

TERRORISM AND INSURGENCY IN NORTHERN PART OF NIGERIA AND ITS EFFECT ON THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Recent terrorism and insurgency act especially in the middle-east countries like the Palestine and the Afghanistan have infected African countries like Nigeria and brought domestic terrorism into the front burner. This study investigates the effects of terrorism and insurgency activities in the northern part of Nigeria and how it has greatly affected its economic development: defining, addressing and understanding its impacts on the economy. This study provides a descriptive exploration of the evolution of bokoharam insurgency as one of the domestic terror group in Nigeria. The study reveals that there will be no significant difference on the series of attacks carried out by BH insurgents and vandalization of basic infrastructures of operators in the north east of Nigeria. Findings from the study indicate that the atrocities of Boko Haram have severe implications on the economy and social lives of the people of the northeast where the activities of the sect are concentrated. The paper recommends for the insurgency to come to an end, the government needs to provide employment to the teeming youths, dialogue with the sect if the need arises and equip the military with sophisticated gadgets in order to confront Boko Haram foot soldiers.

Keywords: Domestic Terrorism, Boko Haram, Insurgency, Poverty, Economic Development.

Introduction

The current BokoHaram insurgency in the North-east geopolitical zone of Nigeria that originally took the form of sectarian religious violence has escalated into terrorist activities with international linkages and affiliations making it a relatively difficult nut for the Nigerian government to crack (Gilbert, 2014). Consequently, Nigeria has not known peace for about four years now. The emergence of the fundamentalist Islamic sect, has led to the flight for safety and security of most Nigerians residing in the North East, especially Christians. Since the commencement of the terrorist operations of the sect, they have adopted several methods to unleash terror on the people. And most states of Northern Nigeria have experienced their dastardly activities, but the worst hit has been Adamawa, Bauchi, Bornu, FCT (Abuja), Kaduna, Kano, Plateau and Yobe. In spite of the holistic approach that was initially adopted in curbing terrorism in Nigeria, the frequency of occurrence of the incidence of terrorism and insurgency becomes higher, therefore the call for international collaboration against all acts of terrorism and insurgency. Friedlander (1937) observed that international collaboration is needed to curb the menace of terrorism at the global level. This is because every terrorist act has serious implications to the international community. For example, the terrorist attack on World Trade Center on 11 September 2001 led to the killing of nearly 3,000 citizens including British, German, French, Italian and Indians. The assassination of King Alexander of

Yugoslavia and French foreign minister Louis Barthou at Marseilles in 1934 led to France proposing the establishment of an international criminal court to try terrorist criminals. It is against this backdrop that this paper tends to investigate the various strategies employed to combat terrorism and insurgency in Nigeria.

Since the start of the crisis, availability of healthcare services have substantially reduced; reasons include unavailability of healthcare workers, poor living conditions with millions of people hosted in camps, increased malnutrition, and destruction of healthcare facilities by bokoharam. As of February 2017, one-third of the 749 health facilities in Borno state have been completely destroyed and another one-third damaged by the insurgency (WHO, 2017). The on-going insurgency has led to insecurity of civilians due to continuous killing of individuals, destruction of properties, and control of cities by bokoharam thus resulting largely in migration of people from the region, which exposes them to exploitation, trafficking, sexual abuse and forced labour. More than 1.5 million people have fled their homes due to the violence (UNICEF, 2015). The education sector also has its share of the negative impact of the insurgency. Bokoharam burnt down several schools thus made education inaccessible for children, displacement of teachers and unavailability of teaching materials. According to UNICEF 2015, more than 300 schools have been severely damaged or destroyed and at least 196 teachers and 314 school children were killed in the period between January 2012 and December 2014. Of the three key states continuously attacked by BokoHaram activities, Borno state is the most affected. According to World Bank 2015, two thirds of damages in terms of deaths, destroyed homes, farmlands and infrastructure arising from insurgency occurred in Borno state which is estimated to about US\$ 5.9 billion for Borno, with Adamawa and Yobe estimated to US\$ 1.6 billion and US\$ 1.2 billion respectively. Three-quarters of the overall damages are on agriculture (US\$ 3.5 billion) and housing (US\$ 3.3 billion). As a result this study examines the direct impact of BokoHaram activities on agriculture in Borno state.

The result has been an accentuation of inequality and disaffection between north and south. Poverty levels in the north-east and north-west are 40% higher than those in the south-west of the country, and unemployment is three times as high. Lack of education is part of the problem – barely one in five adults in the Muslim north are literate, compared to 80% in southern Nigeria – but even educated northern youth struggle to find work in the collapsing northern economy. At the bottom of northern Nigerian society, poverty, unemployment, and rapid rural-urban migration are unraveling communal support mechanisms and eroding traditional Koranic education systems (Hoechner, forthcoming). Membership of youth gangs has flourished, while millions of itinerant Koranic students are subjected to increasing deprivation and neglect, unleashing a growing problem of feral youth across northern Nigerian cities. This article unravels the weaknesses in these explanations and demonstrates that the BH insurgency is a fall-out of a governance crisis, especially in northern Nigeria where the growing incidence of poverty has led to frustration and recourse to violence among the people, particularly the youth. The article is divided into six sections: immediately following this introduction is the second segment which conceptualises the terms ‘governance’ and ‘terrorism’. The third part is on the theory of state fragility, while the fourth part examines the evolution and dynamics of BH insurgency. The fifth section explains why violent conflict is pervasive in northern Nigeria. The sixth and final segment concludes the article.

The inhuman activities of the Islamist sect, have unsettled the Nigerian nation to the extent that ample time and socio-economic cum political resources that ought to have been channeled to the development of the entire country is being wasted on various efforts geared towards checkmating and possibly, annihilating the insurgency in the North East geopolitical zone of Nigeria. Agreed that the North-east is the epicenter of the insurgency but its effect reverberates through the entire country and has constituted a major source of underdevelopment to Nigeria. It is against this backdrop that this paper seeks to critically interrogate the impact of BokoHaram insurgency on the underdevelopment of Nigeria.

Causes of Terrorism and Insurgency

Scholars have argued that terrorism originates from various sources. It is therefore important to investigate this at both individual and group levels. At the individual level, some experts have distinguished rational, psychological, and cultural origins of terrorism. According to Simonsen and Jeremy (2000) rational terrorists think through their goals and options, making a cost-benefit analysis. Psychological motivation for resorting to terrorism derives from the terrorist's personal dissatisfaction with his or her life and accomplishments. At the group level, terrorism can grow out of an environment of political activism, when a group's goal is to redirect a government's or society's attention toward the grievances of an activist social movement.

Other causes of terrorism and insurgency include the following:

Religious motivation: Hoffman (2006) observed that religion has become the key motivator for several terrorist organizations in Africa. Among the organizations and individuals who have been religiously inspired to adopt terrorist violence, those who espouse a radical interpretation of Islam are predominantly singled out. However, the relevance of extreme-right Christian groups is also underscored. According to Gurr and Cole (2005), the proliferation and significance of religiously motivated terrorist groups is notable in the period of time commonly assigned to the emergence of the new terrorism. Evidence of this claim is supported by trends that refer to the percentage of religiously inspired groups in relation to the total number of terrorist organizations. This literature indicates that numbers grew from less than 4% in 1980 to 42% by the mid-1990s (Lesser; Arquilla; Ronfeldt; Hoffman; Zanini & Jenkins, 1999). Substantiating this, Zalman (2014) opined that religion fanaticism creates conditions that are formidable for terrorism.

Proliferation of weapons of war: The availability and the use of weapons of mass destruction and or disruption, namely, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) weapons have continued to fuel terrorism. Some argue that the increasing desensitization of audience caused by media trends have forced terrorists to become more violent and spectacular (Neumann, 2009). A point of divergence from the above analysis was given by Zalman (2014) who believed that terrorist attacks are motivated by social and political injustice. People choose terrorism when they are trying to right what they perceive to be a social or political or historical wrong i.e. when they have been stripped of their land or rights, or denied these.

The Socio-Economic Implications of Boko Haram Insurgency in the Northeast of Nigeria

Aside the human cost in the BokoHaram insurgency, the atrocities of the sect have socioeconomic implications, especially in the northeast where BokoHaram has dominance.

The economic, social and psychological costs of the insurgency cannot be quantified. Commercial activities in the northeast have been reduced because of the unprecedented attacks by the sect. Banks, markets and shops do not open regularly due to the fear of the coordinated attacks from BokoHaram. According to Okereocha (2012) human capital and investors drain is hampering economic development in the northeast this is due to the attacks on banks, markets, parks and government departments. The attacks on these commercial areas have led to the migration of people to other parts of the country. Shiklam (2012) posits that:

“The Maiduguri Monday Market said to be the biggest market in the city is reported to have been seriously affected as hundreds of shop owners, especially Southerners are said to have closed their businesses and left the troubled city. About half of the 10,000 shops and stalls in the market were said to have been abandoned by traders who have fled the city.”

Aside the migration of people who have business in the northeast to other parts of Nigeria, foreign nationals of Chad, Cameroun and Niger are being repatriated to their home countries for what the government of Nigeria said they constitute the members of BokoHaram. Evidence has shown that not all the repatriated nationals of the above countries are members of BokoHaram. Definitely, those who have business in cities like Maiduguri, Damaturu and Yola will form part of those that are sent homes which will actually affect the economic activities in these cities. Ovaga (n.d) asserts that under this situation, the economy of the northeast will seriously be affected if foreign citizens who contribute large quota to the development of the northeast vis a vis their economic activities are sent back to their countries of origin. The never-ending attacks by BokoHaram in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states have a severe impact on the economic lives of people living in these areas. A case in point is that the working duration of most commercial banks in the affected areas hit by BokoHaram bombings has been reduced from eight hours to three hours (Mohammed, 2012). “In Maiduguri, Borno state, where the sect originated, the frequent bombings and clashes between BokoHaram and the security agents have weighed down seriously on the commercial and businesses activities in the city as many business have reportedly crumbled while many people have fled the state” (Shiklam, 2012). There is already a dichotomy in the north and south development in Nigeria.

Nigerian Government Attempts at Combating Terrorism and Insurgency

Since the inception of terrorism and insurgency in Nigeria, government has developed various strategies towards curbing the activities of BokoHaram. First is the use of brute military force against insurgent groups and deployment of over 8000 troops into affected parts of northern Nigeria, but with no clearly defined Military Code of Justice for the operation. For example, the invasion of and killing in the Baga community in Borno state on Sunday, April 21, 2013 by Nigerian soldiers. The Nigerian soldiers in a single operation killed over 200 civilians suspected to be members of BokoHaram in the aftermath of an attack (Akande, 2013). In the recent time, the federal government deployed the specially trained anti-terrorism combat squad to the terrorist zones in order to suppress the activities of BokoHaram (Okupe, 2015). Second is the acquisition and development of more sophisticated, adequate and appropriate military hardware and the recent approval by the African Union and the violations of a broad-based international coalition to collaborate with our military. Third is the approval given by the international bodies that give authority to neighbouring countries

(Chad, Niger and Cameroon) to lawfully deploy troops on Nigerian soil. Nigerian military also operate beyond borders to hunt fleeing terrorists, thus removing their safe haven.

Boko Haram Insurgency and the Underdevelopment of Nigeria

Nigeria is a country that is grappling with issues of development since its independence to date. The country is rated among the developing nations of the world with recent score card of being the fastest growing economy in Africa. Furthermore, Nigeria is a country with low per capita income, high unemployment rate, low human capital development, poor income, infrastructural decay and many other developmental challenges. Nevertheless, since 1999 the civilian administration has been making frantic efforts to revamp the economy and increase infrastructural and human capital development. The administration of President Goodluck Jonathan in the midst of stiff opposition by political opponents and terrorist groups made headway in Airports remodeling, university repositioning, agriculture, commerce and industry, railway reorganization and upgrade, seaports and roads rehabilitation and reconstruction, and employment generation. On the contrary, the activities of BokoHaram insurgency have been a major catalyst of underdevelopment in Nigeria.

Education is a panacea for national development across the world. There is no society that does not give adequate attention to her educational growth and development. Apart from the paltry budgetary allocation by the government, the BokoHaram insurgency has been an obstacle to educational development in Nigeria

Governance failures

Poor governance and rampant corruption have pushed these social and religious tensions to the breaking point. Resource-curse politics and the opulent behaviour of northern elites amid mass poverty have fostered a deep sense of popular grievance. BokoHaram initially emerged as a protest against the poor governance and corruption of northern leaders, which the movement sought to remedy through demands for an Islamic state and strict adherence to sharia law. The charismatic founder of the movement, Mohammed Yusuf, was openly critical of northern leaders, but BokoHaram's move to terrorism only started after his death in police custody in 2009. Despite some sympathy among northern Nigerian Muslims with its critique of political misrule, there is little support for BokoHaram's violent tactics. A 2014 survey by the Pew Foundation showed that 80% of Nigerian Muslims have an unfavourable view of the movement

Security failures

Heavy-handed military tactics that fail to deal with the roots of the problem have proved counterproductive. The terrorist shift of BokoHaram began with the extrajudicial execution by police of the first BokoHaram leader and the destruction of its main mosque. Ongoing abuses – such as the arrests of families of BokoHaram members and the destruction of their homes, or the random arrests and killings of young northern men in security raids – undermine cooperation with the military and foster radicalisation and bitterness against the state. The formation of the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) that has helped to combat BokoHaram in the Borno State capital, Maiduguri, emerged as an effort by civilians to protect themselves from the excesses of the military by rooting out and handing over BokoHaram members, at great personal cost to many civilians involved. In the process the CJTF poses new problems of inadequate training and human rights violations, as well as the challenge of

constructively reabsorbing CJTF members into society and the risks of their potential capture by politicians during the 2015 election campaign. On the international scale, recent studies have found adverse effect of terrorism and insurgency on agricultural and economic development of nations including Burundi, Colombia, India and Iraq. Singh (2012) focuses on Punjabi farmers' labor-related decisions in the face of insurgent violence. This insurgency emanated out of the demand for a Sikh-dominated Punjabi-speaking independent state, to be called Khalistan, which the government of India refused to grant hence resulting in violence since which is focused on India's government and its representative. Using micro-level farmer expenditure surveys for the period 1981-1993 to focus on the monetary amount spent by farmers on two types of hired labour, permanent and casual labour and how it relates to insurgency related violence. It is found that insurgency related violence adversely affected farmstead spending on permanent, but not temporary hiring basically because workers wanted short duration contracts.

New Strategies to Combat Terrorism in Nigeria

The development of strategies in Nigeria is a task that is assigned to individuals or groups of people that are assumed to be professionals in a particular field. There is no doubt that some of these individuals or groups have come up with strategies that they believe are the best, whereas, these strategies may not be practically applicable to the subject. One of these subjects is counterterrorism, and it has been assigned to several counterterrorism "experts", to provide strategies to combat insurgency in Nigeria.

The general belief about counterterrorism in Nigeria is that the military are well trained and are in the best position to advice government on strategies to be taken in that direction. However, in Nigeria, the section of military trained as counter terrorists are trained to physically combat insurgents and do not have the intellectual strategic knowledge and ability to provide solutions to insurgency, based on their training. The best strategy the military can develop in this regard, are military tactics and options, to further engage insurgents by increasing their strength through the acquisition of more sophisticated weapons, as well as manpower support from within and foreign military pools.

Udounwa (2013) identifies the reasons for insurgency in Nigeria as religious, geopolitical and socio-economical proclivity. He suggests in his recommendations to develop strategies, that the government should refocus its efforts on counterterrorism by improving border security, enhance the cooperation between all security agencies, improve the physical capability of counterterrorist units and modify the criminal justice system in Nigeria. From his submission, it is therefore obvious that the mindset of the military is focused on engaging insurgents in combat, killing, arresting, and prosecuting them. These have been the strategies that have been in use in Nigeria, and have been modified in that direction, over the years.

The actions of the Nigerian military however, do not conform to modern warfare practices, and has been condemned as human rights violations, by several organizations and governments, including Amnesty International (Amnesty international, 2015). The strategies recommended by the author clearly support the fact that the military is trained for combat. While the recommended strategies are merely a part of the entire process, it is important that other strategies that will ensure the prevention, management, and termination of insurgency, must be put in place. Udounwa (2015) omitted the fact that the rank and file of the military

require purging. Understandably, troops have complained about poor logistics support to them. This includes poor feeding, no drinking water and inferior fire power to BokoHaram. This has caused several episodes of mutiny amongst soldiers, and must be given urgent attention, in the process of revamping their strategies toward defeating terrorists. The military must also redefine its relationship with the civilian population, especially in communities affected by terrorism. It needs to understand that civilians form a part of the counterterrorism machinery that can be used to the advantage of the military, if managed properly. The relationship in the past has been sour due to the offensive nature of the military toward civilians, causing a wide bridge between them.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The paper examined terrorism and insurgency in Nigeria as well as attempts made by Nigerian government and international communities towards curbing terrorism and insurgency. The conclusions that may be drawn include: First, there is a difference between terrorism and insurgency. Terrorism is an advanced stage of a failed political process that begins with inequities and injustice, and moves from frustrated attempts at reform that breed fear and anger, to political confrontation that erupts in violence, which can be exploited to rationalize the use of any form of violence against any target. The terrorist's objective is therefore more about scaring civil society and making itself known while Insurgent's objectives are military in nature and its tactics is to wear the enemy down through constant attacks against the regular forces while acquiring weapons and support from the disenfranchised population. Second, BokoHaram's ideology is based on fundamentalist Sunni Islam, and their intent is to establish an Islamic state in Nigeria and cleanse the country of any and all Western influence. Third, terrorism and insurgency are caused by corruption, unemployment, poverty, weak institutional structure, ethnicity and social frustration. Fourth, the various acts of terrorism and insurgency lead to dwindling economy, loss of lives and properties, discouraging foreign investment, threatening the country's unity etc.. There is the need for government to ensure that the dividend of democracy is enjoyed by all and sundry, this can be achieved through popular participation of the people. Government should create an avenue to resolve conflicts among any conflicting parties before it degenerates into crisis. Also, government should ensure effective use of resources like power, military, land reforms, finance, external alliances and hierarchical structure of organization to counter-insurgents. Lastly, there must be strict enforcement of law against any act of terrorism and insurgency.

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