



## Boko Haram and Human Security Challenges in Nigeria: The Way forward

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**Abstract:** *Objective of this paper is to examine the relationship between the absence of human security and security challenges using Boko Haram activities as a case. In spite of the successful changeover to civil rule in May 1999, the problem of ethno-religious clash and radicalism remains a serious threat to the social-political unity and economic stability of Nigeria. The Boko Haram insurgency since July 2009 is historic, in that it reinforced the attempts by Islamic extremists at superimposing a variant of Islamic religious ideology on a secular Nigerian state, making the security situation of the country most precarious and inflammable. This spate of insurgency in Nigeria is influenced by both internal factors and external factors. This paper seeks to examine this security problem and its implications on human existence in a heterogeneous society like Nigeria. Among the causative factors of Boko Haram insurgency and human security challenges examined in this paper, were inadequate state security apparatus, endemic corruption level, illiteracy, developmental imbalances and economic disparities in the country. With the available data, one is convinced that the security problem needs an urgent practical solution to save the country from the predicted fragmentation. Therefore, this paper recommends the practice of genuine secular federalism, effective state security, developmental and people oriented and participatory democracy as radical ways of curbing violent ethno-religious insurgency and insecurity in Nigeria.*

**Key words:** *Boko Haram sect, Human Security Challenges, Political Crisis, Ethno-Religious Polarisation and Radicalism.*

### INTRODUCTION

Nigeria as a country is characterized by intense ethno-religious polarization and conflict since after its amalgamation in 1914. However, we must not fail to point out that political development in Nigeria has been greatly inhibited by the threat to human security immediately after the country's independence in 1960. The problem is more pronounced among the majority tribes of Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani and among the adherents of the predominant religions: Christianity and Islam. Many scholars have expressed their views as regard the amalgamation and the inseparability of the country, Nigeria. According to Egwu (2001) "ethnic and religious violence is the extreme manifestation of conflicts rooted in the crises of identity." One of the founding fathers of Nigeria late sage, Obafemi Awolowo, in his book titled "Path to Nigerian Freedom" in 1947, expressed his disbelief in the existence of Nigeria, thus: "Nigeria was a mere geographical expression. There were no Nigerians as there were French and Germans". This view opined by Awolowo according to Igbokwu and Orhero (Oct. 2014) gives us two assertions in accordance with this study that the term 'Nigeria' was not necessary abinitio and that the term 'Nigeria' does not exist in reality. The above assertion reduces

Nigeria's nationalism to ethnic and tribal expression, according to Awolowo's statement as above quoted, that Nigeria being a multi-national or polyethnic society could not be regarded as one nation....one could not be a good Nigerian if he was not a good Yoruba, Igbo or Hausa first. More so, Nnoli (1980)opined thus:

Nigerian politics have presented an image of a struggle among the various ethnic groups for a division of national resources. Most Nigerians have come to believe that unless their 'own men' are in government they are unable to secure those socio-economic amenities that are disbursed by the government....the intensified polarisation of the country into subnational ethnic and sub-ethnic cultures, widely separated in terms of identity and loyalty, is encouraging further hostility.

The spate of violent conflict in Nigeria which is rooted in ethno-religious struggles to control both economic and political fronts could be dated back to the pre-independence era. But this struggle for dominance has degenerated to ethno-religious and politically motivated conflicts in Nigeria since after independence in 1960. Nigeria has witness series of bitter destructive clashes between Christian and Muslim, or the other way round, ethnic clashes between neighboring tribes. According to Adesina (2011), in his back page column on Daily Sun captioned: Constitution review and unfinished matters, where he recalled a conversation between two of our founding fathers, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe and Ahmadu Bello, as contained in a book, Ahmadu Bello: Sardauna of Sokoto written by N. Paden. According to him, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe had told Ahmadu Bello: "let us forget our differences...." to which the latter replied: "No, let us understand our differences." I am a Muslim and a Northerner; you are a Christian, an Easterner. By understanding our differences, we can build unity in our country". Bello was further quoted as admitting that the amalgamation of northern and southern protectorates as "mistake of 1914" (Adesina, 2011 cited from Igbokwu and Orhero (Oct. 2014). Since 1914 Nigeria has had a myriad of security challenges from different militant groups that scared its foundation, unity and posterity, towing ethno-religious lines. Boko Haram turbulent attack stands out because of the seeming facelessness of the perpetrators and the mystery surrounding its actual agenda. While many believe that it is a religious sect which frowns against Western Education since Boko Haram translates to mean "Western Education is a sin" others look at it as an apparatus to stamp out opposition and competitions among political rivalries. Against this background, the purpose of this paper is to examine the nature and dynamics of Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria. It begins with the conceptual analysis of the issues examined. This is followed by theoretical framework and the methodology used. It also discusses the implications of Boko Haram attacks on human security in Nigeria and more importantly attempts in proffering plausible strategies as the way forward.

### **Contextualizing Boko Haram: History, Development and Causes of Insurgency**

It is good to discuss a brief historical antecedent that led to the formation of this group and ideas of its revolt. Boko Haram literally means "Western Education is a sin", the ideological foundation of this group is its total rejection of Western Education as corrupt and lacks moral tendency that Islam does not accommodate. According to Reuters (2011) Sheikh Mohammed Yusuf was the founder and prominent leader of this sect and its operation started in Maiduguri, Borno state, with batch members in neighbouring Bauchi, Yobe, Kano, Gombe, Taraba, Kaduna, Kebbi, Adamawa Sokoto and Kogi states. The uncertain history of the Boko Haram sect in Northern Nigeria could be traced to 2009, when the police operatives reportedly killed Yusuf Mohammed, the founder of the banned Islamic fundamentalist group. According to Reuters-UK (June 2012) "Boko Haram activities started in Maiduguri when the former Governor Modu Sherrif wanted power by all means. To actualize his ambitions, he recruited his own people and tried to make sure that he got into power". It is affirmed that the man who started this thing (Boko Haram) Yusuf Mohammed for instance, was not against any religion, he was against the government and law enforcement agents because he believe that these people were not looking after the society very well, hence poverty and joblessness everywhere in the north.

Historically, Moslems are not opposed to Western Education or any form of Education. What they are opposed to is exploitative western civilization and culture (The Guardian Newspaper, July 7, 2011). To many scholars, the incessant violent attacks in the north are functions of the economic injustice, according to Ranson, B (2012) "more than 80 percent of the populace are not sure of three meals a day. The gap between the rich and the poor is widening and unemployed youths have resorted to violence in expressing their

grievance". From the foregoing, it is deduced that the political class is not being sensitive to the plight of the people, a situation where less than 20 percent of the country's population controls the nation's wealth, while the other 80 percent are floundering in abject poverty. This poor population is used by politicians as a veritable tool to achieving their political ambitions.

The term "Boko Haram" has generated a lot of public debates as it tends recently to be a term regularly mentioned not only in the mouths of Nigerians but also, citizens of other part of the world. Since the return to democratic rule in May 1999, Nigeria has witnessed a number of security challenges associated with militancy, armed robbery, kidnapping, political assassinations, arms proliferation, piracy and ethno-religious conflicts. However, the outbreak of Boko Haram uprising in July 2009 heralded new security challenges in the country Ahmed (2012). The group's official name is jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awatiwal Jihad, meaning "people committed to the propagation of the prophet's teachings and Jihad". It earned its nickname "Boko haram" - meaning Western Education is evil from the teachings of its founder Mohammed Yusuf in the early 2003, in the restive north eastern city of Maiduguri the capital of Bornu State. According to Yusuf, western education, or 'boko' brought nothing but poverty and sufferings to the region and was therefore forbidden, or 'haram', in Islam. He began peacefully mostly preaching but quickly gained followers among disaffected young men in the northeast.

1. Unemployment, illiteracy, poverty and lack of government attention together with social justice are the strongest factors responsible for the decision of some jobless youths to take up arms against the government. Boko Haram audacity has been demonstrated, whose main demands or aggregate demands are fairly unknown and whose main weapon-terror-is also faceless. The sect is an armed Islamist political group, probably factionalized with foreign collaborators as it is extending beyond Nigeria to its littoral neighbours. According to Alozieuwa (2012) cited in Anyadike (2013), the challenge posed by the Boko Haram sect in Nigeria is not only about viciousness of either its terror campaigns, or the sect avowed mission to impose Islamic law to the country but about the confusion regarding the exact causes of the violence. It is pivotal to note that before the advent of colonialism, there were no conflict between Islam and Christianity. Prior to the advent of colonialism with its attendant incursion of the British rule and the subsequent subjugation of the African continent, there existed in most African enclaves or cultural distinct entities, local administrative machinery anchored upon traditional institutions. In order words, one can adduce that it was the advent of colonialism and the subsequent mistake of 1914 which led to the bringing together the North and the South who had distinct life styles and religious beliefs in one geographical condition that occasioned the incessant

Religious differences have a high potential for separating people from one another which can endanger peaceful coexistence. According to Okwudiba Nnoli (1980) "Throughout history these differences have been the basis of tension, animosity, hostility, and even war...this is because religion tends to define what constitutes appropriate social behaviour. When this definition is at the cross-purposes with another, normal relations become difficult. For example, the orthodox Islamic doctrine in the North". The above assertion explains why there is constant ethno-religious clashes in Nigeria. The maiming and bombing of places of worship of the Christians is an indication that Islam and Christianity are proven to be incompatible and the amalgamation of both is really catastrophic and a "mere geographical expression" as opined by Obafemi Awolowo-Anyadike (2013).

**Security:** The ravaging insecurity in the world has led to the crystallization of the security predicament argument among scholars, defining the concept of security in different ways which is allowable in social science research. In Social sciences, researchers maintain various views to a subject matter based on their standing points. For instance, Adibe (1993) argues along the line of traditional notion of security, that structural realism views security as epicentral to international life. To me, security is not only being epicentral to international life but the constant life wire of a state as Kenneth Waltz, argued that, "security is the highest end. Only if survival is assumed can states safely seek such other goals as tranquillity, profit and power – this implies that state system has been in most part of a relentless struggle to achieve security – defined putatively as freedom from self-perceived danger, by means of war, alliance formation and collective in situation building".

Generally, the concept of security is a crosscutting and multi-dimensional concept which has over the last two centuries attracted vehement debates. In this paper therefore, security is perceived as a situation that guarantees people's freedom from danger, anxiety and fear. According to Mohammed Ayoob (1995) "the term security is based upon two major assumptions: one, the most threats to a state's security arise from outside its borders and two, that these threats are primarily, if not exclusively military in nature and usually require a military response if the security of the state is to be preserved. Walter Lippmann (1943) gave these assumptions a vivid summation in his well celebrated statement that "a nation is secure to the extent to which it is not in danger of having to sacrifice core values, if it wishes to avoid war and is able if challenged to maintain them by victory in such war". This definition therefore, implies that security rises and falls with the ability of a state to deter an attack or to defeat it. The impetus for this line of argument comes from the awesome concentration of terror and explosive weapons in the hands of the Boko Haram in Nigeria from the inception of the fourth republic or the return of democracy to Nigeria in 1999. The core values, to which Lippmann referred to, are those elements which assure the smooth functioning of a state. The question here is what determines the core value or smooth functioning of a state. Nigeria for instance, the basic determinant factor of a state's core value in the competitive international area is the power of such a state to define, project and defend such values in the face of both internal and external insurrections, otherwise a state is insecure and weak.

In the recent era, there is a sharp shift from the traditional notion of security to human security, and the latter is the focus of this paper. Security has undergone a revision and re-definition in the recent time. The global political changes at the end of the cold war revealed the weaknesses of realist conceptions of security, making humanitarianism a strong alternative. This humanitarianism includes among other basic needs of all people to have food, shelter health facilities, dignities, meaningful work, human right and enabling environment to survive. According to Adibe (1993 & Eme, et.al2016) this humanitarianism constitutes "security expansionism". The expansion of security beyond the traditional emphasis on defending a state against external aggression has its deepest roots in the United States. The concept of security has for too long been interpreted narrowly, as securing of territory from external aggression or as protecting of national interests in foreign policy, but humanitarian security or security expansionism tilts towards social welfare.

### **Human Security**

During the Cold War era, the concept of security was related more to nation-state than to people. The concept of human security is an offshoot of traditional security which dominated the international political discourse at the end of the Cold War in 1990s. According to Adibe (1993) this constitutes "security expansionism" that is, the expansion of the notion of security beyond the traditional emphasis on defending a state against external aggression. Therefore, human security is a people security not territorial or state based. "For most people, a feeling of insecurity arises more from worries about daily life than from the dread of a cataclysmic world event. Will they be tortured by a repressive state or victim of violence because of their state of origin? Will they and their families have enough to eat? Will they lose their jobs? Will their streets and neighborhoods be safe from crime? Will their investments and property be safe from ethnic and religious violence? Will the oneness and sovereignty of Nigeria remain sacrosanct?"- Gareth Porter (1995). According to Gareth Porter (1995) "Human security is a child who did not die, a disease that did not spread, a job that was not cut, an ethnic tension that did not explode in violence, a dissident who was not silenced". This implies that human security is not concerned with weapons but with human life and dignity. It is a universal concern, relevant to people everywhere, both the rich and the poor. There are many threats that are common to all people – such as unemployment, drug, crime, pollution and human right violations. Their intensity may differ from one part of the country (Nigeria) to another, but all these threats to human security are endemic, divesting, real and growing without attracting adequate attention.

Also, according to Gareth Porter (1995) human security is of two major components: freedom from fear and freedom from want. Gareth Porter (1995) also quoted that:

The founders of the U.N when considering security always gave equal weight to territories and to people. In 1945, the United States secretary of state reported to his government on the results of the conference in San Francisco that set up the United Nations. He was quite specific on this point. The battle of people has to be fought on two fronts. The first is the security front where victory spells freedom from fear. The second is the

economic and social front where victory means freedom from want. Only victory on both fronts can assure the world of an enduring peace.

The implication of the above assertion for Nigeria is that the incursion of Boko Haram on the country since 2009 should change the country's perception about security, changing from an exclusive emphasis on territory to a much greater emphasis on the people, and from security of armament to security through sustainable human development. This is because the Boko Haram war is not only an attack against the territorial integrity of Nigeria, but a human security challenge characterized with ethno-religious violence. According to Adibe (1993) "it is not a deterrent concept – the way territorial or military security is. Instead, human security is an integrative concept. It is embedded in a notion of solidarity among people it cannot be brought about through force with armies standing against armies or armies standing against civilians, it can happen only if we agree that development must involve all people not minding their religion, ethnicity or state of origin".

The devastating violent war of Boko Haram in Nigeria is leading many scholars into a serious research for causes and solutions to the problem; hence, war anywhere in the world is induced by multi-factors. According to Alozieuwa (2012) as quoted in Anyadike N. (2013), "one of the outcomes of the security challenges imposed by the Boko Haram insurgency on Nigerian state has been the emergent preponderance of theories in an attempt to explain the objectives of the Islamic group". However, there are divergent schools of thought to what the causes and solutions to the attacks of Boko Haram on Nigerian state are. According to Anyadike (2013), there is "the Political-Feud point of view which maintained that the crux of the problem is the over-politicization of social life hence we are intoxicated with politics; as the premium on political power is so high that we are prone to take the most extreme measures to win and to maintain political power". In other words, some scholars argue that the Boko Haram insurgency is a conspiratorial act of the northern elite to wrestle political power from the south in the 2015 general elections.

Alozieuwa (2012) argues towards this line of thought, that "attempting an explanation of the Boko Haram catastrophe with the conspiracy theories can be marked into two broad categories: one focusing on machinations of internal actors, the other on external actors. Internal actors may include the disgruntled northern power elite who, having lost power, are bent on bringing down Nigeria under a southern leadership, as well as the Jonathan administration itself, which may be sponsoring the crisis in order to rally southern support behind his administration, and there is also the perception that Boko Haram may be a secret society controlled by some 'invisible' hands that seek to destroy the north ahead of 2015 so as to forestall or weaken its bid for the presidency at that time". Contrary to Alozieuwa (2012) conspiracy theories, the 2015 general elections had come and gone, lost and won but the violent attacks of Boko Haram remain unabated. Although, central on the minds of many Nigerians, prior to the general elections was that Boko Haram was working for northern agenda to reclaim the presidential seat, but its attacks come stiffer even after Mohammed Buhari- a northerner had won the presidential election in April, 2015. This indicates that these violent attacks are beyond a presidential slot.

### **Theoretical Framework**

However, this paper adopts a social conflict theory which believes that the greatest challenge human race has ever faced is how to live in a world free of the threat of violent conflicts. For conflict is ubiquitous, not restricted to time of war, but it exists everywhere, in homes, schools, markets, and communities. Social conflict theory examines the social conditions, socio-political relations, inequalities in the distribution of resources, social development vis-a-vis the yearnings and aspirations of the people within a given society. Many scholars argue that most conflicts in the world can be attributed to the existence of an oppressive social system of power that reinforces difference between groups and allows one group to have power privileged over another group. Marx (1866) argues that as "long as the global system relies on exploitative, oppressive and hierarchical relationship, there will likely exist conflict and peace may become impossible to achieve". Unlike its preceding violent groups such as Niger Delta militants, the peculiarity of Boko Haram jihadist group according to Morgan (2015), is that "they are not agitating for any financial reward or compensation, neither do they ask for jobs. Their cause is 'religious', on the basis of political Islam. Political Islam is defining simply as a set of ideologies holding that Islam is not only a religion but also a political system". It is a fight for economic control and political dominance. Considering the conflicting interest among politicians, the handling of the plight of the masses in respect to the poverty level, fighting along religious

lines is a common practice in Africa especially in Nigeria. Hence, Marx (1866) argues that “religion is the opium of the masses”. The impoverished condition of the masses in the northern part of the country cannot be overemphasized, as a result of government’s reckless abandonment of the people to self-survival with little or no means of livelihood, hence, Boko Haram insurrection is revolutionary as a panacea to the perceived structural imbalance.

This conflict theory therefore, captures the conflict situation in northern Nigeria and gives a better understanding of the Boko Haram insurgency. It also explains the social values for human interaction, Nigeria’s security situation and its continuous implications on human security. Obviously, there is a direct link between dominance, deprivation, denial, frustration, aggression and war. So, armed conflicts are attributable to the nature of social relations and redistribution of resources, as evident in Boko Haram’s insurgency.

## METHODOLOGY

This paper adopted a documentary method. The source of data is mainly secondary. This source would include documentary on the activities of Boko Haram, relevant government records such as National Emergency Management Agency-NEMA, National Planning and Statistics Commission would be put into great use, and also data from National Defence College Journal among others are considered worthwhile. The content analysis method was used for data analysis.

### **The Boko Haram and human security challenges in Nigeria**

Boko Haram insurgency should be understood within the context of the ethno-religious prejudice that overwhelming powers have circumscribed on them by virtue of confrontation with an adversary that wields formidable and terrific weaponry. It is also an attack intended to kill targeted adversaries and inflict great damage in which the attackers expect or intend to die in the process. It is a desperate strategy for regaining freedom from suppressive and oppressive government or from occupying military forces, which imparts negatively on human security in the affected country, such as Nigeria. The horizon of security challenges has also greatly changed and encompassed threats that go far beyond aggression on Nigerian state but on the people. These threats to human security are long but our discussion is centred on four main categories: economic security, food security, personal security and community security.

**Economic Security:** According to Adibe (1993), “Economic security requires an assured basic income usually from productive and remunerative work or in the last resort from some publicly financed safety net”. But only about a quarter of the Nigeria’s population may at present be economically secure in this sense. Many people in the northern Nigeria today feel insecure because jobs are increasingly difficult to find, investment, business and markets have been sheltered by the violent attacks of Boko Haram in the past three years. The number of job in industrial sectors of the northern Nigeria had depreciated and the labor force also diminished drastically. According to the World Investment Report (WIR) 2013, FDI flows into Nigeria dropped by 21% in just one year — from \$8.9 billion in 2011 to \$7 billion in 2012. The loss of \$1.9 billion for a country in desperate need of money – such as Nigeria – was a staggering blow. FDI into Nigeria has a direct impact on trade, while also ensuring progression of economic development to the south. FDI inflow also supplements the available domestic capital by stimulating the productivity of domestic investments. Someone troublesome is the high co-dependency ratio between the inflow of FDI, the Nigerian oil sector, and the country’s GDP.

Apparently, the revenue generation in the northern east Nigeria, according to FIRS Gauge (2014) has dropped astronomically to the point of shutting down almost all the Federal Inland Revenue Service offices in the affected states. By the end of 2014 over 2.5 million people were reported to have fled northern east Nigeria because of the Boko Haram bombing in the area. Therefore, this number fleeing the north to the south increases the social shocks in the area. Southern Nigeria is under pressure by the increasing social vices orchestrated by the swarm of returnees from the north. This is a problem especially for young people. Since the exodus of the southerners from the north, crime rate and unemployment have increased in the south for about 30 percent. And it is one of the major factors underlying security tensions and ethnic violence in several other states. Without the assurance of a social net the poorest cannot survive even a short period

without an income, as many rely on families and community support. According to NEMA's report on July 05, 2015 Boko Haram displaces over 1.4m in North East:

That Boko Haram insurgency and incessant communal clashes among various ethnic groups in the North East sub-region of the country have displaced 1,385,298, million persons in five states of the sub-region. The number of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), were contained in the June, 2015 Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) released by International Organisation for Migration and NEMA to newsmen in Maiduguri, the Borno state capital. The information officer of NEMA in a statement said that Borno state has the highest number of IDPs of 1, 002,688, while Gombe state has the least of 16, 984 persons in two camps and residents of their numerous relations and family members. Next in number to Borno was the neighbouring state of Yobe with 125, 484 displaced persons, currently living with their relations and other family members in Damaturu, Potiskum and three other towns in northern part of the state. Adamawa, Bauchi and Taraba states in the North East sub-region, also recorded a total of 113,437, 76,504 and 20, 501 of IDPs in that order of influx into the state capitals of affected three states in the sub-region."

The above indicates that Nigeria is experiencing the deadliest attacks from militant Islamist group-Boko Haram since 2014. It is a big problem for a country whose massive economic growth has in many cases furthered the divisions between its commercial southern states now home to dozens of multinational companies and a growing middle class, and its poverty-stricken unstable northern region, where Boko Haram dominates. "Nigeria's north is definitely poorer than the south and the conflict is having a negative impact," <http://www.trading>, Africa economist at the Brookings Institute, added that the former depend a great deal on transfers from the latter, though many are seriously concerned about how this happens amid corruption issues. Made famous earlier this year after kidnapping more than 200 girls from the Chibok region in the northern state of Borno, Boko Haram has been operating in the sparsely populated north for more than five years. At the moment, the only economic impact the group has had is slowing down production in a region that is already struggling for survival. Agriculture accounts for roughly a fifth of the nation's GDP and employs more than 35 percent of youths aged 18 to 35, and is starting to show signs of strain. It's concentrated in the northern states, which are also those with the highest poverty rates and the majority of Boko Haram's activity-NEMA June, 2015. A single life lost in this country is a colossal loss of hope and pride of the nation as human life is sacrosanct to societal development. Properties worth billions have been lost in inferno as a result of this saga. Also, many families have lost their loved ones, homes and businesses. Some have even lost their marriages in the process. All these losses are national loss, a threat to human security and therefore serve as a threat to the furtherance of the course of the Nigerian state.

If this trend of threat to Nigeria security continues unaddressed, the system will rapidly collapse. According to Gareth porter (1995) "one of economic insecurity's severest effects is homelessness". NEMA in June, 2015 reported that about 1.5 Nigerians are resettled in different IDPs scattered across the country. That is about 1.5 percent of the country's population are either internally displaced or separated from their homes and economic base and over half of them are children and women. Some of them are quartered at different Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps for close to two years now. These IDPs constitute what is called a floating population, and if not managed well will lead to a more precarious security concern in future.

**Food Security:** Food security implies that all people at all times have both physical and economic access to basic food. This requires not just enough food to go round; it requires that people have ready access to food - that they have an entitlement "to food by growing it themselves, by buying it or by taking advantage of a public food distribution system. People can still starve even when enough funds are available without enough food supply to go round - like the war situation in northern Nigeria.

The war situation in northern Nigeria has debased the volume of food supply from the area, such as fish, beans, and tomatoes among others. In fact, this has created abnormal demand and supply curve, where demand outweighs supply, pushing the cost of food up astronomically over the last two years. Farming activities are diminishing in the north - east Nigeria as Hoko Haram attacks remained unabated. It is a sad indication of inadequate access to food, particularly for southern Nigeria who depends heavily on the northern Nigeria for supply of vegetables, fruits and cereal. According to Reuters (2011) "In some parts of the north, the security situation has affected farmland production and that has led to some increase in food prices". Food prices rose 9.8 percent in June, and inflation hit 8.2 percent, the highest in 10 months,

according to Nigeria’s national statistics bureau-“The effects of conflict on the agricultural sector are largely due to the risk of being attacked by insurgents,”

According to FIRS Gauge (2014), there is a disparity between north and south in terms of revenue collection. “That its economic rebasing shows that revenue is now doubled at 51% up from 26% in southern part of the country but Agriculture is down from 33% to 22% in the northern part since 2014 because of the attacks of Boko Haram in the region”. Government on its part is trying in many ways of increasing food supply across the country through the silos system but the scheme has a limited impact. This is simply because access to food comes from access to meaningful livelihood. Work and assured income have all gone down in the northern with a negative impact on the southern part of the country that has a long standing trade and industrial interdependency relationship.

**Personal Security:**

The incessant attacks of Boko Haram in northern Nigerian put many lives at greater risk than ever before. For many people, the greatest source of anxiety is crime, particularly violent crime. Criminal elements contribute to the erosion of the rule of law when they harness public institutive to facilitate their illicit activities. Crime rate has increase astronomically as Boko Haram activities knocked the youths out of school and these youths have taken to drug trafficking and other vices as reported by Crime Watch 2015 that “crime in Nigeria in 2014 went up by 20 percent. In second quarter of 2015, the murder rate in the country especially northern Nigeria doubled”.

The gruesome murder of people in the north is in the increase and most affected are woman and children. In no society are women secure or treated equally to men. Personal insecurity shadows them from cradle to grave. In the household they are the last to eat. At school they are the last to be educated. At work, they are the last to be hired and first to be fired. And through birth to death they are abuse because of their gender. For instance, abduction of about 300 school girls from Chibok in Borno state – northern Nigeria.

Many women are now bread winners as the Boko Haram violent attacks rendered them untimely widows with many children to tender. “In north – east Nigeria more than 7,500 women have been reported raped by both the Boko Haram and the military and several harassments on their job are very common”-NEMA June 2015. While children who should be the most protected in any society are subject to many abuse and untold hardship in the north. In northern Nigeria, over 20,000 children are being conscripted into suicide bombing. Nearly, 10000 children are reported dead from gunshot wounds. Poverty level in the north compels many children to take to the street as beggars or take on heavy work at too young an age – often at great cost to their health. Report has it that over 2 million spend their lives on the street and over a double of the number involve in child prostitution in northern Nigeria-Reuter 2015. This ugly development threatens human security in northern Nigeria and shatters peaceful coexistence. The tables below capture the number of deaths occasioned by Boko Haram insurgency in 2015 alone.

**Tale 1: Human Cost of Boko Haram in 2015**

<b>Month</b>	<b>Number of Persons killed</b>
January	2107
February	179
March	80
April	0
May	0
June	61
July	194
August	299
September	106
October	0
November	22
December	72
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,120</b>

(Media Reports).



**Table 2:** Boko Haram attacks in 2015

S/N	Date	Place of Attack	Nature of Attack	Number of Casualties
1.	2/1/2015	Waza, Cameroon	Shooting	11 people died
2.	10/1/2015	Northern Eastern city of Maiduguri	Suicide bombing	19 people killed
3.	11/1/2015	Market in Northeastern city of Potiskum	Suicide bombing	3 people killed
4.	12/1/2015	Kolofala, Cameroon	Shooting	1 people (military) killed while 143-300 Boko Haram killed
5.	18/1/2015	North Cameroon (village)	Kidnapping and shooting	80 people kidnapped and 3 people killed
6.	24/1/2015	Village of Kambari near Maiduguri	Shooting and burning	15 people killed
7.	25/1/2015	Maiduguri	Offensive attack on Nigerian forces (but failed)	8 civilians, 53 Boko Haram and unknown soldiers killed
8.	28/1/2015	Adamawa State	Shooting	40 people killed
9.	1/2/2015	Maiduguri, Borno State, Yobe and Gombe	Shooting, suicide bombing	13 people killed
10.	2/2/2015	City of Gombe	Suicide bombing	1 person died and 18 people injured
11.	4/2/2015	Fotokol, Cameroon	Shooting	-----
12.	6/2/2015	Bosso and Diffa town in Niger Republic	-----	5 people killed and 109 Boko Haram killed
13.	9/2/2015	Diffa, Niger Republic	Prison break	-----
14.	12/2/2015	Northeastern of Maiduguri Biu	Suicide bombing	8 people killed
15.	13/2/2015	Ngouboua village	Shooting with	-----
		Chad	motor boats	
16.	14/2/2015	Gombe	-----	-----
17.	15/2/2015	Damaturu	Suicide bombing	16 people killed and 30 injured
18.	20/2/2015	Chibok, Borno state	-----	34 people killed
19.	22/2/15	Postiskum (market)	Suicide bombing	5 people killed & many injured
20.	24/2/2015	Bus station in Potiskum and kano	Suicide bombing	At least 27 people killed
21.	26/2/2015	Biu and Jos	Bombing	35 people killed
22.	7/3/2015	Maiduguri	Suicide bombing	54 people killed and 143 injured
23.	28/2/2015	Damaturu	Suicide bombing	Up to 4 people killed
24.	15/5/2015	Marte Local government, Borno State	Shooting	12 people killed

25.	16/5/2015	Damaturu	Suicide bombing	7 persons died and 30 injured
26.	21/5/2015	Uba L.G.A and Gatamwarwa Village of Chibok L.G.A	Shooting	20 people killed
27.	29/5/2015	-----	-----	6 people killed
28.	2/6/2015	Market in Maiduguri Borno State	Bombing	27 people killed and more than 30 people injured
29.	5/6/2015	Yola Adamawa State and Maiduguri, Borno State	Suicide bombing	27 people killed and 3 injured
30.	15/6/2015	Damaturu Potiskmn. Yobe State	Suicide Bombing	10 people killed and 12 injured
31.	28/6/2015	Maiduguri	Suicide bombing	3 people killed and 16 injured
32.	30/6/2015	Musarram Village, Borno State	Shooting	48 people killed and 17 injured
33.	1/7/2015	Molai, Borno State	Suicide bombing	2 people injured
34.	1/7/2015	Kukawa, Borno State	Shooting	97 people killed
35.	2/07/2015	-----	Bomb blast	12 killed
36.	3/07/2015	Borno	Shooting	29 killed
37.	3/07/2015	Maiduguri		61 killed
38.	5/07/2015		Suicide bombing	6 killed
39.	5/07/2015	Jos, Plateau	Shooting	51 killed
40.	6/07/2015	Kano	Suicide bombing	1 killed
41.	7/07/2015	-----	Suicide bombing	4 killed
42.	7/07/2015	Zaria, Kaduna	Bomb blast	25 killed
43.	7/07/2015	Kaduna	Bomb blast	41 killed
44.	10/07/2015		Shooting	8 killed
45.	10/07/2015	Mongino, Borno		45 killed
46.	11/07/2015	Borno	Bomb explosion	4 killed
47.	11/07/2015	Borno		1 1 killed
48.	13/07/2015	Maiduguri	Bomb blast	1 killed
49.	13/07/2015	Borno		30 killed

50.	14/07/2015	Borno		15 killed
51.	14/07/2015	Ngamdu		20 killed
52.	16/07/2015	Gombe		50 killed
53.	17/07/2015	Damatoru		50 killed
54.	20/07/2015	Damaturu		8 killed
55.	21/07/2015			2 killed
56.	21/07/2015			8 killed
57.	22/07/2015	Gombe	Bomb blast	37 killed
58.	24/07/2015	Borno	Burning	18 killed
59.	24/07/2015			25 killed
60.	26/07/2015		Suicide bombing	22 killed
61.	27/07/2015	Borno		29 killed
62.	29/07/2015	Baga	Suspected Boko Haram members slit the throats of 10 fishermen in villages near Baga on the shores of the Lake Chad.	10 killed
63.	30/07/2015			7 killed
64.	31/07/2015	Maiduguri		13 killed
65.	1/08/2015	Borno		13 killed
66.	2/08/2015	Maiduguri		8 killed
67.	4/08/2015	Baga		10 killed
68.	6/08/2015	Yobe village		9 killed
69.	9/08/2015	Borno		4 killed
70.	11/08/2015	Maiduguri		8 killed
71.	11/08/2015	Borno	Bomb blast	47 killed
72.	15/08/2015	Borno	Suicide bomb	5 killed
73.	17/08/2015	Borno		7 killed

74.	18/08/2015	Yobe	Drown	160 killed
75.	21/08/2015	Borno	Explosion	2 killed
76.	23/08/2015		Shooting	11 killed
77.	25/08/2015	Maiduguri	Suicide bomb	2 killed
78.	25/08/2015	Yobe	Suicide bomb	8 killed & 20 injured
79.	25/08/2015			24 killed
80.	27/08/2015			4 killed
81.	28/08/2015	Borno		68 killed
82.	29/08/2015			24 killed
83.	30/08/2015	Yobe		10 killed
84.	31/08/2015	Maiduguri	Suicide bombing	26 killed & 28 injured
85.	31/08/2015			4 killed
86.	2/09/2015			5 killed
87.	3/09/2015	Borno		53 killed
88.	4/09/2015	Borno		30 killed
89.	11/09/2015	Adamawa	Suicide bomb	5 killed
90.	11/09/2015	Yola IDp camp	Bomb blast	10 killed
91.	20/09/2015	Mongun		27 killed
92.	20/09/2015	Maiduguri	Bombing	117 killed
93.	24/09/2015	Monguna, Baga		20 killed
94.	27/09/2015			20 killed
95.	29/09/2015	Borno State	In an offensive operation to clear Boko Haram terrorists' enclaves around Kwatarha and Torikwaptir area of Gwoza Local Government Area of Borno State, a notorious Boko Haram terrorist was shot dead by the Nigerian Army.	1 notorious Boko Haram terrorist was killed by Nigerian Army.
96.	1/10/2015	Adamawa		11 killed
97.	1/10/2015	Maiduguri	Suicide bomb	15 killed
98.	2/10/2015	Gwoza		20 killed
99.	6/10/2015	Gubio mosque	Bomb explosion	20 killed

100 .	7/10/2015	Yobe	Multiple blast	18 killed
101 .	10/10/2015	Borno		3 killed
102 .	12/10/2015		14 killed	
103 .	13/10/2015	Maiduguri	Blasts	7 killed
104 .	15/10/2015	Maiduguri	Bombs	35 killed
105 .	16/10/2015	Maiduguri	Suicide bombing	30 killed
106 .	17/10/2015	Adamawa		12 killed
107 .	21/10/2015			20 killed
108 .	23/10/2015	Maiduguri		28 killed
109 .	23/10/2015	Yola	Bombing	50 killed
110 .	24/10/2015	Borno	Suicide bomb	5 killed
111 .	25/10/2015		Suicide bombing	4 killed
112 .	28/10/2015	Yobe		20 killed
113 .	7/11/2015	Yola	Blast	34 killed & 80 injured
114 .	18/11/2015	Kano	Twin suicide bombing	19 killed
115 .	20/11/2015	Fika village		7 killed
116 .	27/11/2015			21 killed
117 .	28/11/2015	Cameroun	Two female suicide bombers detonated their explosives in a town in north of Cameroun, killing at least five people and injuring 12 others.	Five people killed and 12 injured
118 .	30/11/2015	Batallion	Boko Haram destroyed a military base (157 Batallion), while 107 soldiers were believed to be missing in action.	157 soldiers missing
119 .	2/12/2015	Sambisa Forest	A multinational force freed 900 hostages held by Boko Haram, killed more than 100 fighters and arrested 100 others. Troops also arrested 100 fighters, including a group leader, from Boko Haram's strongholds in the Sambisa	100 killed and 100 Boko Haram Fighters arrested.

			Forest.	
120	5/12/2015	Abuja	Security forces arrested nine alleged Boko Haram members plotting attacks on Abuja, over the festive season.	
121	5/12/2015	Koufoua	A triple suicide bombing at a market on an island in Lake Chad killed at least 15 people and injured 130. The carnage was blamed on Boko Haram. Females carried out the three explosions on Koufoua.	15 people killed and 130 injured
122	9/12/2015	Bam-Buratai	A panel set up by Governor Kashim Shettima of Borno State to investigate claims of new abductions of women in Bam-Buratai confirmed that a family of six was missing. There were reports that the insurgents abducted several girls on November 28 after killing many in the village during the attack.	6 killed
123	10/12/ 2015	Kamuya village,	Boko Haram killed seven civilians in the Kamuya village, which is located along the border between Borno and Yobe State. The terrorists then burned Kamuya village to the ground.	7 killed
124	12/12/2015			30 killed
125	15/12/2015			2 killed
126	25/12/2015	Borno		14 killed

**Source:** The Authors

**Community Security:** In most African cultures, most people derive security from their membership of an extended family system, of a group, of a cult, of a community, or of an organization that can provide a cultural identity and a reassuring set of values to them. Such groups also offer practical support to the members mostly in a distressed time. For example protection to weaker members and many tribal societies work on the principle that heads of households are entitled to enough land to support their family – and land is distributed accordingly as need arises. Even though, the extended family is now less likely to offer support to a member in distress, it remains a major guaranteeing front for human security in a polarized society like Nigeria. Despite that traditional languages and cultures are withering under the onslaught of mass media and globalization, many oppressive practices are being fought by people's organization, extended family system and through legal actions. Traditional communities and family groups also form a formidable security network to wade off much more direct attack from invader or attacker. But attacks from the Boko Haram on populace of northern Nigeria dislocated their communal living and weakened the traditional security network. In north-east states for instance, for about three years now marriage ceremonies and other traditional activities are contracted outside the states for fear of attacks from Boko Haram insurgents. This has resulted in an erosion of community values and principles. Many young people from the volatile northern

Nigeria have vowed never to return to their native communities. Great number of them fled their homes and cultures to new ones without a foreseeable hope of a return. The situation has increased ethnic tensions in their new communities, often over limited access to opportunities – whether to social service from the communities or to jobs from the market. As a result, about half of the communities in northern Nigeria lost out in community's development initiative, recently they experienced inter – ethnic strife as they are dislocated to strange communities and cultures. Ethnic clashes often have brutal results. According to NEMA's report on July 05, 2015 Boko Haram displaces over 1.4m in North East Nigeria.

Since 2013, crime reporters report many unlawful detention and imprisonment of innocent people by Boko Haram which attracted military intervention. On the other hand, the military also are cited as agents / the perpetrators of human right violations in both northern and southern Nigeria. One of the most useful indicators of insecurity in any community is the priority the government accords military strength- since government sometimes use armies to repress their own people. Arguments can be advanced for the use of armies to repress Boko Haram, but caution should be applied basically to avoid the unsuspecting innocent Nigeria being subjugated to untold humiliations and intimidations by the armies in the course of discharging their called duties. Along different routes, especially in the north, government is more concerned about its military establishment than the people, this imbalance shows up in the ratio of military budget spending to social development, yet nobody bothers to report the mayhem this military unleash on innocent civilians around the country. Travellers along Abuja – Lokoja or Abuja-Kano routes may not totally narrate their ordeals as they traverse to their different destinations on daily basis. Life is worthless and short in the hands of the military, although more in the hands of Boko Haram, both are agents of death and repressions in most northern states.

According to UNHCR March 2014, “Nigerians fleeing Boko Haram's relentless terror, Gombe state's capital has accepted hundreds of internally displaced people from the neighbouring states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe. Extreme violence has led some 250,000 civilians to flee their homes and find refuge in safer areas, staying mainly with host families”. As the world's attention has focused on Boko Haram's kidnapping of more than 300 schoolgirls in the north-eastern Nigerian town of Chibok, other aspects of terror have been largely ignored. For instance, its brutal violence has caused significant forced displacement in the north-east of the country and beyond. Nigeria's National Commission for Refugees (NCFR) recently made data available to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) showing that as many “as 3.3 million people have been internally displaced in the country by violence, including at least 250,000 people who have fled armed conflict perpetrated by Boko Haram. IDMC's Global Overview, published on 14 May, 2015, reported that Nigeria had the largest displaced population in Africa and the third largest in the world behind Syria and Colombia”. The government's strategy to combat Boko Haram has been narrow and short-sighted from the outset. It launched a military crackdown in 2013, pushing most of the group's members into neighbouring countries, only to see them reorganize and re-emerge stronger and better armed after a period of relative peace.

The declaration of a state of emergency in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states in May 2013, and the creation of civilian self-defence groups known as civilian joint task forces (CJTF), have also aggravated the spiral of violence and pushed this formerly urban group into isolated rural areas. Boko Haram's attacks have continued in the north-east since the state of emergency was imposed, and they have escalated in frequency and impact since the beginning of 2014, resulting in the death of many people.

### ***Concluding Remarks***

The Boko Haram's unquenchable aggression against communities, groups and unsuspecting individuals across the country is worrisome and threatening, not only to human security but to continuous existence of Nigeria. It is predominantly an Islamic sect, despite the fact that suicide terrorism is common in Islamic countries but not all modern suicide insurgents are Moslems. More than half of all suicide attacks across the world are carried out by new converts. Therefore, Nigerian government should not just concentrate on Muslims alone but attention should be given to the converts from other religious groups. According to Pape (2004:45), “the world's leader in suicide terrorism was the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka, a Marxist group that is completely secular and that recruits from Hindus.” Undoubtedly, the activities of Boko Haram and its subsequent violent confrontation with the state are a direct consequence of the failure of successive governments in Nigeria to sincerely address cyclical social prejudices and human security that threaten its

statehood. Because of this perceived social imbalance, every ethnic nationality or religious group struggles to survive by taking undue advantage of Nigeria's security lacuna. Without justifying violence, naturally many people become outraged when they are mistreated on the basis of ethnicity, religion, politics and resource control. Therefore, Nigerian government should make an urgent step to address the unbearable economic oppressions and other social injustices people suffer in the country. People should be given sense of belonging in terms of revenue sharing and political participation as to encourage the teeming youths be engaged on meaningful employment, national integration and unity.

### The Way Forward

Therefore, this paper has proffered the following recommendations as the way forward:

- ❖ **Concerning religious motivated violence, government** should through its policies and programmes discourage sacred terror, adherents of great faiths and religious cults that are placing violence at the heart of their beliefs. Therefore, Nigerian government should place an embargo on certain worship practices that nauseate public peace and security. For instance, the use of hijabs, blocking of streets and main roads, uncontrolled loud speakers in the churches and mosques should be banned completely.
- ❖ **Engaging communities;** there is need for government to encourage community engagement strategies such as joint and participatory civil societies and local methodologies in preventing emergence of violent extremism in the north or similar activities in other parts of the country, prevent communities from brewing fertile pool for recruitment of young people into violent extremism or the community itself being under the constant threat of the group, rather communities should be deeply involved in appropriate platforms for dialogue and early identification of grievances. Government should also adopt community oriented policing models and programmes that seek to solve local issues in partnership with the community, firmly based on human rights so as to avoid putting community members at risk.
- ❖ **Mobilizing resources:** For Buhari's government to maintain its change mantra on the area of security and transform its commitment into lasting change, he needs to make more efficient use of the existing funds and consider how based on the interdependence of political, social and economic drivers of Boko Haram, more synergies can be created in the security sector and civil society. More so, as the security operatives are mobilized, ammunitions procured for fighting of insurgency, there is need to grow an understanding that will attract many preventive measures that are traditionally understood to be part of development efforts in mediating and quelling violent extremism.

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