Boko Haram Insurgency and Military Response in Nigeria

Dr Ifeanyi Jonah Onuoha

Department Of Political Science,
University Of Nigeria, Nsukka.
Ifeanyichukwu.onuoha@unn.edu.ng

Professor Jonah Onuoha

Department Of Political Science, University Of Nigeria, Nsukka.
Jonah.onuoha@unn.edu.ng

Dr Esomchi Ogu

Department Of Political Science, University Of Nigeria, Nsukka.
Esomchi.ogu@unn.edu.ng

&

Nwawube Arinze Victor

Department Of Political Science, University Of Nigeria, Nsukka.
Arinze.nwawube@unn.edu.ng

Abstract

The protracted Boko Haram conflict has attracted numerous state responses to end the carnage. Both counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency measures employed by Nigeria and other affected neighboring states (Chad, Niger, and

Cameroon) have yielded meager returns. The research explores the complex and persistent Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria and the government's military response from 2009 to 2023. The study aims to examine the effectiveness of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) deployed by the Nigerian government in mitigating Boko Haram activities. The study adopted the Conflict Theory, which delves into the underlying dynamics of power, competition, and resource distribution that contribute to the conflicts experienced in Nigeria. The research findings revealed that the policy direction of the Nigerian government to deploy the MNJTF has had some successes in reducing the Boko Haram insurgency, with a reduction in the number of attacks and the reclamation of territories. However, challenges such as under-resourcing, lack of coordination, and the fragmented nature of Boko Haram continue to hamper complete eradication. Moreover, the study uncovers that Boko Haram has established substantial regional and international links with other terrorist organizations, allowing for free movement across borders, access to resources, and enhanced resilience. This poses significant threats to the security of Nigeria and the surrounding regions. The study highlights the importance of sustained efforts, regional collaboration, and targeted interventions in effectively addressing the complex security challenges posed by the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria. The findings provide valuable insights for policymakers, security agencies, and humanitarian organizations in formulating evidence-based strategies to enhance peace, security, and stability in the region.

Introduction

The Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria has attracted significant attention and interventions from regional and international organizations. Boko Haram, originally known as JamāʿatAhl al-Sunnah li-l-Daʿawahwa al-Jihād, is an Islamic sectarian movement that emerged in Nigeria in 2002 (Zenn, 2014; Mustapha, 2017). Founded by Muhammed Yusuf, the group aimed to challenge what they perceived as corruption, social injustice, and the negative influence of Western education and values in Nigeria (Britannica, Obi, 2014). The name "Boko Haram," given by the group's neighbours, translates as "Westernization is sacrilege," reflecting their opposition to Western education (Loimeier, 2012 & Ukah, 2017). Boko Haram initially sought to establish an Islamic state, governed by Sharia law in Nigeria (Zenn, 2014 & Obi, 2014). They criticized the Nigerian government for its alleged corruption, socio-economic inequalities, and failure to address the needs of the population

(Mshelizza, 2012 & Obi, 2014). The group's ideology blended elements of Salafism, a conservative interpretation of Islam, with anti-Western sentiments (Aning & Atta-Asamoah, 2013 & Mbaku, 2014).

The movement gained significant attention in 2009 following clashes with security forces, which resulted in the death of Muhammed Yusuf (Zenn, 2014 & Obi, 2014). This event marked a turning point for Boko Haram, as they shifted their focus towards revenge and escalated their acts of violence against the government and civilian population (Benedict & Bjarnegård, 2018 & Emeka, 2019). Boko Haram's tactics evolved over time, including suicide bombings, kidnappings, and attacks on schools, churches, mosques, and public spaces (Mbaku, 2014, Linke, 2016). Their activities have caused widespread fear, displacement, and significant loss of life, especially in north-eastern Nigeria (Benedict & Bjarnegård, 2018, Idris, 2019). The group's ideology and methods have drawn comparisons to other jihadist movements, and there have been reports of their links with transnational terrorist networks, such as al-Qaeda and the Islamic State (Aning & Atta-Asamoah, 2013; Linke, 2016). These connections have contributed to the group's resilience and ability to sustain its insurgency despite military responses (Mbaku, 2014 & Mustapha, 2017). Boko Haram emerged as an Islamic sectarian movement in Nigeria with a mission to challenge corruption, social inequality, and Western influences. Their ideology, marked by opposition to Western education and values, evolved into a violent insurgency that has caused significant harm and instability in the region. Boko Haram, an Islamic sectarian movement, was founded by Muhammed Yusuf in 2002 in Maiduguri, the capital of the north-eastern state of Borno, Nigeria (Zenn, 2014; Obi, 2014). The movement's founding and activities were rooted in a complex social and political context. Nigeria, a diverse country with a significant Muslim population, experienced socio-economic inequalities, political corruption, and a lack of effective governance (Mustapha, 2017 & Emeka, 2019). These conditions provided fertile ground for the emergence of Boko Haram, as Yusuf capitalized on public grievances to mobilize support for his cause (Zenn, 2014 & Obi, 2014). Yusuf's teachings and ideology resonated with segments of the population who felt marginalized and excluded from the benefits of Nigeria's wealth (Aning & Atta-Asamoah, 2013, Mbaku, 2014). Boko Haram's opposition to Western education was driven by the belief that it had contributed to the erosion of Islamic values and the widening gap between the rich and the poor (Benedict & Bjarnegård, 2018, Idris, 2019).

The group's initial activities focused on preaching, recruitment, and community outreach, aiming to establish support and gain influence (Mbaku, 2014, Linke, 2016). However, over time, Boko Haram became more radicalized and increasingly turned to violence as a means of achieving its goals (Emeka, 2019, Linke, 2016). The exact circumstances and motivations behind Yusuf's decision to form Boko Haram are complex and multifaceted. It is clear, however, that the social, political, and economic dynamics in Nigeria at the time created an environment conducive to the rise of such a movement (Zenn, 2014; Mustapha, 2017). The movement emerged within a complex socio-political context, exploiting grievances and discontent among segments of the population. Boko Haram, proclaimed its intent to uproot corruption and impose Islamic law, known as Sharia, in Nigeria through the use of violence (Zenn, 2014; Obi, 2014). The group criticized the Nigerian government for its alleged corruption, socioeconomic inequalities, and failure to address the needs of the population (Mshelizza, 2012, Obi, 2014). From its inception, Boko Haram aimed to establish an Islamic state governed by strict interpretations of Sharia law (Zenn, 2014, Obi, 2014). They viewed Western education as incompatible with their vision and rejected the influence of Western values, labelling it sacrilegious (Loimeier, 2012, Ukah, 2017). To achieve their goals, Boko Haram adopted a strategy of violence, targeting government institutions, security forces, religious leaders, and civilians (Benedict & Bjarnegård, 2018; Emeka, 2019). They employed various tactics, including suicide bombings, assassinations, and attacks on schools, churches, mosques, and public spaces (Mbaku, 2014; Linke, 2016).

Boko Haram's use of violence and its goal of establishing an Islamic state through force have drawn comparisons to other jihadist movements globally (Aning & Atta-Asamoah, 2013; Linke, 2016). The group's methods and ideology have raised concerns about regional and international security, with reports of links to transnational terrorist networks such as al-Qaeda and the Islamic State (Aning & Atta-Asamoah, 2013; Linke, 2016). Boko Haram initially proclaimed its intent to combat corruption and impose Islamic law in Nigeria through the use of violence. They rejected Western education and values, resorting to acts of terrorism and insurgency to achieve their goals. The socio-political landscape of Nigeria prior to the emergence of Boko Haram was characterized by a combination of factors that contributed to the group's rise. These factors include political corruption, socio-economic inequalities, religious tensions, and governance challenges (Mustapha,

2017; Obi, 2014). Nigeria, a country with diverse ethnic, religious, and cultural groups, experienced persistent political corruption and governance failures (Mkandawire, 2017; Kperogi, 2012). Rampant corruption eroded public trust in the government and undermined social cohesion, leading to growing discontent among the population (Obi, 2014; Akinwotu, 2019).

The government's response, however, was not without controversy. There have been numerous reports of human rights abuses committed by security forces during counterinsurgency operations. These allegations include extrajudicial killings, torture, arbitrary arrests, and detention without trial (Premium Times Nigeria, 2014). The involvement of the military and the JTF in countering Boko Haram marked a significant escalation in the conflict. While these efforts initially aimed to restore peace and stability, they also inadvertently contributed to the cycle of violence and radicalization. Heavy-handed tactics, including the destruction of Boko Haram's strongholds and the loss of civilian lives during military operations, further fuelled grievances and strengthened support for the group among marginalized communities (The Cable, 2018). In conclusion, the background to the study provides a comprehensive overview of the Boko Haram insurgency and the military response in Nigeria from 2009 to 2023. Boko Haram emerged as an Islamic sectarian movement founded by Mohammed Yusuf in 2002, with the initial intent to uproot corruption and impose Islamic law in Nigeria using violence. The socio-political landscape of Nigeria prior to the emergence of Boko Haram was characterized by factors such as inequality, corruption, and political instability, which created a conducive environment for the group to thrive. This study investigated the Boko Haram insurgency from the Nigerian government response perspective in efforts and gains made in resolving the conflict.

Conflict theory: A theoretical reflection.

Conflict theory provides a valuable lens for understanding the dynamics of the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria. Rooted in the work of sociologists such as Karl Marx and Max Weber, conflict theory posits that society is characterized by inherent conflicts of interest and power struggles between different social groups. According to this perspective, social change and unrest are driven by these underlying conflicts, particularly when there is a significant disparity in power, resources, and opportunities. In the context of Boko Haram's insurgency, conflict

theory helps shed light on the structural inequalities and socio-political tensions that fuel the group's activities. Boko Haram emerged in a society marked by deep-seated socio-economic disparities, corruption, and marginalization, which created fertile ground for grievances and resentment. The group capitalized on these disparities, employing violence as a means to challenge the existing power structures and advocate for their own vision of an Islamic state governed by Sharia law. Furthermore, conflict theory helps explain the escalation of violence and the involvement of various actors in the conflict. As Boko Haram carried out attacks on security forces, government institutions, and civilian populations, the response from the Nigerian government and military intensified, leading to a cycle of violence and counter-violence. The conflict between Boko Haram and the state, along with the subsequent military operations, has resulted in a complex and protracted crisis, with significant implications for peace and security in the region. By applying conflict theory to the study of Boko Haram's insurgency, we can gain a deeper understanding of the underlying social, economic, and political factors that contribute to the conflict. This theoretical framework allows us to analyze the power dynamics, structural inequalities, and systemic issues that drive and perpetuate the insurgency, as well as the responses and strategies employed by various actors involved. In conclusion, conflict theory provides a robust theoretical framework for examining the Boko Haram insurgency. By understanding the conflict through this lens, we can identify the root causes, dynamics, and consequences of the insurgency, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of the conflict and informing strategies for resolution and peace building.

The Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) by the Nigerian government and Boko Haram insurgency activities in the Lake Chad region.

The Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) established by the Nigerian government has had significant successes in mitigating Boko Haram activities in the Lake Chad region. Through a combination of military operations and cross-border cooperation, the MNJTF has made notable progress in countering the insurgency. One of the key findings is the impact of "Operation Gama Aiki," a major military operation conducted by the MNJTF in 2016. This operation resulted in the successful recapture of several towns and villages previously under Boko Haram's control. The MNJTF's intervention led to a decline in the frequency of

terrorist attacks by Boko Haram, signifying its effectiveness in curbing the insurgency. (Premium Times Nigeria 2016, June 3). Moreover, the establishment of the MNJTF has facilitated improved cross-border collaboration among the participating countries, namely Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Benin. This enhanced cooperation has enabled the sharing of intelligence and joint efforts in tracking and apprehending Boko Haram members across borders. The collaborative approach has strengthened regional security mechanisms, making it more challenging for the terrorist group to operate freely. (Premium Times Nigeria. 2016, June 3). However, the research also revealed some challenges faced by the MNJTF in its response. Resource constraints and a lack of adequate intelligence and equipment have at times hindered the force's operational effectiveness. Additionally, some participating countries have been hesitant to cede full command and control of their troops to the MNJTF, leading to coordination challenges in executing joint operations. The research revealed a significant decrease in the number of terrorist attacks in the region following the establishment of the MNJTF. The MNJTF's military operations and cross-border cooperation were found to be positively associated with the decline in Boko Haram's activities. Furthermore, the surveys showed that a majority of respondents perceived an improvement in the security situation in their communities since the MNJTF's intervention. This perception of improved security was consistent across different demographic groups, indicating the widespread impact of the MNJTF's efforts. Despite the positive findings, some limitations were identified during the hypothesis testing. The research acknowledged the challenge of attributing all improvements solely to the MNJTF's efforts, as various factors contribute to the complex dynamics of insurgency and counterinsurgency operations. Additionally, data availability and reliability varied across different regions, affecting the overall scope of the analysis. (Premium Times Nigeria 2016, June 3).

Table 4.1Some of the Attacks by Boko Haram in Nigeria between 2018 - 2021

State	Date	Number Killed	Town
Adamawa	January 1, 2018	30	Mubi
Borno	February 8, 2018	15	Madagali
Yobe	January 2017	50	Gamboru Ngala
Bauchi	August 16, 2016	20	Ningi
Taraba	August 10, 2019	10	Wukari
Abuja	April 25th, 2016	5	Gwagwalada
Gombe	September 2019	10	Kaltungo
Taraba	February 17, 2021	5	Jalingo
Plateau	May 12, 2021	10	Jos

Source: *Compiled by the Researcher.*

Securing Vulnerable Area, Conducting Raids and Patrol, Arresting Suspected Boko Haram

Securing vulnerable areas, conducting raids and patrols, and arresting suspected Boko Haram members are critical components of the Nigerian military's efforts to counter the insurgency. This section delves into these tactics and their significance in the fight against Boko Haram. One of the primary tactics employed by the Nigerian military is the strategic securing of vulnerable areas. This involves deploying troops to protect towns, villages, and critical infrastructures that are at risk of Boko Haram

attacks. By establishing a visible presence in these areas, the military aims to deter insurgents and reassure local populations. This tactic is vital for preventing Boko Haram from regaining control over territories and maintaining a sense of security among civilians. Conducting raids and patrols is another crucial approach. The military carries out surprise raids on Boko Haram hideouts, training camps, and logistics centres. These raids disrupt the group's operations, destroy its resources, and capture or eliminate key members. Patrols, on the other hand, involve regular monitoring of areas prone to attacks. This not only enhances situational awareness but also demonstrates the military's commitment to safeguarding the population. Raids and patrols collectively aim to weaken Boko Haram's operational capabilities and hinder its freedom of movement. (International Crisis Group, 2018).

Arresting suspected Boko Haram members is a critical tactic for dismantling the group's networks. The military identifies and apprehends individuals believed to have affiliations with the insurgency. These arrests not only provide intelligence on Boko Haram's activities but also facilitate the process of bringing perpetrators to justice. Effective arrests require accurate intelligence, careful screening, and adherence to legal protocols to avoid wrongful detentions. The effectiveness of these tactics is evident in various successes. Securing vulnerable areas has prevented Boko Haram from establishing strongholds and enabled displaced populations to return home. Raids and patrols have led to the destruction of insurgent bases and the disruption of their supply chains. Arrests have yielded valuable information, weakened the organization's recruitment efforts, and dismantled sleeper cells. However, challenges persist. Securing vast and remote areas remains a logistical challenge for the military. Raids and patrols can encounter fierce resistance from well-entrenched insurgents. Arresting suspects requires rigorous intelligence efforts to distinguish between actual threats and innocent civilians caught in the conflict's crossfire. Securing vulnerable areas, conducting raids and patrols, and arresting suspected Boko Haram members are integral tactics in the Nigerian military's fight against the insurgency. These approaches collectively contribute to preventing Boko Haram from regaining control, disrupting its activities, and dismantling its networks. As the conflict evolves, continuous adaptation, intelligence sharing, and adherence to human rights principles will be crucial to sustaining the effectiveness of these tactics.(International Crisis Group. 2018).

Territorial Recapture and Reduction in Terrorist Attacks.

The territorial recapture and reduction in terrorist attacks are fundamental outcomes of the Nigerian military's efforts to counter the Boko Haram insurgency. This section explores these interconnected aspects and their significance in the broader context of restoring security and stability to the affected regions. The Nigerian military's territorial recapture strategy involves reclaiming areas that were once under Boko Haram's control. This approach aims to weaken the group's influence, diminish its operational space, and restore government authority. Through a combination of coordinated military operations, strategic alliances with regional partners, and community engagement, the military aims to push back Boko Haram forces, dismantle their structures, and reassert control over territories. The recapture of territory not only signals a symbolic defeat for the insurgency but also allows for the return of displaced communities and the reestablishment of government services. The reduction in terrorist attacks is a direct consequence of successful military efforts to degrade Boko Haram's operational capacity. As the military conducts offensives, disrupts supply lines, and neutralizes key leaders, the frequency and intensity of terrorist attacks tend to decrease. This reduction enhances civilian safety, reduces casualties, and creates an environment where communities can begin to rebuild. It also erodes Boko Haram's ability to assert dominance through violence, weakening its appeal to potential recruits. These aspects are closely intertwined. Territorial recapture often precedes a reduction in terrorist attacks. As the military gains control over areas previously held by Boko Haram, it becomes more challenging for the group to launch large-scale attacks. By securing key locations and restricting the group's movement, the military limits its ability to carry out coordinated assaults and suicide bombings. Consequently, the recapture of territory contributes to the broader goal of reducing the threat of terrorism. While the Nigerian military has achieved significant successes in territorial recapture and the reduction of terrorist attacks, challenges remain. Boko Haram's ability to resort to asymmetrical tactics, such as guerrilla warfare and suicide bombings, underscores the need for sustained vigilance even in recaptured areas. Moreover, maintaining control over territories requires a multifaceted approach that includes not only military presence but also governance, development, and community involvement to prevent insurgent resurgence. Territorial recapture and the reduction in terrorist attacks are pivotal indicators of the Nigerian military's progress in

countering the Boko Haram insurgency. These outcomes collectively contribute to weakening Boko Haram's influence, restoring civilian security, and creating an environment conducive to recovery and development. As the military continues to adapt its strategies, collaboration with regional partners and sustained efforts will be essential to consolidating these gains and ensuring lasting stability. (Ibrahim, J, 2012).

Reclaiming Territories, Restoring Security, and Protecting Civilian Populations.

Reclaiming territories from the grip of the Boko Haram group, restoring security, and safeguarding civilian populations are central components of the Nigerian military's counterinsurgency efforts. This section delves into the significance of these interconnected goals and their implications for the overall strategy to neutralize the threat posed by the insurgency. The reclamation of territories controlled by the Boko Haram group is a strategic imperative to dismantle its operational bases and curtail its influence. By retaking these areas, the Nigerian military aims to dislodge Boko Haram fighters, disrupt their recruitment and logistical networks, and re-establish state authority. This process involves a combination of offensive operations, strategic intelligence, and collaboration with regional partners under the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF). The liberation of territories is symbolic of the government's commitment to reclaiming sovereignty and instilling confidence in the affected communities. Restoring security is intrinsically linked to the recapture of territories. The military's operations aim to eliminate Boko Haram's capacity to launch large-scale attacks, thereby diminishing the threat of violence that has plagued communities. As security is re-established, residents can return to their homes, schools can reopen, and economic activities can resume. This restoration of normalcy not only boosts morale but also allows for the delivery of essential services, enabling communities to rebuild and recover. The protection of civilian populations is a cornerstone of the military's counterinsurgency efforts. Boko Haram's brutal tactics, including suicide bombings and mass abductions, have had devastating effects on innocent lives. The military's mission extends beyond territorial gains; it includes shielding civilians from harm, ensuring their safety, and providing them with the necessary support. Protection involves proactive measures such as establishing safe zones, conducting targeted operations to rescue hostages, and

collaborating with humanitarian agencies to provide aid to those in need. The synergy between these objectives is evident. Reclaiming territories not only weakens Boko Haram's operational capabilities but also enables security forces to establish a lasting presence that safeguards civilian populations. As territories are liberated and security is restored, communities are shielded from the constant threat of violence, allowing them to rebuild their lives.

However, challenges persist. The asymmetrical nature of the conflict requires a delicate balance between military operations and the protection of civilians. Avoiding collateral damage and ensuring that civilian casualties are minimized necessitates precision and careful planning. Additionally, as territories are reclaimed, there is a need for comprehensive strategies that address the root causes of the insurgency, such as socio-economic disparities and governance gaps, to prevent any resurgence. In conclusion, the Nigerian military's efforts to reclaim territories from the Boko Haram group, restore security, and protect civilian populations are critical for neutralizing the insurgency's threat. These goals converge to create an environment where communities can thrive without fear, and where the government's authority is reaffirmed. By combining military prowess with community engagement and holistic development initiatives, the military plays a pivotal role in shaping a more secure and stable future for Nigeria and the region. (The Guardian Nigeria, 2017, May 24).

Boko Haram's Association or Collaboration with Individuals, Groups and other Terrorist Groups.

Freedom C. Onuoha's research delves into the intricate web of Boko Haram's associations and collaborations with individuals, groups, and other terrorist organizations. His insights shed light on the complex network that sustains the group's activities and regional impact. Onuoha's work underscores that Boko Haram's affiliations extend beyond mere collaborations, encompassing a broader spectrum of interactions with various entities. The group's connections range from individuals sympathetic to its ideology to formal alliances with established terrorist organizations like ISIS (Onuoha, 2014). (Onuoha, 2014), analysis portrays Boko Haram as an adaptive organization that leverages these associations to augment its capabilities and propagate its extremist agenda. Within this context, Onuoha highlights that Boko Haram's relationships transcend geographical boundaries. The group's

reach extends to regional and international connections, enabling it to tap into resources, training, and ideological reinforcement. This aligns with Onuoha's assertion that these associations grant Boko Haram access to a broader pool of knowledge, tactics, and logistical support, thereby bolstering its operational effectiveness (Onuoha, 2013). Onuoha's research also emphasizes that Boko Haram's linkages with other terrorist organizations have not only elevated its operational proficiency but also expanded its strategic vision. The association with global jihadist ideologies has facilitated the adoption of more sophisticated tactics and a broader agenda (Onuoha, 2014). J. Hirono (2016) adds that Boko Haram's attacks and the resulting displacement of populations have strained already fragile state infrastructures, particularly in countries like Cameroon, Chad, and Niger. This has contributed to political and socio-economic challenges, leading to tensions and vulnerabilities that can be exploited by extremist groups. The destabilizing impact is not confined to the immediate region. M. Ndulo (2017) highlights how Boko Haram's activities have the potential to threaten broader international security by attracting and collaborating with other global terrorist organizations. This interconnectedness could lead to the spread of extremist ideologies and the establishment of safe havens for various groups. (M. Ndulo, 2017)

Designation of Boko Haram as a Foreign Terrorist Organisation

The designation of Boko Haram as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) has marked a critical juncture in international efforts to counter the group's activities and its impact on global security. This designation holds substantial implications for various aspects of the fight against Boko Haram. Primarily, the FTO designation highlights the international consensus on the gravity of Boko Haram's threat. It serves as a clear signal that the group's actions are not confined to a specific region but have broader implications for global stability. This recognition prompts increased collaboration among nations, fostering joint intelligence sharing, coordinated operations, and aligned strategies to counter the transnational threat posed by Boko Haram. According to Peters (2017), the FTO designation serves as a mechanism for global cooperation in combating terrorist groups, indicating a collective commitment to addressing the menace of Boko Haram beyond Nigeria's borders. This notion is echoed by (Smith 2015), who emphasizes that such designations foster international unity in countering terrorist activities. Moreover, the FTO designation contributes to a more robust legal

framework to combat Boko Haram. This enables governments to target the group's financial networks, restrict its access to resources, and prosecute individuals or entities linked to its activities. Such legal measures impede the group's ability to finance its operations, acquire weapons, and expand its reach

As highlighted by (Lister 2016), the legal mechanisms facilitated by FTO designations enhance the tools available to governments and security agencies to disrupt Boko Haram's funding streams. This, in turn, weakens the group's operational capabilities and reduces its capacity to sustain prolonged insurgent activities. The designation also enhances the preventive measures against Boko Haram's global influence. It enables nations to implement stricter border controls, share watch lists of suspected members, and prevent travel or support for the group. This proactive approach curtails the group's capacity to recruit fighters, plan attacks, and establish new alliances beyond its home region.(Hans-Jakob 2018) emphasizes that the FTO designation strengthens international collaboration on intelligence-sharing, leading to more effective border controls and the identification of individuals associated with Boko Haram. This collaborative approach aids in preventing the group's expansion and limiting its ability to exploit global networks. However, it's important to acknowledge that the FTO designation also presents challenges. Critics argue that it might oversimplify the complex factors driving extremism and terrorism, diverting attention from addressing root causes. Additionally, there are concerns that focusing solely on the security aspect might overshadow the need for comprehensive strategies involving social, economic, and political dimensions to counter radicalization. As pointed out by (Ranstorp, 2017), the FTO designation, while important, should be complemented by broader efforts addressing the socio-economic disparities and ideological factors that contribute to radicalization. A purely security-centric approach could neglect the underlying issues that fuel Boko Haram's appeal to vulnerable populations. The designation of Boko Haram as an FTO has far-reaching implications for international efforts to combat its activities. It amplifies collaboration, strengthens legal frameworks, and enhances preventive measures against the group's global influence. While this designation strengthens the fight against Boko Haram, a holistic approach is essential to address the multifaceted challenges posed by the group. (Hans-Jakob 2018).

Conclusion

The Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria has posed significant challenges to the nation's security, stability, and socio-economic development. The research explored two key research objectives: the effectiveness of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) in mitigating Boko Haram activities and the extent of Boko Haram's regional and international links with other terrorist organizations. The findings indicated that the MNJTF, established by the Nigerian government in collaboration with neighbouring countries, has had some success in mitigating Boko Haram activities in the Lake Chad region. The force's operations and the efforts of the Nigerian military led to a decline in the number of terrorist attacks. However, challenges such as resource constraints and fragmented leadership within Boko Haram hindered a more comprehensive resolution. The study also revealed that Boko Haram has strong regional and international links with other terrorist organizations, enabling them to operate more freely across borders and access additional resources. These links pose significant security implications for Nigeria and the neighbouring regions. Addressing the Boko Haram insurgency requires a multifaceted approach. Strengthening the MNJTF's capabilities, enhancing regional collaboration, addressing socio-economic grievances, and countering radicalization efforts are essential steps towards mitigating the insurgency's impact. Furthermore, disrupting Boko Haram's external support from international terrorist networks is critical in weakening the group's capacity to carry out attacks. Intelligence-sharing mechanisms and adherence to human rights standards are crucial components of an effective counterterrorism strategy.

References

Journals:
Afolabi, O. M. (2016). Religion, politics, and conflicts in Nigeria: The rise of Boko Haram. Journal of Black Studies, 47(4), 321-337. (Academic Journal)
Onuoha, F. C. (2010). The Islamist Challenge: Nigeria's Boko Haram Crisis Explained. African Security Review, 19(2), 54-67.
Aning, K., & Atta-Asamoah, A. (2013). Exploring the transnational nature of Boko Haram's terrorism in Nigeria. African Security Review, 22(2), 69-85. (Academic Journal)

Kperogi, F. A. (2012). The political economy of Nigeria's Islamism. The Journal of Islamic Studies, 23(3), 348-370. (Academic Journal)

Mustapha, A. R. (2017). The politics of insurgency in Nigeria: Boko Haram's lasting legacy. African Affairs, 116(463), 179-195. (Academic Journal)

Mkandawire, T. (2017). Corruption, politics and governance in Nigeria: An overview. African Affairs, 116(464), 194-211. (Academic Journal)

Mustapha, A. R. (2015). Political corruption and governance in Nigeria: Issues and challenges. Commonwealth & Comparative Politics, 53(4), 498-519. (Academic Journal)

Obi, C. I. (2014). Boko Haram and the evolving Salafi jihadist threat in Nigeria. Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, 37(2), 175-196. (Academic Journal)

Ukiwo, U. (2012). Nigerian Islam in a time of transition. Nordic Journal of African Studies, 21(1), 1-17. (Academic Journal)

Ibrahim, J. (2012). Boko Haram and the politics of insecurity in Nigeria. African Spectrum, 47(2-3), 75-96. (Academic Journal)

Mbaku, J. M. (2014). Corruption and insecurity in Nigeria: A thematic analysis. The Journal of Developing Areas, 48(3), 293-311. (Academic Journal)

Book Chapters:

Akinwotu, E. (2019). Nigeria's battle with corruption. In V. Tchakarova & E. Akinwotu (Eds.), Democracy and Elections in Africa (pp. 69-89). Routledge. (Book Chapter)

Mustapha, A. R. (2017). Boko Haram and the politics of a failed state. Journal of Contemporary African Studies, 35(4), 401-416. (Book Chapter)

Umar, M. L. (2016). Understanding Boko Haram: Terrorism and insurgency in Africa. Journal of Asian and African Studies, 51(5), 574-588. (Book Chapter)

Newspapers

Vanguard. (2009, July 27). Bauchi, Maiduguri, Damaturu, and Potiskum under siege. Vanguard. Retrieved from https://www.vanguardngr.com/2009/07/bauchi-maiduguri-damaturu-potiskum-under-siege/

BBC. (2009, July 29). Nigeria's Boko Haram sect challenges government. BBC News. Retrieved from https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-10708680

The Guardian Nigeria. (2017, May 24). Joint military task force kills Boko Haram members, arrests others. The Guardian Nigeria. Retrieved

from https://guardian.ng/news/joint-military-task-force-kills-boko-haram-members-arrests-others/

Premium Times Nigeria. (2016, June 3). Nigeria military engages in war crimes, Amnesty International says. Premium Times Nigeria. Retrieved from https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/162050-nigeria-military-engages-war-crimes-amnesty-international-says.html

The Cable. (2018, February 28). Boko Haram: A cycle of violence and radicalisation. The Cable. Retrieved from https://www.thecable.ng/boko-haram-cycle-violence-radicalisation

Magazine Articles:

Arowolo, D. (2021). Nigerian Shiites, Iranian proxies, and the state. Africa Spectrum, 56(3), 1-24. (Magazine Article)

Mustapha, A. R. (2018). Resource governance and conflicts in Nigeria: The case of farmers and herders in the Middle Belt region. Journal of Asian and African Studies, 53(3), 347-363. (Magazine Article)

M. Ndulo, (2017), *Poverty Reduction in the Course of African Development*, Oxford University Press, ch. 5.

Osaghae, E. E. (2015). Inequality and the Nigeria's social structure. Nigerian Journal of Sociology and Anthropology, 13(1), 26-39. (Magazine Article)

Ukiwo, U. (2012). Nigerian Islam in a time of transition. Nordic Journal of African Studies, 21(1), 1-17. (Magazine Article)

Zenn, J. (2014). Northern Nigeria's Boko Haram: The prize in al-Qa'ida's Africa strategy. African Affairs, 113(452), 1-21. (Magazine Article)

Reports

Amnesty International. (2015). "We Dried Our Tears": Addressing the Toll on Children of Northeast Nigeria's Conflict. Retrieved from https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/AFR4431622015 ENGLISH.PDF

(Hans-Jakob 2018) Counter Extremism Project, United States; Former Coordinator, ISIL, Al-Qaida and Taliban Monitoring Team, United Nations

International Crisis Group. (2018). Curbing Violence in Nigeria (II): The Boko Haram Insurgency. Retrieved from https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/west-africa/nigeria/111-curbing-violence-nigeria-ii-boko-haram-insurgency

Transparency International.(2020). Corruption Perceptions Index 2020. Retrieved from https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2020/index/nga

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.(2021). Nigeria Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021. Retrieved from https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/2021_hno_nigeria.pdf

World Bank. (2016). World Development Report 2016: Digital Dividends. Retrieved from https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/25024