The Boko Haram Insurgency and the Festering Human Insecurity in North-East Nigeria

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Abstract

The study establishes a nexus between Boko Haram insurgency and human insecurity in the north-east of Nigeria. Anchoring on the concept of human security, the study adopt qualitative method of data collection and analysis which relied heavily on extant literature from journal articles, official documents, workshop and seminar papers, newspapers, magazines and internet sources. The study argues that though human insecurity is a major driver of the Boko Haram insurgency. The lethal and destructive activities of its actors have heightened and widened the spate of human insecurity amid debilitating food insecurity, physical harm, internal displacements and hemorrhaging refugee syndrome. The study concludes that military combat alone cannot tame the Boko Haram insurgency and thus recommends that, the government should adopt credible measures to address the human security challenges as an effective and functional counter-insurgency strategy.

Keywords: Counter-insurgency, insurgency, insecurity, violence, state, Boko Haram

Introduction

Since the end of the Cold War, statist nationalism which used to be the hub of citizen-state relationship has given way to intra-state nationalism. In the wake of this altered relationship between the state and its citizens, the hitherto predominant classical inter-state war is in drastic decline with disturbing implications. Thus, other more internal threats beyond the full control of states have emerged. These include ethnic conflicts, religious militancy and terrorism-like insecurity whose common cause, to a large extent, is situated in the failure of the state actors to fulfil their human security obligations to citizens. In effect terrorism appears to be a major means of non-state actors to register human insecurity and displeasure. It has now attained an epidemic level and has become increasingly lethal in nature (Ekpe, 2012; Kegley, 2006).

It is in this post-Cold War wave of non-state actors' use of terrorist acts committed to attract the attention of the state andregister their displeasure or disillusionment that Boko Haram insurgency could be located. Prior to the end of the Cold War, the states that were in existence had a stronger central authority which was able to keep tenuously intergroup unity through the instrumentality of rewards and sanctions (Taras and Gangaly, in Obikaeze and Iheka, 2016). Thus, the sense of nationalism inter-state or cross-border conflicts seemed to blur the internal discontents during the Cold War. In the case of Nigeria, the elite conspiracy succeeded in breeding identity politics with which it used to negotiate power among them while swaying the masses away from issues of their human security concerns. The post-Cold War era coincided with the advent of revolution and proliferation of computer high-tech information technology as well as small arms and light weapons (SALWs) across boundaries, leveraging non-state actors with the capacity to challenge the state authorities. Thus, issues of human rights violations which were hitherto unchallenged began to be challenged and such resistance to state authorities led to more repressive actions, violent insurgency and counter-insurgency conflicts within the state (Aboagye, 2007). "In this scenario, the extraordinary growth in information technology and advancement in communication through social networking sites can easily and rapidly polarize the landscape and recruit dissatisfied adolescents to terrorist militancy" (Ogata, 2020).

In order to do a proper analysis of the connection between Boko Haram and human insecurity, this paper shall address the following themes: The first one, the concept of human security, examines the nuanced issue of human security, particularly the debate between realists and idealists on the strength and weaknesses of each paradigm on human security. The second one critically traces the evolution of human security linking its origin to some empirical studies which metamorphosed into the concept of human security in 1994 by the United Nations Development Programme. The third theme addresses the evolution and motivating factors behind the Boko Haram insurgency. On this note, the paper traces the origin of Boko Haram to a religious group which later turned violent when it fell out with the Borno State Government and its leader and consequently hounded out. It further examines how the sect's motives ran contrary to that of the state and how the uncompromising stance of both resulted in the spate of insurgency and counter-insurgency in the north-east region. The last theme looks into the impact of the conflict in deepening the human security crisis in the region. This is expressed with some examples and statistics after which a conclusion is drawn and recommendations are made.

The concept of human security

Human security arose from the shared consensus among its advocates that there is a need to shift issues of security from a state-centred to a people-centred approach. More so, concern with the security of the state borders should include concern for the security of the people living within the state borders (Tadjbakhsh, 2005). Burgesss and Grans (2012), corroborating Tadjbakhsh, drew the connection between human security and international security and conceived that the main kernel of human security demands that security threats be viewed equally from the perspective of the people with the notion that security threats confronting humans also affect international security. This is contained in the "human-centric" vision whereby the state no longer serves as the

only reference point of security discourse as conceived by the realists, but should also focus on the individuals that make up the state in the liberal perspective (Kerr, 2007; UNDP, 1994). The human security approach does not entail the displacement of the Westphalian state model but it is a way of filling the gap in the state-centric approach based on the notion that when human rights and development are enhanced and strengthened, the flashpoints of security are curtailed. The Commission on Human Security (2003) describes the approach as putting in place a system that "complements state security, enhances human rights and strengthens human development, … seeks to protect people against a broad range of threats and empowers them to act on their own behalf". Thus, security, as conceived by UNDP (1994), assumes that human security consists of two complementary elements: "freedom from fear" of threats from war, conflict and state-sponsored violence such as physical, sexual or psychological abuse, persecution or death, on one hand, and "freedom from want", which includes freedom from preventable diseases, economic hardship, poverty, unemployment, and hunger.

Experts and academics such as Paris (2001, 2004); Duffield and Waddell (2004; 2006); Krause (2004); and Chandler (2008), among others, have debated the usefulness of defining human security in terms of freedom from fear and want which are fundamental to human security. These scholars have brought the concept of human security under scrutiny and heavy criticism. Prominent among these criticisms are those related to its conceptual ambiguity and absence of clear-cut definition. Paris (2001), for example, argued that human security can be equated with other vague concepts such as sustainable development. In other words, "everyone is for it, but few people have a clear idea of what it means". On a similar note, Newman (2004) sees it as being "normatively attractive but analytically weak". For Khong (2004), it amounts to prioritization of everything and by implication, we end up prioritizing nothing. Lending his own voice, Krause (2004) says that human security defined in its present broad form is "a loose synonym for bad things that can happen". Sharing the sentiments of the issue of a broad definition of human security, Buzan (2004) and Owen (2010) look at its consequence as posing a practical challenge to policymakers who are charged with the responsibility of allocating resources that are already scarce.

Other brands of criticism such as Black (2006), Suhrke (1999), Booth (2007), Conteh-Morgan (2005) and Duffield and Waddell (2006) centre on the states' use of human security initiative to further their own ends in terms of servicing their hegemonic interests in their own perspectives rather than being genuinely committed to emancipating the vulnerable and the poor. The last strand of critics of human security, which includes McCormack (2008) and Duffield and Waddell (2004), argues for the idea of human security rather than play an emancipatory role from the real challenge of human development. Instead, it leads to the classification of states into the weak and strong, the haves and the have nots, the developed and undeveloped so as to disempower the weak through such humanitarian interventions.

In spite of the perceived conceptual ambiguity which has been a major criticism against human security, proponents of the human security approach rather argue that the greatest strength of the approach lay in its inclusive, broad and holistic features (Johns, 2014). Proponents of human security such as King and Murray (2001) argue that the initiation of the concept plays both a

unifying and an organizing role that create an opportunity for broad coalitions to engage in specific security concerns which were constrained in the era of narrow state-centric conception of security. Lending credence to the above, Jolly and Ray (2006) and Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy (2007) contend that the post-Cold War security threats vary both within and across state boundaries; a flexible and broad definition of human security remains a viable option. Besides, Ewan (2007) and Uvin (2004) argue that it facilitates cooperation amongst international agencies in the intertwined spheres of security, development and human rights. Proponents support their argument with some progress made in coalition efforts such as the campaign to ban landmines in the 1990s that led to the enunciation of the Ottawa Treaty on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their destruction as championed by Canada; the establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in 2002, etc. (Franceschet, 2006; Shinoda, 2004; Robinson, 2001).

In the concept of human security, therefore, the link between human security and containment of the emerging domestic conflicts cannot be overemphasized. As expressed by Macfarlane and Khong (2006), "the link between human insecurity and international insecurity has been invigorated" in the sense that the failure to achieve the conditions that allow persons to live their lives free from fear and want can contribute, according to Vietti and Scribner (2013), to the insecurity of persons and by extension to conflicts that in turn generate insecurity as in the case of Boko Haram insurgency in north-eastern Nigeria where there is lack of human security, which encapsulates economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security and political security (UNDP, 2004). The failure to provide security from the human angle and level can disrupt development while the failure to establish mechanisms for development can exacerbate insecurity and lead to increased deprivation.

To this end, the broad scope of security encompasses two main ideas. The first one is the notion of "safety" that goes beyond the concept of mere physical security in the traditional sense of it, and the second one is the idea that people's livelihoods should be guaranteed through "social security "against sudden disruptions (UNDP, 2004). Human security is thus the absence of fears of physical, sexual or psychological abuse, violence, persecution, or death and a socio-political atmosphere free of deprivation of gainful employment, food and health.

Evolution of the concept of human security

The concept of human security, as reported by scholars such as Nyberg-Sorenson, Hear & Engberg-Pedersen (2002), Chandler (2007), Stern & Ojendal (2010) and Human Security Centre (2005), emerged when the issue of security was widened based on empirical research carried out during the post-Cold War period. Not long after the Cold War, in the mid-1990s to be precise, the feature of conflict changed from the hitherto predominantly inter-state conflict to an intra-state conflict with the latter becoming more frequent than the former (Intrastate Conflict by the Numbers, 2013). In fact, the very foundation for respect for sovereignty was shaken during the Cold War; there was so much concentration on state-centric (national) security that eclipsed a comprehensive understanding of the nuanced issue of security. Nevertheless, the idea of linking

security to development, beyond the traditional notion of military-oriented security, was muted in 1977 when the then President of the World Bank and former U.S. Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara, proposed that an international commission comprising distinguished individuals from poor and rich nations address the social and economic disparities that existed between developed and developing nations. The idea metamorphosed into the establishment of the Independent Commission on International Development Issues, chaired by the former German Chancellor Willy Brandt (Scully, 1982).

The Commission came up with a report that the bulk of the world's insecurity was triggered by the wide disparity between the rich and poor countries characterized by injustice and starvation. It, therefore, recommended that "if military expenditure can be controlled and some of the savings related to development can be boosted, the world's security can be increased and the mass of mankind currently excluded from a decent life can have a brighter future" (Independent Commission on International Development Issues, 1980). The next commission referred to as the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues, chaired by the Swedish politician Olof Palme, advocated for "common security". The Commission issued a final report that the world can only attain enduring security through cooperation on the platform of equity, justice, reciprocity, dignity, freedom from hunger, poverty, destitution and when they are gainfully employed (Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues, 1982).

These studies became a watershed to the idea of human security in the sense that issues of security were gradually broadened to include non-military dimensions of threats such as inequality, poverty, deprivation, which when tackled could stem insecurity. Even though reports by these commissions touched on the idea of human security, they only laid the foundation of concept of human security. As observed by Timothy (2004), it was the "Human Development Report: New Dimensions of Human Security" (1994) commissioned by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) that expressly linked security and human development as human security.

Although these Commissions promoted themes consistent with the idea of "human security," it was not until the 1994 Human Development Report: New Dimensions of Human Security by the UNDP that this approach became explicit. Building on conceptual developments related to security that cropped up in the 1980s, the report emphasized that social and economic insecurity threatened international stability (Timothy 2004). It opened with the following statement:

For too long, nations have sought arms to protect their security. For most people today, a feeling of insecurity arises more from worries about daily life than from the dread of a cataclysmic world event …. Most people instinctively understand what security means. It means safety from the constant threats of hunger, disease, crime and repression. It also means protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of our daily life (UNDP, 1994).

The 1994 UNDP report assumes that human security consists of two complementary elements: "freedom from fear" (threats from war, conflict and state-sponsored violence) and "freedom from want" (preventable diseases, economic hardship, poverty, developmental concerns) (UNDP, 1994). While experts and academics have debated the usefulness of defining human security in

these terms, freedom from fear and want are interlinked and fundamental to human security. The failure to achieve the conditions that allow persons to live a life free from fear and want can contribute to forced migration. The report identifies seven categories of threats to human security: economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political (UNDP, 1994). From such research, it was discovered that states themselves were perpetrators of insecurities given their failure to fulfil their obligations towards their subjects as well as threatening their existence (Tadjbakhsh, 2005).

During the Cold War, security was merely restrictive and state-centric defined in military terms. Accordingly, security was purposed to defend the territorial integrity and political sovereignty of the state. In this vein, both scholars and statesmen were preoccupied with the building of military capabilities of their states to ward off potential and real threats facing them. However, in the post-Cold War era, most of the interstate wars have given way to civil and ethnic wars which have been ravaging populations. The inability of the post-Cold War state and governance structures to secure its citizens became manifest with the tragic fratricidal wars in Somalia, Rwanda, and former Yugoslavia. The major cause of these intrastate conflicts was the failure of the government to perform its statutory functions manifested in poor level of governance, disruption of state institutional capacity to perform its functions, which in effect endangered the security of peoples' lives (Human Security Centre, 2005).

These new wars, according to studies by Jolly and Ray (2006), Debiel and Werthes (2006) and Kaldor (1999; 2007), are products of globalization and the emergence of intransigent nationalism has destroyed infrastructure deliberately targeting civilian non-combatants, thereby worsening and spreading poverty conditions while promoting the drive for criminal activities. Thus, "globalization, which not only creates wealth and opportunities but also widens inequality, has added further complications to security management" (Ogata, 2020). The challenges thrown up by globalization emerged to create a new security context that overwhelmed the conventional institutions of state manifesting as communication revolution, environmental concerns, poverty, etc. (UN, 2004). Given these growing concerns and challenges, the UN Secretary-General pointed out in his Millennium Report that a new understanding of the concept of security has become necessary, hence the need to place the "emancipation and development" of the individual at the centre of the security agenda" (UN, 2004).

In concrete terms, the concern expressed by the UN Secretary-General was captured by the United Nations Development Report (HDR). The Report observed that at the end of the Cold War, it was discovered that people should be at the centre of development. Hence, the central theme of the HDR underscores the fact that while the gross national product (GNP) and gross domestic product (GDP) were necessary to meet all essential human objectives, however, it was equally necessary to study how this national growth translates or otherwise fails to translate into human development in various states, particularly the developing states. Therefore, any development process which fails to capture the choices people have to lead lives that they value, cannot be said to accommodate human security. By so doing, the HDR embraces the intersection between security and development, which is translated into the concept of human security (Muguruza, 2007). It was the need to buttress this intersection between the Boko Haram insurgency and

human security that ignited the motivation for this study as discussed in the subsequent sections.

The concept of insurgency

Given the complexities associated with insurgency as a terminology, scholars have given diverse definitions portraying what it is and what it is not. The United States Government has described insurgency as "a violent political struggle for control of people and resources" in pursuit of "some common objectives to undermine the legitimacy of the government and bolster their own standing with the population" (Guide to the Analysis of Insurgency, 2012). Johnson (2001) describes insurgency as 'complex emergencies', where parallel, lower-level processes executed by separate but interrelated unit actors generate higher-level trends.' Lammers (2017) breaks down the description of insurgency into four elements: (a) a group of actors (b) uses violence to (c) contest the sovereignty of the established regime, (d) with the aim of political change. Drew (1988) defines insurgency as "nothing more than an armed revolution against the established political order"

Other scholars see insurgency from the point of an organized armed group whose intention is to overthrow, seize or take over power through subversive means (Kitson, 1973; Joint Pub 1-02; FM 100-20/AFP, cited in Afzala, 1991). The diverse definitions paraded by scholars led Afzala (1991) to say that it is difficult to cover the issue of insurgency by mere definitions. He, therefore, considers insurgency as a rebellion by a dissident group that drew the support of a proportion of the population and has control over some portion of a state, engaging in real and potential acts of civil disobedience and sabotage with the aim of eliciting political, economic or social concessions.

Moore (2007) contends that the term insurgency continues to be used interchangeably, and inexactly, with warfare such as irregular warfare, unconventional warfare, revolutionary warfare and even terrorism. He further posits that "the interchangeability of terms is understandable, given the diverse nature and adaptability of those who wage insurgency and the overlapping traits of these types of conflict" (Moore, 2007). Thus, the diverse ways insurgents carry out their activities have made many conceive it as probably terrorism, subversion, guerrilla war, conventional war, revolution, coup d'état, etc. (Liolio, 2014; Curtas; 2006). However, in spite of these conceptions, Hassan (2014) has closely associated insurgency with terrorism. According to him,

… terrorism has become the main commonly adopted strategy by the insurgents. Terrorism in modern usage is associated with a certain kind of violent act carried out by individuals and groups rather than by the states and with events that take place in peacetime rather than as part of conventional war. As a strategy of insurgency, terrorism involves the adoption of some methods to achieve its goals. These include bombing, guerrilla warfare, kidnapping and abduction (Hassan, 2014).

This connotes that insurgency often uses terrorism to pursue the goals of the political movement. In this vein, O'Neil (1990) captures the transcendental expression of insurgency which makes it to be closely and often times interchangeably used with terrorism. Thus, by O'Neil's (1990) estimation, insurgency is a struggle between a non-ruling group and ruling authorities in which the non-ruling group consciously uses political resources and violence to destroy, reformulate,

or sustain the basis of one or more aspects of politics. The main objective of insurgency is to challenge the existing government for control and it requires the active support of some segment of the population. Insurgencies do not happen if the population either supports the government or sees nothing to gain from fighting. The above explains why in most studies like the present one, Boko Haram is referred to as an insurgent group employing terrorist tactics to achieve its objectives, considering how it evolved from a mere religious adherent to a political tool and then to a full-scale insurgent group. Therefore, in the context of this study, Boko Haram is referred to as an insurgent group of non-state actors confronting state actors.

Evolution and motivations of the Boko Haram insurgency

The term Boko Haram in Arabic is translated to mean "Western education is sinful". It is propagated by the "jama 'Atul Alhul Sunnah Lidda 'watiwal Jihad" sect that believes it is committed to the Hadith of Prophet Muhammed's teachings and Islamic jihad. Some analysts even contend that Boko Haram is a remote outgrowth of the Maitatsine riots of the 1980s and the religious/ethnic tensions that followed in the late 1990s (Johnson, 2011). The founder of Boko Haram (Mohammad Yusuf) was a radical Islamic cleric trained as a Salafist (a school of thought often associated with jihad) and was strongly influenced by Ibn Taymiyyah, a 14th century legal scholar, who preached Islamic fundamentalism (Johnson, 2011). There is a strong indication that Yusuf set up a mosque and an Islamic school in Maiduguri in 2002 (which attracted students from northern Nigeria and the neighbouring countries of Chad, Niger and Cameroon) to realize his aims of Islamizing Nigeria (Farouk, 2012). Prior to 2009, the Boko Haram group engaged the government in violent clashes, though its leader often criticized the northern Nigerian Muslims for participating in what he saw as an illegitimate, non-Islamic state and preached a doctrine of withdrawal. The group gained many followers especially when its leaders continued to speak against police brutality and political corruption with harsh government treatment (Johnson, 2011). The sect's uprising reached climax in July 2009 when a widespread police and military suppression was reported due mainly to Boko Haram's refusal to follow a motor-bike helmet law in the Bauchi, Borno, Yobe and Kano states of Nigeria. That year, Mohammed Yusuf and several hundred adherents were killed during violent confrontations with security forces. The brutal and extrajudicial circumstances of those killings set the sect on a vicious violent collision with state authorities. Boko Haram then embarked on a spate of vengeful attacks, targeting security forces, public infrastructure and other civilian targets (Badejogbin, 2013).

The motivating factors for the Boko Haram insurgency are intertwined in a chain of occurrences manifested in admixture of ethno-religious and socio-economic elements. The sect believes that the enthronement of Sharia Code will address the ravaging poverty, economic deprivation, inequality and marginalization that existed in the north-east and the human insecurity gap in the region. The sect is motivated by the need to use Sharia law to remedy the "grievances resulting from decades of poor governance, elite delinquency, and extreme economic inequality" (Asfura-Heim and McQuaid, 2015, p.v) prevalent in the north-east.

Ethno-religious motivation of the Boko Haram insurgency is a major factor in the insurgent activities in the north-east. Members of the inner circle of the Boko Haram adherents claim that they are motivated by falsehood among the Muslim political elites in northern Nigeria who chose to enrich themselves at the expense of adhering to the tenets of Islam. They accused the Muslim elites of compromising their Islamic faith given their level of cooperation with the Christian-dominated secular governance system (Olojo, 2013). Thus, the Boko Haram actors attributed the corruption and decline of the Muslim north in the Nigerian polity to the adoption of the Western system of politics and education (Asfura-Heim and McQuaid, 2015) and thus believe that the scourge of poverty and inequality which this Western influence has brought on the Muslim society would be stamped out by the full implementation of the Sharia law (Sodipo, 2013).

It is also believed that the sect is motivated by interethnic rivalry (Asfura-Heim and McQuaid, 2015). Historically, the minority Kanuri ethnic group from which most Boko Haram insurgents come has always had differences with the Hausa-Fulani majority in terms of holding sway, the political and religious leadership. The Kanuri converted to Islam before the Hausa-Fulani and the former view themselves as the rightful bastion of Islam in Nigeria (The Soufan group InelBrief, 2013). Being a territory that was under the Borno-Kanuri Empire (1380-1893), it has to a large extent been outside the influence of the Hausa-Fulani Sokoto Caliphate (1804-1903), which explains why the Shehu of Borno, not the Sultan of Sokoto, has remained the traditional ruler of Borno (Zenn, 2012). The Kanuri see themselves as a marginalized group by the Hausa-Fulani under the Sokoto Caliphate. These shared sentiments serve as a motivating factor for the Boko Haram insurgency, which the sect equally uses to recruit its membership (Asfura-Heim and McQuaid, 2015).

There are two probable explanations on why Boko Haram has used religion to advance its cause: first, religion offers an outlet for expressing discontent with the political order, and second, organizing resistance with religion as a rallying point confers advantages. It appeals to a ready audience of people with shared affinities, who have, or can be easily swayed into endorsing a common vision of what the social order ought to be, and are displeased enough to want immediate radical changes to the extant order. Besides, religion offers or reinforces identity, gives new choices, and provides affirmation and some meaning with which the terrorist can connect with the hope of charting a new social order, even if it means employing violence (Adenrele, 2012).

Based on the above motivations, the late leader of Boko Haram, Mohammed Yusuf, worked with the Governors to introduce and implement Sharia in several northern states in the 2000s (Asfura-Heim and McQuaid, 2015, p.27). It was when the sect saw that there was no improvement in the human security conditions of the people that it fell out with the government and sought violent means to introduce a real Islamic state. The classic case of alliance between Yusuf and Senator Ali Modu Sheriff is a typical example. It could be recalled that the political actors adopted Shari'a in twelve states, in what Mazrui (2012) described as "a cultural assertion by northern elites at the state level to compensate for their political decline at the federal level". Within this period, Yusuf rose to greater prominence when he reportedly formed an alliance with Ali Modu Sheriff, the three-time Governor and Senator and wealthy businessman from a prominent Maiduguri family.

The connection allegedly also generated resources for Yusuf and his followers. Even though Sheriff had denied any political link with Mohamed Yusuf, the late leader of the Boko Haram sect, a link could still be established because when the sect turned into insurgents, it started killing Borno State All Nigerian People's Party politicians, whom they claim reneged on promises. "After the politicians had created the monster", a former State Security Service officer said, "they lost control of it." Victims included Madu Fannami Gubio, a gubernatorial candidate and Modu Sheriff's cousin, shot with five others outside his family house in Maiduguri in January 2011, and Awana Ngala, ANPP's national vice chairman, shot in his home with a friend the following month — and just over a month before general elections (World Watch Monitor, 2020).

It was further reported by Luntumbue (2021) that the Boko Haram sect was initially supported financially by businessmen and politicians in north-eastern Nigeria who were anxious to win local elections. Mohammed Yusuf was engaged by the then Governor Sheriff to draw supporters for him during the election in return for financial support and the promise of working towards the adoption of Sharia law. The Governor reneged on the promise and conflict brewed, which metamorphosed into civil disobedience and consequent suppression by the government and radicalization of the Boko Haram sect (Friedman, 2014).

The emergence of the Boko Haram sect came at a time of serious socio-political unrest and economic decline in the country. As a result, Boko Haram drew a large following among poor unemployed youths in northern Nigeria and soon led them into violent confrontations with the state. Its success with recruiting unemployed youths has informed claims that economic deprivations lie at the root of the Boko Haram crisis (Badejogbin, 2013). Adenrele (2012), citing Kester (2012) and IFAD (2007), portrays the poverty rate in Nigeria as 158 out of 177 poor economies on the Human Development Index (HDI, 2008), despite its rich and abundant human and natural resources. He further narrated that in spite of Nigeria's plenteous resources and oil wealth, poverty is widespread to the extent that the country is ranked one of the 20 poorest countries in the world. Unsurprisingly, over 70% of the population is classified as poor, with 35% living in absolute poverty and the majority of them could be traced to north-east Nigeria, the theatre of the Boko Haram insurgency.

Findings of a study carried out by Adelaja, Labo and Penar (2018) show the strongest opinion centred on the notion that terrorists are typically unemployed people easily recruited by sponsors. Survey results also show that terrorists are motivated by poverty and economic problems coupled with other factors such as dislike for government, adherence to extreme political ideology and religious beliefs, manipulations by politicians as a ploy to stay in power and absence of democracy. Thus, in northern Nigeria, there is a common perception that violent extremism is entrenched in the socio-economic problems of the country. Further, there have been deep-seated social and economic disparities which lend credence to perceptions of marginalization and exclusion thereby making the region ripe for radicalization. For instance, the poverty rate among the population in the region was 69% in 2004 whereas the national average was 60.9% in 2010. Besides, economic productivity during the year was below the national average (UNDP, 2018). In Maiduguri, most residents live on less than two dollars a day. In this scenario, the impoverished masses of the

north seem to harbour a "quiet rage over their falling living standards, their lack of clean water, decent schools, health clinics and jobs" (Maier 2000). The predominant economic activity in the north-east is subsistence agriculture which had dwindled consistently over the past decades due to a lack of government support and investment, poor management and lack of access to new technologies and input. A combination of the above deprivations led to high levels of sustained unemployment (UNDP, 2018).

Over the years, there has been a limited state presence and governance capacity, which has contributed to low rates of economic growth and development. This led to popular discontent and loss of legitimacy amongst the populace which eventually served as a huge motivation for insurgency. There are chains of other socio-economic deprivations that bred discontents. These include: low human capital development due to the limited provision of education, health and water/sanitation services. This is reflected in the pre-conflict rate of literacy (28%), access to safe drinking water (under 50%), and access to health services (between 40 and 50%), which are all below the national average. Low levels of investment in economic infrastructure (market and transport infrastructure) have constrained economic productivity due to insufficient and deteriorated infrastructures (UNDP, 2018).

In specific terms, the Nigerian National Population Commission reports show that northern states have very low levels of literacy. In Yobe and Bauchi States, the illiteracy rate is 58% while in Borno State, 72% of children between the ages of 6 and 16 have never attended schools (Vanguard, 2011). These challenges of deprivations have produced a teeming number of vulnerable people breeding an army of disillusioned and impoverished individuals who have become easy targets and tools of religious fundamentalists as expressed by Boko Haram leaders. Furthermore, there are tens of thousands of unemployed youth and armed gangs such as the Almajirai and Yan Tauri in northern Nigeria that made the north-east states a hot spot for terrorist activities (Uzodike and Maiangwa, 2012). For instance, in many parts of the region, it is estimated that youth unemployment is as high as about 80% (Faul, cited in Uzodike and Maiangwa, 2012).

Ayegba's (2015) contention that poverty and unemployment were the driving forces behind the Boko Haram insurgency in northern Nigeria typifies the fact that a high rate of youth unemployment has resulted in poverty and insecurity in the country. David et al. (cited in Ayegba, 2015) corroborated Ayegba's contention and argued that "socio-economic indices such as poverty, unemployment, inequality, economic underdevelopment, low education, inter alia, underlie the emergence and persistence of Boko Haram's terrorism". These assertions suggest that the pervasive poverty and unemployment in northern Nigeria created the conditions especially for young people to be manipulated and recruited by Boko Haram. Although, some studies have found no link between poverty and terrorism, however, the vicious cycle of poverty and unemployment makes it easy for people to become prey to Boko Haram recruitment even as they "see Boko Haram as a job" (Botha, Ewi, Salifu and Abdile, 2017). Furthermore, the results of the study carried out by Evans and Kelikume (2019) corroborates the fact that poverty is a significant cause of Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria. In other words, there is a strong association between poverty and increased terrorism. The study identified three factors that mutually reinforce poverty in

Nigeria as positively related to terrorism: inequality, unemployment and corruption. According to the report, inequality is positively related to terrorism, with the degree of responsiveness to inequality being elastic and statistically significant. Thus, inequality is consistent with higher levels of terrorism. Also, unemployment is positively related to terrorism. This is against the backdrop that the higher the level of unemployment in a country, the higher the level of terrorism. Lastly, corruption also has significant positive effects on terrorism, meaning, the higher the levels of corruption, the higher the level of terrorism.

Counter-insurgency strategy of the Nigerian state

As mentioned earlier, since the death of Mohammed Yusuf in 2009, armed confrontations between Boko Haram and the state authorities escalated into a wide range of violent campaigns against the state and the civilian population. The sect employed the tactics of destruction targeting community leaders, churches, mosques, markets and other public facilities; the use of terrorist attacks (suicide bombings); massacres and the abduction of hundreds of women and children. From 2014 onwards, the group escalated its attacks and gained considerable territory under its control (both in Nigeria and in neighbouring countries) in an attempt to establish a 'caliphate' (UNDP, 2018). The sect made effective use of information and communication technology which it deployed to disseminate information on how to carry out attacks, mobilize funds, post pictures of their attacks, warn the government, post pictures of those they held hostage, etc. In fact, the internet helped them a great deal to achieve their targets while beating the security operatives to their games (Akpan, 2015).

The response of the Nigerian government was a robust military operation which, in 2015, resulted in a progressive 'roll-back' of Boko Haram forces from most occupied territories in the Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states. However, while the military made a significant incursion into Boko Haram's stronghold, the gain came with a cost that resulted in significant collateral damage to the civilian population and adding to the existing waves of displacement (UNDP, 2018). Until 2013 when Boko Haram's havoc began to inflict a heavy toll on government facilities, military personnel and the populace, the Nigerian government treated the group as a mere embarrassment and nuisance, hence largely deploying public relations campaign against the sect. However, following a series of 'high-profile' bombings and kidnappings, coupled with international pressure, the government was forced to start dealing with the group in a more coordinated manner. It focused on kinetic military operations to kill and capture the fighters though in haphazard attempts at negotiations (Asfura-Heim and McQuaid, 2015). A follow up to the military operations was the declaration of a state of emergency in Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe states which were then flooded by soldiers. The government created a Joint Task Force (JTF) made up of approximately 8,000 soldiers, police, and other security personnel, with heavy support of fighter jets and helicopter gunships. Other measures included mounting roadblocks and checkpoints, cordon and search operations, raids on suspected hideouts, retaliation on suspected Boko Haram sympathizers and their property, mass arrests, and the co-option of local, non-statutory, self-defence militias (Asfura-Heim and McQuaid, 2015).

As part of the strategy, the Nigerian government started tracking communication lines in order to intercept insurgents' messages. Furthermore, the Nigerian military decided to shut down the GSM mobile communications in the three north-eastern states on 23 May 2013 to limit Boko Haram's communication capabilities, restricting their ability to re-group and re-enforce as well as limiting their ability to detonate improvised explosive devises. In doing this, the State security forces deployed an alternative mobile communication system using Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA) on Global Open Trunking Architecture (GoTA) from the Chinese manufacturer ZTE which was distributed among the police officers in north-eastern Nigeria before the mobile phone shutdown. This shutdown was done with the belief that mobile phones were essential for Boko Haram's activities (Jacob and Akpan, 2015).

Though these military campaigns were able to scale down the activities of Boko Haram, however, the group continued some pockets of surprise attacks and kidnappings. Prominent among these was the kidnapping of 276 female students from the town of Chibok in April 2014 (Brechenmacher, 2019).

Again in early 2015, the Nigerian government made frantic efforts to carry out a renewed offensive against the insurgents on the eve of Nigeria's election season. With the assemblage of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNTJF) 'a loose coalition' of troops from Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Nigeria, most of the previously held territories were seized back from Boko Haram. However, the counter-insurgency operations sparked off new waves of displacement as civilians were pushed from the countryside into military-controlled camps in urban centres. The military onslaught against Boko Haram was reinvigorated with the election of President Buhari. Since then, there has been an unprecedented decline of Boko Haram. The insurgents have been pushed back into more remote rural areas as they have reverted to their earlier guerilla tactics of attacks and suicide bombings (Brechenmacher, 2019). Besides, while the Nigerian security forces have struggled to consolidate control over rural areas and protect urban centres from sporadic attacks, the number of fatalities associated with the group has declined and the number of attacks has fluctuated although patterns of violence have remained consistent to a large extent since 2014 (Matfess, 2019).

At present, the group has splintered into two factions or cells. While the larger faction, the Islamic State of West Africa Province (ISWAP), is led by Abu Musab al-Barnawi, the relatively smaller one which is a group of militants and still bears the original name, Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad (JAS), is headed by Abubakar Shekau. ISWAP seems to have spread its tentacles in northern Borno, and is even recapturing a number of towns near Lake Chad previously controlled by the Nigerian military (Hassan, 2018). Some of the north-eastern states such as Adamawa, Yobe, and southern Borno have been inundated with greater security and the return of displaced populations is going on while in other parts of Borno State there still are ongoing heavy military operations and humanitarian crisis (Brechenmacher, 2019). Having briefly examined the counter-insurgency activities of the government and security agencies, our next point of interest is the impact on human security.

The impact of Boko Haram on human security in the north-east

There were a number of human security breaches that resulted from the Boko Haram insurgency, and to some extent, from the counter-insurgency exercise by the Nigerian authorities. These include breaches on the psychological and physical safety of the people, food security, and socio-economic well-being of the people. These infractions have deepened the level of human insecurity that existed in the region even before the Boko Haram insurgency. It is important to note that the impact varied across the six states that constitute the north-east geopolitical zone. For instance, the conflict has directly impacted the states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe (the BAY states), and most predominantly the rural areas as there is government control in most major urban centres. The other three states of Bauchi, Gombe and Taraba have been impacted to a lesser degree, especially by pressure from evictees competing for the already weak means of livelihood and service provision (UNDP, 2018). Tables 1 and 2 below show the levels of imposed impact by state and population, as well as estimates of damages to social services.

Table 1: Breakdown of the population affected by the conflict in North-east Nigeria (2016).

States	Total People in Need	Host Community	Internally Displaced	Returnees	Sex		Age Group		
					F(%)	M(%)	Children(%)	Adults(%)	Elderly(%)
Borno	4.4	2.6	1.4	1,4	53	47	64	31	5
Bauchi	2.8	2.7	0.06		51	49	59	35	6
Adamawa	2.5	1.7	0.2	0.6	52	48	54	42	4
Yobe	1.6	1.3	0.1	0.2	51	49	59	35	6
Gombe	1.4	1.4	0.03		51	49	59	35	6
Taraba	1.3	1.3	0.04		50	50	54	39	7
Total	14.0	11.0	1.8	1.2	51	49	58	37	5

Source: United Nations, 2017 Humanitarian Needs Overview Nigeria, November 2016

Table 2: Estimated damages to social services by state (in US$Millions)

Sectors	Adamawa	Bornu	Yobe	Gombe	Taraba	Bauchi	Total
Education	58	143.8	47.3	2.1	10.2	11.6	273
Health/Nutrition	21.1	59	32.9	0.4	6.5	27.8	147.7
Water/Sanitation	7.3	35	3.6				45.9
Totals	86.4	237.8	83.8	2.5	16.7	39.4	466.6

Source: Federal Government of Nigeria, North-East Nigeria recovery and Peacebuilding Assessment, 2015.

A quick examination of the above tables shows the variation of impacts by states and by population. All these damages have contributed to deepening the human security challenges faced in the north-east. Having looked at the table in general, let us examine the impacts thematically.

Human safety

The insurgency unleashed direct violence against the people and resulted in over 20,000 deaths in the north-east (UNDP, 2018). This number kept on increasing as reported by Matfess (2019), Boko Haram carried out about 2,800 attacks between 2014 and 2019 with more than 31,000 fatalities. According to the United Nations Development Programme 2018 National Human Development Report, attacks by Boko Haram had claimed 32,570 lives in Adamawa, Yobe and Borno States in a period of eight years (Tribune, 2018).

As reported by Reliefweb (2020), between January and the end of November 2020, there was a total of 142 Boko Haram insurgencies in parts of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states in which more than 1,606 people were killed, an average of 13 deaths per violent attack. The Boko Haram insurgency has left many living in fear in their communities, while some had to relocate for fear of attack, torture or arrest. For example, between 2009 and 2015, Amnesty International reported about 20,000 arbitrary arrests and widespread cases of extrajudicial killings committed by the military authorities. These human rights abuses further weakened communities that had already suffered Boko Haram's violence (Brechenmacher, 2019). The Boko Haram insurgents also unleash various kinds of human rights abuses on their victims. The Office of the Human Rights Council of the United Nations has catalogued a number of such abuses unleashed on the people of the BAY states (Borno, Adamawa and Yobe). One of the abuses is abduction. While boys were mainly abducted for indoctrination and recruitment into its fighting force, women and girls were abducted for sexual exploitation, forced marriages, labour and religious conversions to Islam. There were also practices of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatments such as depriving captives of food and water, cutting off hands or stoning to death. Other forms of abuses included violence against children and their use in hostilities. Some of the boys were forced to attack their own families to demonstrate their loyalty to Boko Haram while girls were forced to marry, clean, cook, carry equipment and weapons, etc. (Sieff, 2016; Olukoya, 2019).

Food and nutrition

The UNDP (2018) reported the different levels of acute food insecurity in the north-east. In the report, it was stated that Adamawa and Damaturu (part of Yobe State) were experiencing stressed food situation while Yobe State (except in Damaturu) was in a situation of food crisis. Parts of Borno state were in an emergency situation.

The conflict has adversely affected the economic mainstay and productivity in the North-east region, which is largely based on farming, pastoralism and fishing. These agro-livestock activities account for 80% of livelihoods. The main impacts of the conflict include inaccessibility and loss of productive assets and inputs due to displacement and destruction as farmers are even afraid to

go to their farms (Amalu, 2015). This has led to increased prices of agricultural inputs and food (with the latter increasing at an average of 7% annually in all six affected states). Agricultural production has declined sharply between 2010 and 2015 (Osagie, 2013, p. 24). In Borno, for instance, production of sorghum declined by 82%, rice by 67% and millet by 55%. Surprisingly, the state that used to produce about a quarter of Nigeria's wheat could no longer do that resulting in widespread loss of livelihoods and employment (International Crisis Group, 2017).

According to the Recovery and Peace Building Assessment (RPBA) undertaken in 2014-2015, the total losses in the agricultural sector (farmlands, buildings, equipment, livestock and equipment) due to the conflict amounted to US$ 3.7 billion. The majority of losses have occurred in Borno State (64%), followed by Yobe (23%) and Adamawa (12%). In these worst-affected states, 5.1 million people are currently food insecure with Integrated Food Security (IPC) Phases 3 to 5 (with an estimated 100,000 people at famine levels of food insecurity), representing a 50% increase since March 2016 (UNDP, 2018).

By September 2017, food insecurity has reached extreme levels in parts of the BAY states, with an estimated 5.1 million people in IPC Phases 3 to 5, representing an increase of 50% in levels of extreme food insecurity since March 2016. Of this population, an estimated 100,000 people are in IPC phase 5 (famine). Direct causes of food insecurity include a combination of factors including physical displacement and loss of access to productive assets and employment, declining purchasing power due to decreased income and high food prices, and low availability of food due to disruptions in production, markets and transportation. As pointed earlier, prior to the Boko Haram insurgency, livelihoods in north-east Nigeria were already fragile due to dependence on subsistence-level agriculture, low average income levels, and scarcity of other revenue-generating sources. The destruction or loss of access to productive assets has decreased livelihoods and employment for many, resulting in a decline in labour force participation for that sector from 43% in 2009 to 27% in 2012-2013 (UNDP, 2018).

Health insecurity

Boko Haram insurgency has claimed a lot of lives and inflicted injuries on thousands of people through bomb blasts. Increased injuries, in turn, have led to the overcrowding of health care centres and hospitals with so much pressure on machines causing them to breakdown as well as the health staff working overtime. Besides, the sect has destroyed health care centres and facilities needed for the proper health of citizens. Health workers themselves who also are targets have fled from offices. Affected people across the north-east are having increasing difficulty in accessing health care services. According to The UN-Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA, 2014), Boko Haram insurgents have attacked numerous health facilities and health workers, meaning that in large areas of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa, the health system is barely functioning.

Besides physical injuries, malnutrition-related diseases also affected the health security of the people in the north-east due to insurgency. Thus, malnutrition and disease have increased significantly in

the BAY states due to worsening food insecurity and destruction and inaccessibility of essential health and water/sanitation services. Acute food insecurity and lack of access to healthcare have led to emergency levels of malnutrition with 1.2 million children under 5 and pregnant and lactating women currently acutely malnourished. Lack of access to health care facilities has left 12 million people highly susceptible to diseases, with 6.9 million in the BAY states requiring urgent assistance. The risk of diseases is compounded by the widespread destruction of WASH facilities, which has left an estimated 3.6 million people without access to safe water, 1.9 million people without basic sanitation, and 6.2 million people without proper hygiene. Conditions in areas of high IDP concentration, including camps and informal settlements, are particularly troubling due to the unavailability of adequate health and WASH services. This situation has led to increased incidence of diseases, including outbreaks of polio and measles over the past year (UNDP, 2018). In the absence of access to health care, an estimated 6.9 million people have become vulnerable to some disease.

Displacements

The number of houses destroyed by the Boko Haram insurgency cannot be quantified. The destruction has left millions displaced. According to the International Organization on Migration (2015), over 2.1 million have been displaced in Nigeria by the Boko Haram insurgency. These internally displaced persons have migrated and now live in host communities and are in dire need of appropriate shelter and, in the long run, resettlement. The HNO (2014) noted that most internally displaced people are camped in schools, churches and makeshift accommodations which are mostly unfinished buildings or derelict houses. This massive displacement of persons has multiplier effects on the security of the victims. "Many of the communal and makeshift shelters are overcrowded and unsuitable in terms of water and sanitation facilities, cooking and privacy, especially for women" (HNO, 2014). The human security of the individual is threatened when such situations occur. Cases of theft and rape are often experienced; transmission of communicable diseases is high and most often women are worst-affected in such situations (Amalu, 2015). At least 600,000 people were living in congested camps and informal settlements in 2019 (Bilak, 2019).

As of October 2018, over 2 million individuals remained displaced, a number that has once again increased over the past year. Ongoing military operations around Lake Chad continued to force more people to leave their homes and drove others into secondary displacement, particularly due to the Nigerian military's ongoing practice of clearing rural villages by pushing civilians into IDP camps in nearby towns. Some refugees that had fled to Cameroon have been forced to return to Nigeria further adding to the complexity of the situation (Brechenmacher, 2019). The number of IDPs has continued to increase among the states of Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe states. The figure recorded was 2,088,124 or 429,442 households, signifying an increase of 41,520 persons (2%) against the 2,046,604 or 420,072 households recorded in February of the same year (UN OCHA, 2020). These displaced people are suffering from shelter insecurity in the sense that there are lots of hazards in the camp. They have lost their livelihoods and human dignity. A study carried out by Azad, Crawford and Heidi (2018) reported that one in every four households affected by the Boko Haram insurgency has experienced displacement and loss of

economic opportunity. About 16% of affected households sent their children away or removed them from school while 12% faced additional costs for expenses such as medical treatment or replacement of stolen or damaged items.

Other socio-economic means of livelihood

Table 2 presented earlier shows the rates of damage to the social sector as a result of the Boko Haram insurgency in the north-east. As shown in the table, the destruction in the education sector amounted to $58 million in Adamawa, $143.8 million in Borno, $2.1 million in Gombe, $10.2 million in Taraba and $11.6 million in Bauchi. The loss in the area of water and sanitation was $7.3 million for Adamawa, $35 million for Borno and $3.6 million for Yobe. Boko Haram insurgency has greatly affected the educational sector as the sect had targeted schools and colleges with students and teachers injured, killed or abducted and facilities destroyed. According to the HNO (2014), "conflict and insecurity have had a direct and compounding negative impact on children's access to education, availability of educational spaces and materials and ability of teachers." Schools in the target states were closed (Awortu, 2015). The height of insecurity of persons in the education sector can be expressed by the abduction of over 200 female students at the Government Girls' Secondary School in Chibok (Hassan, 2014), an incident that discouraged parents from enrolling their children and wards in schools and made them withdraw those already in schools. This has propped up great concern because the north-east has already been tagged as an educationally backward zone, thus the insurgent activities have worsened the case.

Other impacts include disruption of markets due to physical destruction of facilities. About 50% of markets are non-operational or intermittently functioning. Prices for agricultural inputs and food have increased with the latter increasing at an average of 7% annually in all six affected states. In addition to direct losses in productive assets, productivity has also been significantly impaired due to damages to the road network, which is estimated at $526 million. Essential social services such as education and water/sanitation have been disrupted as the insurgents deliberately target and destroy infrastructures, facilities and equipment. In the education sector, 2.9 million children have been denied access to school due to damages and destruction to school infrastructure. Further, an estimated 75% of all water and sanitation infrastructures have been destroyed, compounding the pre-2009 shortages where only less than half of the population had access to safe drinking water. Displaced people bear much of the brunt of these realities, given the competition for access to limited services in areas of displacement, and their inadequate availability in IDP camps (UNDP, 2018).

As a result of the insurgency, the pre-2009 ailing macroeconomic conditions have significantly deteriorated. World Bank estimates indicate that economic losses incurred between 2011 and 2015 due to the conflict in the six affected states amounted to 1.66 trillion naira (approximately $8.3 billion). Particularly, the loss in the three most affected BAY states was up to the tune of 75% (UNDP, 2018) and that was mainly associated with the decline in agricultural production. The loss culminated in a sharp increase in unemployment and poverty, decreased purchasing power

due to price inflation, and progressive inability of the state to fund emergency programmes and service delivery as and when due (UNDP, 2018).

Conclusion

The crux of this study was to reveal that Boko Haram insurgency has a negative impact on the human security of the Nigerian citizens and particularly in the affected BAY states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe. The paper has shown that a number of factors such as the ICT revolution assisted in the springing up of the Boko Haram insurgency. The insurgency, however, has had serious negative impacts on human security and other areas as it has claimed lots of lives, aggravated food and nutrition insecurity, damaged health and education sectors and caused general fear and anxiety all of which need urgent solution.

Boko Haram insurgency is a threat to human security in Nigeria. Since human security denials and deprivation are the major drivers of Boko Haram militancy, the government should embark on a massive human security plan and funding to urgently address unemployment and poverty through genuine empowerment programmes, aggressive drive for school enrolments, provision of infrastructural facilities and good and accountable governance.

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