid of the activities of the BH in the region in particular and the nation at large.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Nigeria security agencies coordinating the war against Boko Haram should live- up to their responsibilities particularly in the area of intelligence gathering to enable them to bring to an end the activities of the deadly Islamist sect in the northeast. When there is no synergy among the various security agencies, it can compromise the war against terrorism in Nigeria.
2. The Nigerian government should increase the annual budget for arms procurement to pave the way for more funds to acquire more sophisticated weapons to help end the crisis in the northeast. Part of the problem why the Islamist sect has not been defeated is that most of the weapons used by the Nigerian army are substandard compared to the ones wielded by the terrorists.
3. A special intervention agency should be established by the Nigerian government to help reintegrate those who have lost their economic livelihood as a result of the devastating attacks from Boko Haram, to enable them to return to normal life
4. The Nigerian government should collaborate more with other neighbouring countries (Cameroon, Chad and Niger etc) affected by Boko Haram to help flush out the terrorist group to create an enabling environment for investment.

References

Achumba, O. S. (2013). Security Challenges in Nigeria and the implications for business activities and sustainable development. *Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development,* 2(4), 44-.58

Amara T. C & Amaechi (2010). *Manual of research methodology and theses writing, revised edition*. Ker Experts Books

Babbie, K. (2007). *Qualitative data analysis: an introduction*. Sage publications.

Eminue, O. & Dickson, M. (2012). Boko Haram and Nigeria's National Security Challenges, 2009-2012: Some Preliminary Observations. *African Journal of Culture, Philosophy and Society: Aworom Annang,* 1(2): 21-41.

Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) (2020). *Towards food security multidimensional* index – Retrieved from fao.org 12 December, 2023

Ghauri, G. (2005). *Research methods in business: a practical guide, 3rd edition*. Pearson publication.

Human Rights Watch(2020)

Lawal, W. A. (2011). An analysis of government spending on the agricultural sector and its contribution to GDP in Nigeria. *International Journal of Business and Social Science,* 3(9), 54-.62

Morganthau, H. (1978). *Politics among nations.* Englewood publication.

National Bureau of Statistics (2023). *Fiscal report on Nigeria's economic performance.*

Ndahi, M. (2017). *Nigeria, Lake Chad region porous borders pose security threats, live.* Ipmann press.

Nwagboso, C.I. (2012). *Security Challenges and Economy of the Nigerian Stat*e. American International Journal of Contemporary Research, 2(6), 244-.258

Searcey, D. (2016). Nigeria Vexed by Boko Haram's Use of Women as Suicide Bombers. *The New York Times*.

Sodipo, M. (2019). *Mitigating radicalism in northern Nigeria. Africa Security Brief.* Centre for Strategic Studies 1(3), 23-.45

Stephanie, Busari, and Adebayo Bukola. (2018). *Hundreds of schoolgirls flee suspected Boko Haram attackers in Nigeria.* CNN https://edition.cnn.com/2018/02/20/africa/hundreds- schoolgirls-fleeboko-haram-attackers/index.html (accessed on 19 December, 2023).

TI (2019). *Transparency International report*. Available at: https://www.transparency.org/country/NGA accessed on 14 December, 2023.

Timothy, D. (1993). *The globalization of world politics.*New York press

United Nations Development Programme (1994). *Human Development Report 1994.* Oxford University Press.

Walker, R.B. (1993). *International relations as political theory*. Cambridge University Press.

World Bank (2017). *Agriculture, value added (% of GDP).*

World Health Organization (2020). *Report on health challenges in the BAY States.*