

The Socio-Economic Implications of Book-Haram Activities in Northern Nigeria

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Abstract:

Presently in Nigeria, there is a general feeling of insecurity among the Nigerian populace. The terrorizing effect of the activities of the fundamentalist sect, Boko Haram on the socio-economic condition of the northern states of Nigeria has become so devastating that some financial institutions and other business ventures have closed down in many areas, thereby causing relocation of non-indigenes to their own states. It is based on the above that this paper seeks to find out the extent the Boko Haram insurgency has affected the socio-economic situation in the northern states of Nigeria. During the course of the study, it was discovered that the insecurity situation in the north was so tense that even the indigenes have started to send their children and wards down to the southern parts of the country for their education. At the end, the paper proffered solutions to the problem.

Key Words: Insecurity Terrorism Insurgency, Feudal, Fundamentalism.

Introduction

Since Nigeria's independence in 1960, Nigerians have been faced with a lot of problems emanating from disorderliness, confusion and the latest insecurity development. To be precise, the first problem Nigeria encountered was the military intervention in the Nigeria's polity. The military administrations which were the fall-outs of the coups and counter coups marked the beginning of the country's calamities and misfortunes. These were followed by the claims and agitations for resource control by the Niger-Delta region, which in practical term means demand for larger shares of the oil revenue. The inability of the government to meet up with such demand, led to the militant groups from the region taking arms and waged war against Nigerians. The timely intervention of late President Alhaji Yar'Adua helped to quench

the burning flame ignited by the militants. Nigerians got relieved following the introduction of amnesty policy into Nigeria's political and democratic structures by the same Yar'Adua administration.

Unexpectedly, there arose in most recent time, a disorder of a serious religious dimension in the country. The dangerous trend in insecurity came with the emergence of Boko Haram, the Muslim fundamentalist sect, bombing and attacking everything within reach. According to reports, multiple explosions went off one after the other in places like Kano, in the usual manner of attacks by the members of Boko Haram sect in Maiduguri, Damaturu, Potiskum, Gombe, Abuja and Madalla in Niger State (Okpaga, Ugwu and Eme, 2012:77). They attacked government institutions and later expanded to churches thereby inflicting terror and destruction on innocent people. Suicide bombing of the United Nations Secretariat in Abuja on August 26, 2011 did not happen long after a similar attack on the Nigeria Police Force Headquarters on June 16. Boko Haram otherwise called "Western education is sin," claimed responsibilities for these and other series of bomb blasts and attacks. It is observed that the sect concentrated its attacks in the northern parts of the country.

From the foregoing, it becomes increasingly difficult for socio-economic activities to thrive under the present security threats that have enveloped the north. This is evident in the continuous relocation of Igbo businessmen from the north to other more peaceful environment. Also, the Yoruba people are equally returning to Lagos and Ibadan (Egbemode, 2012:71). It is unfortunate to observe that parents of north origin do not think of the great old Ahmedu Bello University (ABU), Bayero University, Kano (BUK) or University of Jos (UNIJOS) when filling JAMB forms for their children. In other words, for fear of the insecurity situation generally in the northern region, many parents from the area are sending their children to the southern areas of the country for their education. The question is, if the indigenes of the north are equally fleeing from their own God-given environment, what will then be the fate of the socio-economic condition of the region? It is the focus of this paper to provide answer to this question.

The Origin of Boko Haram Sect in the North

The northern power elites had through history created a thin layer of leaders from whom everyone else draws their protective existence. It was observed that unless one belonged to such elite group, there would be no appointment into a position in the upper echelons of government. This was done for fear of breeding critics who might rise to overthrow them. A recognized member of the power elite group had to approve appointments at any level (Odu, 2012:18). In other words, only those who are nominated by the powers that-be in high places could get top positions. Notably, a great number of young men who had no privilege of having the overlord influence existed side-by-side with the power elites. Sequel to this kind of discrimination against their kinsmen, the youths became aggrieved with restraint for over sixty years (Odu, 2012:18). Why should they not be aggrieved when for instance, a General Manager of Federal Housing Authority (FHA), a nominee of Sokoto caliphate, who was expected to serve the housing needs of Nigerian populace, was in practical term, catering for their elite group residing in Lagos. This was when FHA had not moved to Abuja. His main concern was to ensure that positions were created for their members in Lagos and other places using his privileged position.

It is unfortunate to note that these young men were ignorantly brain-washed against any attempt to change the feudal system and inhuman treatment being inflicted on them by their feudal lords. Even today, majority of these young men do not have any meaningful sources of livelihood. Though, they do not have bright and promising future, yet these lords are praised for their magnanimity for the daily meals served them (young men) through their cronies. It is observed that a few number of northerners are self-employed with little basic western education. According to Odu (2012:18), some of the northern youths are versed in Arabic language and the Qu'ran. He observed that these northern leaders and power elites who desire to feed young students of Qu'ranic schools, provide them (youths) with classes. Another group of students known as Almajiris move from place to place begging for alms which they share all the time with their Qu'ranic masters. There is no doubt that they have been subjected to ineptitudeness and impoverishment contrary to the settlers such as Ndigbos and Yorubas,

who, most of the time, make progress in their own land. In other words, their leaders who preached to them that Qu'ranic education was all they needed could not provide them with any tangible and meaningful sources of livelihood, which Ndigbo and Yoruba settlers are enjoying while the indigenes are watchers in their own land.

From the foregoing, envy against the settlers and acrimony against the elite group from the north are undisputably the outcome of long age accumulation of grievances from the downtrodden in the north. Comparatively, Islamic education cannot compete favourably with the western education and contemporary technological movement in Nigeria. How can the Moslem preachers or fanatics convince Nigerians that western education and its accompanied life styles were responsible for the plight of greater majority of the northerners, when their Moslem brothers in Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates (UAE) and their neighbours with their huge oil resources are great beneficiaries of western technology today? These countries serve as models in Islamic culture, which other Moslem countries try to emulate. Therefore, the claim by the Boko Haram fundamentalist sect in Nigeria that "Western education is sin" is a fallacy and cannot be substantiated. Rather the sect arose as a result of long years of accumulated grievances against their northern elite groups, who have been exploiting their ignorance to their own advantage.

The Boko Haram official name is Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati Wal Jihad, meaning "people committed to the propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad (Okpaga, Ugwu and Eme, 2012:82). According to these writers, the group earned its nickname from the teachings of its founder, Mohammed Yussuf in the early 2000s, in the restive north eastern city of Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State. In his own argument, Yussuf believed that western education (Boko) was forbidden (Haram) in the region because of the fact that education had brought nothing good to the people but poverty and misery. He succeeded in brain-washing his already disenchanted and disgruntled adherents that western education was the cause of their plight.

Theoretical Framework

The functional superiority of theories as guideposts in all fields of human endeavour lies in the fact that rather than base action on judgment derived from mere experience, guesswork or speculations, theories enable a chosen line of action to be anchored in and guided by evidence derived from scientific research, which makes the consequences of such an action fall as close in line with the intended direction as possible (Onah, 2003:128-129). It is in view of the above that conflict theory is selected as the viewpoint for the study.

Conflict is a common phenomenon in all organizations where two or more persons come together to achieve certain objectives set by organizations. That is why conflict was defined by Ugwu (2000:147), as an act of striking together, mutual interference of opposing or incompatible forces, ideas, interest contest, discord among different persons. He said, when there is a conflict, it implies that there is a dispute and struggle against something undesirable by the persons expressing opposing views or claims.

Furthermore, conflict is believed to represent a condition of disharmony within an interaction process usually as a result of a clash of interests between or among the parties involved in some form of relationship (Imobighe, 2003:20). But Nnoli (2003:1), refers conflict as contradictions arising from perceptions, behaviours, phenomena and tendencies, while Mialli (1992), believed that conflict emerges where a clear contradiction exists or is perceived to exist among the participants who view the outcome as extremely important. It can be deduced from the above contributions that conflict is a behavioural pattern involving two or more individual ties, which can be inter-personal, inter-groups, inter-organizations and inter-states (Afegbua, 2010:12).

The conflict as a concept has been well highlighted by Dhrendorf (1976), who saw it as a basic factor underlying societal dynamics. Dhrendorf cited an industry as a case where all participants are interested in self gain. As a result, there is bound to be conflict as participants in the industrialization process try to out-do each other in the quest for self gains (Anugwom, 1997:99). According to conflict

theory, Anugwom argued that the conflict between management and labour results from the fact that they have conflicting and contradicting interests. Precisely, the theory sees management as possessing the profit consciousness while labour possesses the wages consciousness. Under this circumstance, each party tries to make its own consciousness or interest dominant as well as increase its sphere of domination but this can only happen at the detriment of the other party (Anugwom, 1997). This conflict of interests between the two parties will create a situation where they are constantly fighting over whose interest or consciousness will have dominion over each other.

Considering the above analysis, the quest for material rewards, power and the predisposition to rule by the few elites in Northern Nigeria against the interests of the people of the downtrodden, has made the conflict theory relevant to this study. It is within the contending viewpoints above that this study attempts to ascertain the extent to which the conflict theory will provide reasonable explanations to insecurity situation in Northern Nigeria.

Manifestations of the Activities of Book Haram Sect in Northern Nigeria

The cycle of violence being unleashed on Nigerians by the fundamentalist group, Boko Haram has heightened serious fears among Nigerian populace and even the international community (Okpaga, Ugwu and Eme, 2012:77). The dangerous dimension the insecurity challenge has posed before the nation, has become a source of worry since there is belief in some quarters in Nigeria that the trend has even gone beyond religious or political colouration. The dangerous trend has led to the bombing of everything within the sect's reach with little or no provocation. For instance, it is pertinent to remind ourselves of the burning down of the Police stations and government offices in Borno State in 2009 following the clamp down on some of the sect members who refused bluntly to abide by the law establishing the wearing of crash helmets by motorcycle riders. This violence later on spread across other parts of Northern Nigeria with about 800 people left dead including Yussuf, the sect leader. This was followed by series of continuous bombings and attacks, which culminated in great loss of

lives and property. The table below depicts series of violence being perpetuated by Boko Haram sect in Northern Nigeria between July 2009 and June 2012.

Table 1: Series of Attacks in Northern Nigeria by Boko Haram Sect between July 2009 and June 2012

S/n	Date	State	Type of Violence/Attack
1.	July 27, 2009	Yobe	Attack on Potiskum, Yobe State's Divisional Police Headquarters, three Policemen and one fire service officer died.
2.	September 8, 2010	Bauchi	Bauchi Central Prison was set ablaze and members of the sect freed.
3.	March 13, 2010	Plateau	Another sect operation in the northern part of Jos, Plateau State led to the death of 300 people.
4.	October 1, 2010	Abuja	Explosions near the Eagle Square, Abuja claimed 12 lives, leaving many injured.
5.	December 24, 2010	Plateau	A bomb attack, in Barkin Ladi, Jos, Plateau State, killed eight people.
6.	December 31, 2010	Abuja	Explosions at Mogadishu Mammy Market, Abuja, claimed about 10 lives.
7.	January 21, 2011	Borno	The Borno State Governorship candidate of All Nigeria Peoples Party ANPP, for the 2011 election, Alhaji Modu Gubio, brother to former Governor of the state, Modu Sheriff, was killed by sect members alongside six others in Maiduguri, Borno State.
8.	March 2, 2011	Kaduna	Boko Haram killed two policemen attached to the residence of the Divisional Police Officer, Mustapha Sandamu, at Rigasa area of Kaduna State.
9.	March 30, 2011	Yobe	Bomb planted by Boko Haram in Damaturu, Yobe State, exploded and injured a police officer
10.	April 8, 2011	Niger	Bomb at INEC office in Suleja, Niger State, claimed lives of eight corps members and a suicide bomber.
11.	April 9, 2011	Borno	Bomb explosion occurred at a polling unit in Unguwar Doki Maiduguri, Borno State, killing the suicide bomber.
12.	April 26, 2011	Borno	Three people killed and scores injured in bomb attack
13.	April 29, 2011	Bauchi	Army Barracks in Bauchi bombed.

14.	May 19, 2011	Bauchi	Three policemen killed and two soldiers injured in bomb attack
15.	May 29, 2011	Bauchi	Explosion at mammy market of Shandawanka barracks in Bauchi State claimed lives and left many injured.
16.	May 30, 2011	Borno	Bombs exploded early morning on Baga road in Maiduguri, Borno State, 13 dead and 40 injured.
17.	June 7, 2011	Borno	Series of bomb blasts occurred in Maiduguri, Borno state, claiming five lives and leaving several others injured
18.	June 16, 2011	Abuja	Nigerian Police Headquarters, Abuja, bombed by a suspected suicide bomber, three killed and many vehicles damaged
19.	June 16, 2011	Borno	Four children killed in a bomb last at Damboa town, Maiduguri, Borno State
20.	June 20, 2011	Katsina	Seven policemen killed when Boko Haram stormed Kankara Police station in Kastina State. Two of the security men guarding a band opposite the state were also killed
21.	July 9, 2011	Borno	A clash between Boko Haram and the military left about 31 people dead in Maiduguri, Borno State. Also in Suleja, Niger State, a bomb targeted at a church killed four and injured many others
22.	July 11, 2011	Kaduna	Tragic explosion at a relaxation joint in Fokados Street, Kaduna
23.	July 12, 2011	Borno	Boko Haram threw an explosive device on a moving military patrol vehicle, which claimed five lives
24.	July 15, 2011	Borno	Explosion in Maiduguri injured five people
25.	July 23, 2011	Borno	An explosion close to the palace of the Shehu of Borno, Abubakar Garbai Elkanem, injured three soldiers
26.	July 25, 2011	Borno	Bomb explosion near the palace of traditional ruler in Maiduguri claimed eight lives.
27.	August 25, 2011	Borno	Sect members killed four policemen, one soldier and seven civilians and carted away undisclosed sum of money in a bank robbery by the sect.
28.	August 26, 2011	Abuja	A Suicide Bomber Drove into the United Nations Building in Abuja, 25 killed and 60 injured.
29.	September 12, 2011	Bauchi	Seven people, including four policemen, killed

			during a bomb attack on a police station in Misau, Bauchi State
30.	September 13, 2011	Borno	Sect members shot and injured four soldiers in an attack in Maiduguri, shortly after the arrest of 15 sect members, during military raids on Boko Haram hideouts in Bauchi State
31.	September 17, 2011	Borno	Brother in-law of Mohammed Yussuf, the slain leader of Boko Haram, Babakura Fuguo, shot dead in front of his house in Maiduguri by two members of the sect two days after he was visited by former President Olusegun Obasanjo
32.	October 3, 2011	Borno	Boko Haram attacked Baga market in Maiduguri and killed three people
33.	November 4, 2011	Yobe	About 150 people killed by Boko Haram in Damaturu, Yobe State
34.	November 27, 2011	Yobe	Seven people killed in attacks in Geidam, Yobe State
35.	December 18, 2011	Borno	Three members of Boko Haram were killed when their bomb detonated in Shuwari, Maiduguri, Borno State
36.	December 22, 2011	Borno	Explosive and gunshots killed four people and left several others injured.
37.	December 24, 2011	Plateau	About 80 people killed in bombing in Jos, Plateau State
38.	December 25	Niger	About 50 people died on Christmas Day bombing in Madalla, Niger State
39.	December 30, 2011	Borno	Seven people killed in Maiduguri, Borno State
40.	January 5, 2012	Gombe	About six people died in a church attack in Gombe State
41.	January 6, 2012	Adamawa	17 people died in a Christ Apostolic Church, Yola, Adamawa State while 20 Igbo people were also killed in Mubi in the same state.
42.	January 20, 2012	Kano	About 250 people killed in multiple attacks in Kano
43.	January 22, 2012	Bauchi	Two churches destroyed in Bauchi State, two military personnel, a DPO and eight civilian were killed by gunmen at the headquarters of Tafawa Balewa Local Government Area in the state.
44.	January 26, 2012	Kano	The Sabon Gari of Kano State witnessed another explosion, which caused another pandemonium in the state. Many injured and some luxury buses were damaged in the

			explosion.
45.	January 28, 2012	Borno	One killed in Gambiru, Ngala
46.	January 29, 2012	Borno	Two killed in Gambiru, Ngala
47.	January 30, 2012	Borno	Six people killed in Maiduguri environs including two Air force officers
48.	February 4, 2012	Borno	Two people killed in Damboa
49.	February 5, 2012	Yobe	SSS man killed
50.	February 07, 2012	Kadun	5 killed were killed in the Military Barrack
51.	February 07, 2012	Kano	10 killed in Kano
52.	February 10, 2012	Borno	4 Boko Haram members were killed during Soldier shoot-out in Maiduguri
53.	February 10, 2012	Kano	Boko Haram sect attacked Police Station and engaged the police in gun duel in Shagari Quarters, Kano
54.	February 12, 2012	Borno	Boko Haram members killed in Maiduguri
55.	February 15, 2012	Kogi	Jail Break In Koton Karji Prisons, Kogi State. A warder was killed and 199 prisoners released
56.	February 15, 2012	Niger	2 police men killed and injured in Minna, Niger State
57.	February 17, 2012	Yobe	2 people killed in Geidam, Yobe State
58.	February 17, 2012	Borno	5 people killed in Maiduguri metropolis
59.	February 20, 2012	Borno	Boko Haram and soldiers clashed in Maiduguri market. 30 persons died
60.	March 8, 2012	Sokoto	Boko Haram killed 1 Briton and 1 Italian who were abducted in 2011. They were killed during rescue attempt
61.	March 11, 2012	Plateau	A car bomb denoted outside Catholic Church in Jos killing 10 persons
62.	April 2, 2012	Kano	A Professor and 17 others were killed in Bayero University, Kano.
63.	April 8, 2012	Kaduna	38 people killed on Easter Sunday.
64.	April 9, 2012	Kaduna	40 people were killed in Kaduna
65.	April 9, 2012	Plateau	Bomb explosion near Plateau State Governor's Lodge.
66.	April 29, 2012	Borno	5 worshippers including a Pastor were killed in Maiduguri
67.	April 30, 2012	Taraba	11 died as suicide bomb hit Police Chief Convoy in Jalingo
68.	May 10, 2012	Kano	A bomb was defused around the premises of kings Garden Cinema, Bridge Quarters, Kano State where hundreds of soccer fans were billed to watch the final match between Chelsea and Liverpool.

69	June 17, 2012	Kaduna	Multiple bomb attacks on 3 churches killing 70 people and injured scores of others.
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Source: Adapted in Okpaga, Ugwu and Eme (2012:8) and also compiled by the Author.

The Socio-Economic Implications of Boko Haram Activities in Northern Nigeria:

It has been discovered that foreigners aid and abet violence in the North. According to the Kaduna State Police Commissioner, Mohammed Jinjiri Abubakar in Omipidan (2012:6), foreign countries sharing the same borders with the Northern states of Nigeria sneak into this country to cause disharmony. He did not hesitate to mention the citizens of Niger Republic, Chad and Cameroon among those involved in the terror activities in the north. This is evident on the arrest of many nationals of these countries, who were caught in mass killings and bombings. The Police Commissioner could not condone the activities of these foreigners any longer and therefore warned that the Police would no longer care about the Africa Charter on the free movement of citizens and would treat foreigners arrested with iron hand, adding that the nation’s kind gesture should not be taken for granted. The fear is that the invasion made by the foreign elements may endanger the existing good relationships between Nigeria and her neighbouring countries. When this happens, there is no doubt that the balance of payments of all countries involved will be badly affected. Under this circumstance, the economy of the north would have the greatest impact as the foreign nationals that contribute to a large extent on its development through their various economic activities, would relocate to their mother countries.

It has been observed that the incessant bombings and gun attacks in the Northern parts of this country by the Boko Haram fundamentalists, have seriously affected the economic lives of individuals in the areas. For instance, commercial banks have been forced to review their operational hours to begin from 9.00am to 12.00 noon as against the normal operational period of 8.00am to 4.00pm (Mohammed, 2012:2). According to Mohammed, this is a part of efforts by these financial institutions to safeguard their business premises. Under this new

operational arrangement, bank customers especially traders, find it very difficult to deposit their daily proceeds in the banks due to the limited banking operational hours that are no longer in their favour. Alternatively, these helpless traders have to hide their money in their shops. That is why in addition to the frequent suicide bombings, there are rising cases of shop-breakings and burglaries in the affected areas. The growing insecurity in the north has seriously affected the socio-economic condition such that many people including businessmen are fleeing to more peaceful environment in the southern parts of the country. Moreso, the prices of foodstuffs have started increasing astronomically following the drastic fall in the transportation of the foodstuffs from north to the south where they (foodstuffs) are greatly consumed. This is because the traders farm south find it unsafe to travel to north where they are sold. Consequently, these farm products are stockpiled wasting in the hands of farmers who rely on them as the only source of livelihood.

The insecurity situation created by the Boko Haram sect is threatening the existence of NYSC scheme, which is regarded as a unifying factor in this country. For instance, out of the 4171 members of the corps that were posted to serve in Adamawa state and later trained for the Adhoc electioneering in 2011 by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), about 1041 of them fled the state before the conduct of the general elections, due to lack of inadequate security in the country (Egburonu et al, 2012:21). Following the massacre of many corps members in some of the northern states in the same year (2011), many of them besieged the NYSC Secretariat in Abuja demanding the reposting to states outside the Northern States. Today, the members of the scheme are still protesting vehemently against posting corps member to any of the crisis – ridden states in the north until peace is restored. Some of them have even vowed to quit the scheme should they be forcefully posted to such areas only to die in the waiting hands of Boko Haram sect.

In a swift reaction to the Federal government's decision not to post NYSC members to some Northern States, Governor Kashim Shettima of Borno State lamented the impact the decision will have on their

affairs, and therefore, pleaded with the federal government to reconsider the decision as the state's health and education sectors could be negatively affected. (Musa, Akhaine and Abdulsami, 2012:1). This is because corps members that have been serving in the state provided over 65 per cent of the required healthcare delivery and education services at the grassroot level where about 75 per cent of the citizens live.

The current activities of the Boko Haram sect are obviously threatening the corporate existence of Nigeria's sovereignty. The north and south of the country are in disharmony as a result of allegations and counter allegations against each other. There is established impression in the minds of the majority of the southerners that some northern leaders, disgruntled with the loss of leadership in the past nine years, have decided to precipitate crises using religious and sectarian platforms. According to the southerners, these frustrated leaders from the north have the belief that rulership of this country is their birthright. For instance, political power rested in the north for 38 years out of 50 years of this country's existence (Obumneme, 2012:35). But having understood that the current political arrangement in the country has changed in contrast to their expectations, and having also realized that restoring the power (rulership) to status quo may not be easy, they decided to hide under the religious sect, Boko Haram to express their ill-fated anger and ill-feelings. That is why they decided to incite the members of the sect and other people at the downtrodden from the same north, who were already aggrieved and frustrated following the high-handedness of the same leaders, who have been tormenting, alienating and denying them of their fundamental human rights. It is believed that the poor and wretched young men from north are products of long years of neglect and economic slavery (Obumneme, 2012:35). That the poorest people will be found in the north has been authenticated by these boys who are willing to die by killing orders. There is no person with well established future prospect who would want to die recklessly. There is the belief from different quarters that the north is presently reaping what it sowed in the lives of these frustrated youths so many years ago.

It is observed that Boko Haram activities are now threatening the hope and future of the children from the Northern states of this country. It is disheartening to note that the security situation in the areas has denied these children the opportunity of participating in the recent Cowbell National Secondary Schools Mathematics Competition (NASSMAC), organized by Promasordor Nigeria Ltd. It was revealed that out of those who emerged champions in this year's competition, and were honoured, only two northern schools participated, and only one male student could make the list from the entire northern region (Tyessi, 2012:11). This situation is opposed to 6, 7 and 11 champions that emerged from the region in 2009, 2010 and 2011 respectively. The above pathetic situation calls for immediate solution to the security problem in the north as its escalation may lead to total breakdown of education system in the area, and the consequence will be very disastrous not only to the region but to the entire country.

It is alleged that Boko Haram sect was the creation of politicians, especially some Governors from the north, who needed them (Boko Haram) to win elections, intimidate opponents, score political points and extract relevance at the national level (Okpaga, Ugwu and Eme (2012:85). According to these writers, the sect reached an agreement with the former Kano State Governor, Ibrahim Shekarau in 2004 to be receiving monthly payment of N5 million, which was later increased to N10 million in 2009. Similar agreement was equally reached between the sect and the Bauchi state government. Unfortunately, these agreements broke down following the takeover of the mantle of leaderships in the two states by the new Governors in 2011, and the payments were stopped. This, according to the sect's spokesman, warranted the bombings in the two states. That is why Lister (2012:14), claimed that it is no longer a sect of Islamic fanatics but has the support of disgruntled politicians and their paid thugs. In his own reaction, a legal practitioner and Human Rights Activists, Barrister Pedro Azogu was not comfortable with the roles played by some politicians from north. He stated without mincing words that all the children from the same cultural background, who were denied western education but trained to be killers, are the same people that will kill those that had deprived them of social and economic wellbeing (Onuoha, 2012:27),

hence concentration of suicide bombings and gun attacks in the Northern States.

Boko Haram has succeeded in instilling fear and hatred among the people who have been living in peace and harmony for decades. For instance, Adamawa state is a heterogeneous society with high social diffusion made up of over 70 different tribes, ethnic compositions and languages. But in spite of their differences, Adamawa was known to be one of the most peaceful states in the north east until the rise of the current bombings and attacks, which have brought misery among the people. Prior to the present insurgency, Muslims, Christians and other religious believers were living peacefully. But today, Boko Haram has brought disintegration, discrimination and lack of trust among people of the same blood. Muslims are no longer comfortably discussing family issues with their Christian brothers and sisters. This ugly situation is not peculiar to Adamawa State but cuts across the northern region. For fear of being attacked, northern parents are no longer eager to register their children in most schools in the north. That is why parents of northern origin are sending their children and wards down to the southern parts of this country for their education.

Recommendation:

Allegations from different quarters have been levelled against some high placed personalities in Northern Nigeria over their hidden agenda in providing financial support to Boko Haram religious sect. According to Ifijeh (2011:19), Senator Ali Ndume and Late Ambassador Saidu Pindar were believed to be some of the greatest financiers to the sect. This is in addition to the established case against a judge with the Kano State judiciary that his call log showed that he actually had links with the religious sect, Boko Haram. Considering the above, the federal government should regard these persons as terrorists, who aid and abet terrorism in Nigeria, and therefore should be arrested and prosecuted accordingly to serve as a deterrent to others who are yet to be exposed.

Federal government should be reminded of the fact that the members of Boko Haram comprise the children of the less privileged people who were unable to have access to western education owing to financial

incapabilities of their parents, and therefore, the products of long years of neglect and economic slavery. To reduce the incidents of violence and insecurity resulting from reactions of the aggrieved and frustrated people of the downtrodden from the north, all the governments from the crisis-ridden areas should focus on investing more in education to tackle the issues of illiteracy and economic backwardness. In this regard, the Governors from the areas concerned should introduce free and compulsory education particularly to the “Almajiris.”

The federal government had in many occasions declared state of emergencies in some northern states that were seriously devastated by the Boko Haram sect. Unfortunately, this strategy was of no effect as the members were not domiciled in a particular area. Alternatively, the federal government should invite the northern state Governors and security agencies as well as the leaders of the sect, who are known to claim responsibilities for the most attacks, for a dialogue. In this dispensation, the amnesty approach employed in the Niger – Delta region can be useful.

The multi-ethnic nature of this country is regarded as one of the major challenges facing the security situation in this country. This condition has obviously generated a lot of primordial feelings and sentiments among Nigerian populace. It is on this premise that Odita (2012:17), reminded every Nigerian that this country belongs to all of us and each person has a responsibility not just the security agents. In this respect, Nigerians should not fold their hands indefinitely waiting for the government to tackle the incessant bombings and gun attacks alone. If a dialogue approach fails, the government should provide enabling environment and adequate tools to well trained security agents to perform, while the public provides reliable information on the whereabouts of the sect’s members, who are residing in the midst of the people.

Considering the level of security consciousness in this country, one may be constrained to state that Nigeria is not yet ready to tackle the issue of Boko Haram menace in the north. It is pertinent to remind Nigerians that after 9/11 disaster in United States and July 7 bombings in London,

all important public facilities have been well guarded with modern technological gadgets capable of detecting and preventing bomb blasts. It is not out of place if Nigeria should borrow a leaf from these advanced countries by ensuring that all the various security agencies are put on red alert and ensure that all sensitive public facilities are properly guarded with modern technological gadgets capable of detecting and preventing bomb blasts.

Conclusion

The dangerous dimension the insecurity challenge has posed by the fundamentalist group, Boko Haram, has heightened serious fears among Nigerian populace. The trend has led to incessant suicide bombings and all sorts of attacks in the northern parts of the country with little or no provocation. Consequently, lives and property are lost, business ventures and shops have remained closed especially in the north. Most regrettably, the Igbos who are the life-wire of economic activities in the north are relocating in large numbers to their states of origin to avoid losing their lives in the hands of the sect.

It was discovered from the study that the use of force or declarations of state of emergencies by the federal government were of no effect to the Boko Haram insurgency. Alternatively, the federal government should embrace dialogue approach, especially now that the fundamentalist group has declared its readiness to dialogue with the federal government (Akhain, 2012:51), but this can only be effective if the dissident group within the government cycle, who are ever ready to sabotage the strategy, are fished out, dislodged and prosecuted accordingly.

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