



Boko Haram and Security Management in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The issue of Boko Haram as a terror group has posed a great Challenge to the security management in Nigeria. The activities of the Boko Haram terrorist group have implications for the development of the Nigerian Economy. This study has shown empirically that terrorism and insecurity impacts negatively on economic development in Nigeria. It has made government to divert resources meant for development purposes to security votes. It has virtually affected the economic, social, religious and the political well-being of the nation which requires a systemic change to the approach or method of the security management in order to put a stop or reduce the activities of the group to a minimum level. The Boko Haram activities have persisted and have become worse in terms of inflating the security situation in the country and has also continue to remain a major threat to the unity and integration of Nigeria. This clearly is an indication of the lethal nature of the group in Borno State. This perhaps account for why the second finding in the study revealed the need to scale up efforts in fighting the Boko Haram insurgents in the state and in Nigeria in general. While Nigeria grapples with its changing image as one of the hotspots of terrorism, there is the domestic dimension of dealing with security especially in the Northern part of the country. Terrorism as unleashed by Boko Haram and expanded by the migratory Herdsmen who have now provided a different dimension to the domestic terror situation in the country, Nigeria is clearly faced with serious insecurity challenges. This paper contends that his situation calls for a significant overhaul of the security strategy in the country if Nigeria is to defeat Boko Haram.

I. INTRODUCTION

One of the major determinants of development (social, economic, political, and cultural) in any society is security. Without long-

lasting peace and security, there cannot be development. The activities of government will either be slow or stagnant in improving the quality of lives of citizens. Resources which ought to have been concentrated towards development would be used in managing security challenges like the Boko Haram challenge.

By security management in the context of this study, it implies the totality of all mechanism and strategies that have been put in place by the Nigerian government to fight and manage the insecurity situation in the country especially arising from Boko Haram. The UNDP'S (1994:22) Human Development Report observes that "...while various conceptions have emerged as a result of these efforts, all agree that the primary goal behind the concept of human security is the need to restore the security of the people. Major disagreements have emerged, however, regarding these kinds of situation that should be considered threats to people. The debate encompasses "narrow" and "broad" definitions concerns violent threats to individuals, placing the "freedom from fear", aspect at the core of consideration. Broad definitions include not only violent threats but also hunger, disease, and natural disaster (freedom from want), since these have caused more deaths than war and violent conflict, particularly during the last decade."

In Nigeria, it is the primary responsibility of the security forces to protect the state from external aggression and internal insurrection, while still maintaining law and order. The Nigerian security forces include the Nigerian Army, Nigerian Air Force, the Nigerian Navy, The Nigerian Police, Civil Defense Corps and other security agencies. These agencies are constitutionally authorized to manage the security of the Nigerian state. In the case of the Boko Haram challenge, the Nigerian government has largely responded through the



deployment of these agencies to ensure security of life and properties in the troubled region of North-eastern Nigeria.

The government has attempted to resolve the Boko Haram challenge by setting up modern schools for out of school children of the north known as 'Almajiris'. It is believed that the Almajiris are the willing tools for causing violence in the north and it is as a result of lack of education and poverty. Given the advancement in Boko Haram attacks, particularly its increased use of homemade bombs, some US officials had suspected that the group was and still is receiving technical support and training from other extremist groups in the region. General Carter Ham the command and Director of National Intelligence and James Chapper have unambiguously stated that Boko Haram is allied with two other major African Militant Groups, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and Somalia's Al-Shabaab, both of which the US State department has designated as terrorist organizations.

However, much disagreement among experts remain about Boko Haram's ties to the other terrorist groups, unlike other armed group, Boko Haram's rhetoric is focused on Nigeria, not the United States. (Ayanlaya and Ukwenga 2011:95). Moreso, Boko Haram has evolved into a franchise that includes criminal groups claiming its identity. Revealingly, Nigeria's state security service issued a statement on November 2011, identifying members of four "Criminal syndicates that send threatening text messages in the name of Boko Haram. Southern Nigerians – not northern muslims – ran three of these four syndicates, including the one that led the US embassy and fire to other foreign mission to issue warnings that implies Abuja's high-and hotels. The security services also arrested a Christian southerner wearing northern Muslim garb as he allegedly set fire to a church in the Niger Delta. In Nigeria, religious terrorism is not always what it seems. None of this exonerates Boko Haram killing of innocents. But it does raise question about a rush to judge the Nigeria's complex reality. (Herskovits 201:105).

What is The Rationale for Boko Haram?

The judicial system and the law enforcement agencies in Nigeria serve the interests of the elite and of the state to the detriment of the poor masses. The judicial system allows and encourages human rights violations. The saying that "the judiciary is the last hope of a common man"

does not apply to Nigeria. When Boko Haram was formed in 2002, it was a non-violent religious movement, although the teachings of Yusuf were described as "extreme" (Ford, 2014). The sect's activities were not illegal because, Section 38 (1) of The 1999 Constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria explains that "Every person shall be entitled to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, including the right to change his belief and freedom (either alone or in conjunction with others, and in public or in private) to manifest and propagate his religion or belief in worship, teaching, practice and observance". By virtue of the above section, Muhammad Yusuf had a legal right to propagate his belief of Boko Haram i.e. Western Education is prohibited, and nowhere in the applicable laws is it an offence to denounce or discard western education (Ja'afar, 2009).

In addition, Muhammad Yusuf was teaching and interpreting the Koran according to his perception the "Haramuzation of Knowledge", but he was not killing or fighting anybody; it was peaceful. Boko Haram first manifested because basic human needs were violated. Yusuf Muhammed took advantage of the government failure to provide basic human needs for the people to establish Boko Haram. He built a mosque and a koranic school in Maiduguri. He provided succor and shelter for homeless kids while indoctrinating them into his own perception of Islam. He had access to these kids because their rights to basic needs were violated and, as such, they were vulnerable. It was the violation of personal security rights suffered to the followers of Yusuf and Yusuf himself that transformed the movement into a terrorist organization. "It has been said that most revolutions are not caused by revolutionaries in the first place, but by the stupidity and brutality of governments. Well, you had that to start with in the north all right."—Sean MacStiofain, quoted in English 2003, 134.

The founder and members of this religious movement were constantly harassed because the government perceived them as radicalizing Islam. In 2009, Yusuf Mohammed was arrested by the Nigerian police and killed without trial. According to Ibrahim (2009), "scholars expressed dismay and outcry regarding the recent extrajudicial execution of Boko Haram leader, Muhammad Yusuf, allegedly carried out by the Nigeria police Force". It is also important to note that Yusuf was not the only person who was extra judicially killed. Furthermore, on the personal security rights violation, according to Olamilekan (2015), reports are that Nigerian



security forces later stormed Mohammed Yusuf's house in Railways Quarters with a bulldozer, and they demolished the compound which housed the Koranic School and the space for the street kids he rescued. Items worth more than N160 million were reportedly destroyed in the compound. This mayhem unleashed on Yusuf's property by the Nigerian state caused dissatisfaction and compelled the family to seek legal action against the state, accusing the police of extra-judicially killing their patriarch. The court asked the Nigeria police to pay the sum of N100 million to the family. Since justice in Nigeria is not for the common man or ordinary citizen the money was never paid. Rather, the police went after the people who took the case to court and many of them were executed. To this day, Yusuf's family has not received justice. It was at this point of personal violation of rights that Abubakar Shekau, took over the mantle of the sect leadership and vowed to avenge the death of the founder of Boko Haram. The theory of human security accounts for the genesis and evolution of what is now known as a terrorist organization based in north eastern Nigeria 'Boko Haram'.

According to Marchal 2012, the killing of Mohammed Yusuf by the police (as well as hundreds of Boko Haram members) was a crucial factor in the current wave of assassinations and attacks carried out by Boko Haram against security personnel, and infrastructure, and the state at large. The deaths of these Boko Haram members made the group to disappear temporarily, and go underground in order to re-strategize and transform. According to Cook 2011 as cited by Uzodike 2012, the death of the sect leaders, the mass killings, and the arrest of many Boko Haram members made the group retreated for a while. They resurfaced with a new strength on 7 September 2010 to free 721 prisoners, including approximately 100 members of their group; as a follow up, Boko Haram then launched an attack on the police headquarters in Abuja in June 2011, killing at least two people. In addition, in August 2011, a series of attacks on police stations and banks by the sect's members killed at least sixteen people. In the first ten months of 2012, more than 900 people died in attacks perpetrated by the group – more than the numbers in 2010 and 2011 combined (Reuter 2011 as cited by Agbiboa 2013). Boko Haram members have targeted and regarded almost every other person and group outside their network as an enemy. The activities of this sect have made local, regional and global head lines. In 2013, the sect was listed as global terrorist organization by the United States (US Dept. of State, 2013). On 7 March 2015, Boko Haram announced the group's

pledged of allegiance to the Islamic State (ISIS), aligning itself with ISIS in the global Jihadist theatre (TRAC, 2015). Despite heightened security efforts, the group has managed to continue with its attacks. Since its inception, Boko Haram's primary areas of focus have been in the northern states of Yobe, Kano, Bauchi, Borno and Kaduna, although recent trends suggest that activities are moving southwards, with attacks being recorded (TRAC, 2015). The headquarters of the sect is in the northeastern parts of Nigeria and they have been operating there since its formation.

The Position of the Military and Police in Curbing Boko Haram Menace in Nigeria

In every state, there exists a sovereign body. In Nigeria, the federal government is the highest law making authority and by virtue there is no group that is greater in strength than the government. Therefore, the federal government has to stand its ground without any form of fear in order to combat the activities of the Boko Haram sect and to prevent any trace of future occurrence of such religious cum political sects. It is in a bid to curb the activities of the Boko Haram sect that we therefore specify or rather suggest the following options or approach to be adopted by the federal government. The former Chinese leader Mao Tse Tung defined military power as "Power which emanates from the barrel of the gun". The might is always right that is to say, he who wields the instrument of coercion is the political sovereign. This view or rather opinion is true to a large extent because even if it were to be little child or a situation of crisis, the adult being has no choice, than to adhere to the whims and caprices of the teenager.

Over the years, the most preferred option for combating or fighting such societal problems has been the armed confrontation popularly known as the military option or approach. To a great extent, this largely explains why president George Bush Jnr. immediately or rather instantly declared war on terrorism in response to terrorist attacks on the United States on that memorable black Tuesday of September 11, 2001. This meant that the United State adopted the military option to avenge the attack. Several other countries in the west have often employed this approach in solving their political instability. The British army can boast today of having achieved a truly impressive record in combating major terrorist outbreaks around the world. Specifically, its experience in countering terrorist placed it on the vantage position when in August 1969, the labor government of the day



decided to put the army into Northern Ireland to maintain public order (Callaghan, 1972).

In the same vein, the response of the Françoise regime to both Basque nationalism and the emergence of ETA were to utilize to the extreme the coercive apparatus of the state (Pollack and Hunter, 1988:130). Anti-terrorist Special Forces are often erected to demonstrate their preference to armed confrontation in other countries which have been encroached by terrorism.

Nigeria just like every government that tries to exhibit or show its capability to protect the lives and property of its citizens has to encourage its successive governments to adopt military confrontation in tackling terrorism through the establishment of Joint Task Force (JTF) and declaration of state of emergency. According to Vanguard Newspaper (June 17, 2011) the federal government has directed the immediate establishment of a special joint military Task Force specifically to tackle the Borno state as headquarters of the task force. The task force to be headed by major Generals of the Armed Corps could comprise the Nigerian Army, Nigerian Navy, Nigerian Air force, and Nigeria police force, Defense Intelligence Agency and the Department of State Security, D.S.S (NBF News 2012).

Already Vanguard gathered that about 200 operatives of the D.S.S arrived Maiduguri, 300 officers of the Nigeria Air Force, 300 officers of the Nigerian Navy and 500 soldiers of the Army with their force commander, are deployed for action. It was gathered that at the end of the day, Nigerian Army would have two battalions of soldiers in place, the Nigeria police will deploy 1,500 officers, and D.S.S would have 500 operatives, the Air Force 680 officers while the Nigeria Navy will have 750 officers deployed. Director, Army public relations Brigadier General Rafael Isa, told vanguard that there were plans to support operations there, but said he could not confirm if the troops had been deployed. It could be recalled that the Inspector General of police, made an operational visit to Maiduguri, the Borno state capital, where he received 10 Armored Personnel Carriers donated by the state government to the police to fight Boko Haram menace. The joint security Task force has commenced deployment to the conflict zone with its headquarters at Maiduguri, which is the centrally located capital of Borno state, and the force commander of the JSTF was a senior officer of the Armored Corps, Major General Jack

Okechukwu Nwaogbo. Maiduguri already plays host of the headquarters garrison of the 21 Armored Brigades, a formation that has earned for itself a reputation for toughness, which is expected to actively support the operations of the ad-hoc JSTF (Daily trust April 2, 2012).

The position of the military here cannot be over looked or neglected and its importance cannot be over emphasized. The position of the military is not just killing the perpetrators of these acts, but in making adequate efforts which will end the seeming chaotic situation in the country. Unfortunately, the Nigerian military is faced with charges of corruption in its operations in the north. There were a lot of incidents that happened while soldiers were fighting the group that exposed the weaknesses of Nigerian security for tackling the menace of the group. These incidents are; on 14 May 2014, some of the battlefield soldiers fighting the group in Maiduguri attempted a mutiny by firing off their commanding officer. The soldiers had complained that the insurgents outgun them as a result of more sophisticated weapons used by the sect members. This problem shows endemic corruption within the Nigerian security system, where billions of Naira was allocated to defense ministry for the fight against terrorism, but the outcome has not yielded any achievement.

In a related issue, a group of soldiers fighting the group in Maiduguri had refused to go to the battlefield until modern weapons are provided to them. The Nigerian Army officials are not ready to fight Boko Haram; a Nigerian soldier said, the soldiers fighting the insurgents has no sophisticated weapons and adequate arms and ammunitions which made it difficult to confront the insurgents (Thisday Newspaper, 2014). These military inadequacies in its operation have gradually slowed down military achievements in the fight against terrorism in Nigeria. Soldiers from Lagos, part of an expected 1,000 reinforcements sent to Adamawa state to fight Boko Haram Islamists, with 23rd Armored Brigade, arrived Yola May 20, 2013. The attack on Sambisa forest Reserve, one of the strongholds of the Islamic sect/militants, began on Thursday 24 May, 2013. Troops shelled the area with cannons, killing dozens of insurgents, though there was no independent confirmation of the casualties, the associated press reported. Director of Defense Information Brigadier-General Chris Olukolade confirmed that co-operated offenses against militant camps across all three states are ongoing, with several already taken over or destroy in northern and central Borno, the heart of the



insurrection. Nigeria's military offensive against Boko Haram strongholds has left many insurgents dead, and has incapacitated their formations in the North East, thereby improving the safety and security of the entire region.

Terrorism and the Changing Image of Nigeria

By far the most troubling if not devastating challenge of the 21st century, is the globalization of terror which has led to the death of millions of people globally without mentioning its adverse impact on the world economy. While terrorism is not a new phenomenon, its scope, dimensions and organized character has never been as problematic as it is today. Terrorism is considered one of the topical items in global socio-political agenda with transnational concerns focused on how to resolve the problem. The term terrorism has attracted a riot of definitions from different quarters with strong bias based on the ideology of the definer whether this is an individual or organization or state. This has meant that there is little consensus even among international agencies concerning the meaning of terrorism. Hence, several attempts have been made to define terrorism with little success in terms of a universally accepted definition. The ideological underpinning of the associated with the attempt at defining the concepts stems largely from the double-edged reality of the concept especially as it concerns the issue of legitimacy. This is because there is the confusion as to who defines the domain of legitimacy for tagging someone a terrorist since in reality, there is a thin line between good and evil and by extension, 'one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter'. This difficulty in first, defining legitimacy provides justification for the violent acts of both state and non-state actors in a bid to contrast one side's legitimate killing to another side's illegitimate killing and also blur the distinctions between acts of non-state terrorism and state terrorism (Hough 2018, p. 66; English 2019, p. 4).

Just for the sake of clarity, the term terrorism is derived from the Latin word 'terrere' meaning to frighten, terrify, deter, or scare away (English, 2009). Following this original meaning of the term, Enders and Sandler (2015), conceptualize terrorism as the premeditated use or threat of violence by individuals or sub-national groups in order to obtain a political or social objective through the intimidation of a large audience beyond that of their immediate victims. The implication of this definition, is that those who are considered terrorists

engage in attacks that transcend just their victim(s) alone, but also comes with a trademark of fear and panic for non victims also and the society general. Without necessarily going down the lines of contention on what constitute a comprehensive definition or not, for our purpose here, we choose to align ourselves with the definition by the UN Security Council Resolution 1566, which sees 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 (Emeh, 2012). In a nutshell, terrorism carries the social seal of being some kind of political violence since in almost all known cases, terror actions tend to be largely antithetical to the state even when their activities carry ideological, religious, ethnic or racial undertone.

Although terrorism is not a new issue as already mentioned above, its contemporary dimension associated with mostly with the Salafist Jihadist Ideology of the Sunni Islam sect which gained prominence under the activities of groups such as Al-Qaeda, Hezbollah, Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant or Syria (ISIL-S), Boko Haram and Al-shabaab among others, have continued to increase global social hypertension. Today, almost all parts of the world is affected by one form of terror attack or the other in a pandemic style that leaves millions of dead without mentioning the volume of property destruction associated with it. The Global Terror Index (2020) reporting data from the Global Terror Database (GTD) revealed that over the period of 1970 to 2017, a total of 170, 000 terror attacks have been recorded leaving millions of people dead with properties worth billions of dollars (USD) lost. Although, the whole world seems to be having a bite from the dinner table of terrorism, Africa is by far the hardest hit and this has been attributed to the fact that the continent is noted for its position at the bottom of the global development pyramid with a cocktail of human development problems that serves as enablers to terrorism (Oche, 2013).

While for most part of the deadly history of the notorious terror activities of the Islamic sects mentioned above, Nigeria remained largely in the shadows, its status as one of the leading hotspots of terrorism became very pronounced with the



activities of Boko Haram in the Northern part of the country. Despite several narratives concerning the origin of Boko Haram with Taiwo and Olugbode tracing its origin to 1995, when Abubakar Lawan established Ahlulsunna wal'jama'ah hijra sect at the University of Maiduguri, there is the media narrative which believes that the group began in 2002, with the emergence of Mohamed Yusuf as its leader, with scholars laying claim to 2009, when its terror department officially launched a reprisal attack on the Police Force in Borno State as the origin of the terrorist wing of the group (Adekoya & Rasak, 2016). This dates clearly reflects some kind of contradiction especially with regard to key events. At best, these timelines can be merged in a simple liner trajectory covering events of formation, consolidation and action with the reprisal attack of 2009 acknowledge as a watershed in the terror landscape of Nigeria.

The origin of Boko Haram and the conditions that made Northern Nigeria susceptible to this brand of Islam, which is violently opposed to the modern state and its institutions, and seeks to establish an Islamic state governed by Sharia is instructive. The name of the group comes from the Hausa word "Boko" meaning, Animist, western or otherwise non Islamic education and the Arabic word "Haram" figuratively meaning sin. In other words, the term simply means western education is a sin. Hence, by opposing western education, the sect also stands against the culture and whole civilization of the west. This is further strengthened by the desire to spread Islamic ideas in a jihadist fashion as a way of exterminating the culture of the west which is seen as evil with its voracious appetite for dominating other cultures that it comes in contact with. In this vein, Boko Haram runs with the ideology that Islamic society must be entrenched by destroying modern state institutions (Fakunle, 2016)

Whatever the reason that necessitated the emergence and terror trademark of the Boko Haram, it is clear that its activities have redefined the image of Nigeria in the global community. While the domestic activities of the group affect international investments as well as citizens of the global community, Nigeria's initial place in the international terror books came when a 23 years old Nigerian Islamic student, Umar Farouk AbdulMutallab, almost detonated a bomb in a US Northwest Flight 253 heading to Detroit, Michigan from Amsterdam, on December 25th, 2009. Since then, the country's international image became largely suspect with further validation when the

United Nations (UN) Embassy office in Abuja was attached by Boko Haram terrorists. These events along with many others redefined the foreign policy landscape for both Nigeria and the western world and this is perhaps why Adekoya and Rasak (2016), share the opinion that more than ever before in the political history and external relations in this country, Nigeria's foreign policy experts, observers, security personnel and average citizens are faced with a serious challenge. Though made in Nigeria, its international link to Al-Qaeda and the ISIL has increasingly internationalized its activities making it one of the most dreaded terror groups in the world. Nigeria is now considered a fertile ground for Al-Qaeda recruitment and consequently an emerging exporter of terrorism (Fagade, 2020). By extension, this has affected the image of Nigeria as the country continues to climb to the top of the global terror ladder in the most unenviable way. Today, Nigeria is ranked the third most terrorist impacted society of the world only behind Iraq and Afghanistan (Global Terror Index, 2020).

While Nigeria grapples with its changing image as one of the hotspots of terrorism, there is the domestic dimension of dealing with security especially in the Northern part of the country. Terrorism as unleashed by Boko Haram and expanded by the migratory Herdsmen who have now provided a different dimension to the domestic terror situation in the country, Nigeria is clearly faced with serious insecurity challenges. This has affected international economic activities in Nigeria as Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) continues to drop significantly. No investor would want to do business in a terrorist-prone zone where the watchword is insecurity. This is in addition to the adverse impact it has on domestic growth and development as more funds are now channelled towards the fight against terrorism in country. This situation calls for a significant overhaul of the security strategy in the country if Nigeria is to defeat Boko Haram and put an end to its current rating a one of the most impacted terror society in the world.

II. CONCLUSION

The issue of Boko Haram as a terror group has posed a great Challenge to the security management in Nigeria. The activities of the Boko Haram terrorist group have implications for the development of the Nigerian Economy. This study has shown empirically that terrorism and insecurity impacts negatively on economic development in Nigeria. It has made government to divert resources meant for development purposes to security votes. It



has virtually affected the economic, social, religious and the political well-being of the nation which requires a systemic change to the approach or method of the security management in order to put a stop or reduce the activities of the group to a minimum level.

It also affected the level of government activities in all sectors and its successful management requires the input and commitment of all stakeholders in the security sector with a view of been ahead of the activities of this terror group because its presence in Nigeria is great danger. Based on the finding of this research, there were encouraging achievements in crime prevention on one side and identified underlying challenges are obstructing the practices of the program in Borno State on the other hand.

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