

Terrorism and Human Security: The Case Study of Boko Haram in Nigeria

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Abstract: This paper examines the impact of Boko Haram's insurgency on human security in Nigeria, using the UN's human security framework centered on "freedom from fear" and "freedom from want." Tracing the group's origins from a Salafist Islamic sect founded by Mohammed Yusuf in the early 2000s to its radicalization under Abubakar Shekau, the paper argues that Boko Haram's activities have severely undermined multiple dimensions of human security, including food security, education, protection of life, and human rights. Drawing on data from UN agencies, NGOs, and scholarly sources, it documents mass displacement, food insecurity, school closures, the Chibok girls' abduction, widespread sexual violence, and thousands of civilian deaths. The paper also critiques Nigeria's counterterrorism response, highlighting human rights abuses committed by state security forces alongside insurgent violence. It concludes that a sustainable resolution requires a citizen-centric, human-security-based approach addressing poverty, governance failures, and accountability for both Boko Haram and state actors.

Keywords: Terrorism, Human Security, Civil Society, Human Rights, Boko Haram, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Terrorism has a long history but has taken inconceivable and deadly dimensions in recent times. The terrorists are adopting ways that make it more frightening, especially taking into account the increasing casualties across the globe. Examples of terrorist activity lie within our country, India 26/11 attack in Mumbai by Lashkar-i-Taliban. The September 11, 2001, terrorist attack on the World Trade Center (WTC) and Pentagon in New York (NY) and United States (US) has been the most devastating terror act in the world. Since, 9/11 the issue of terrorism has been engaged at a global level- more responsively. The present situation in terrorism tradition has serious implications for human security, especially in the area of global peace, economy, food security, education, cohesion, human rights, and social structure of society. Above all, the recent terror attacks in different countries of the globe leading to tremendous destruction of lives and property, speaks volumes about the growing trend of this phenomenon. Hence leading to the emergence and re-emergence of such terrorist organizations like ISIS (The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria), the Irish Republican Army (IRA), the Italian Red Brigades (IRD), and Boko Haram.

Boko Haram is a terrorist group in Nigeria that is ideologically based and made towards the version of particular Islamic doctrine which detests elements of Western civilization and influence. It preaches mainly that Western education is forbidden as suggested by the name itself and maintains the supremacy of Islamic culture. However, in order to propagate these teachings, they chose the path of extremism and created serious human security challenges in the country due to massive destruction of lives and property, deteriorated the standards of living in terms of health, education, food security, etc and has to lead to massive refugee problem due to large displacement from wide geographical communities. This situation brought Nigeria to the list of terrorist organizations as part of modernization, globalization trends which increased in scope towards the end of the 20th century. Nigeria has witnessed lethal acts of terrorism which were targeted against foreign embassies, soliders, religious leaders, economic and social infrastructure, worship sites, and most importantly the defenseless civilians. The most highlighted security challenge, both from conventional and non-conventional way are the activities of Boko Haram. It is no wonder that Nigeria stands at third position in the Global Terrorism Index¹. Over the years, the terrorism index in Nigeria experienced an increase. As of 2019, the indicator stood at 8.31. The index measures the direct and indirect impact of terrorism on a scale from 0 (no impact) to 10 (highest impact). Despite a decrease compared to the previous five years, Nigeria is one of the countries with the highest terrorism threat levels in the world. In 2019, it recorded the second largest number of deaths related to terrorism worldwide (Statista 2021).

To further analyze the impact of Boko Haram in Nigeria we should first understand some key concepts of terrorism and human security for a better understanding of the paradigm of the paper. Human security is an emerging paradigm in which the notion of national security from one that elevates the state as the most entity is redefined to put the individual as the most important reference for security. Hence, the notion of human security is people-centered and encourages a multidimensional

¹ The Global Terrorism Index is a report published annually by the Institute for Economics and Peace and was developed by IT entrepreneur and IEP's founder Steve Killelea. The index provides a comprehensive summary of the key global trends and patterns in terrorism since 2000.

understanding of security. The concept got its impetus in 1994 through the United Nations Human Development Report that outlined two important concepts within this- 'freedom from fear' and 'freedom from want'. The Human development report identifies seven threats to security- food security, health security, personal security, community security, economic security, community security, political security, and environmental security. Freedom from Want, which seeks to broaden the definition of human security to include other threats such as natural disasters, hunger, and disease. These threats are liable for the deaths of many more people than genocide, terrorism, and war combined. Freedom from Fear focuses on violence as well as developmental issues. Freedom from Fear limits the notion of human security to violence. Limiting human security to violence is limiting human security to violence is manageable. Conflict prevention, emergency assistance, and peacebuilding are the center of this approach. It seeks to empower people by giving them the agency to make their own choice.

There is no universally agreed definition of 'terrorism'. The general understanding of the term is made about violent acts that target civilians in pursuit of ideological/political objectives. Resolution 49/60 (Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism) adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1994, defines terrorism as "criminal acts intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in the general public, group of persons or particular persons for political purposes."

The General Assembly later discussed a more comprehensive definition so that terrorism be considered as:

*"unlawfully and intentionally causing, attempting or threatening to cause: (a) death or serious bodily injury to any person; or (b) serious damage to public or private property, including a place of public use, a state or government facility, a public transportation system, an infrastructure facility or the environment; or (c) damage to property, places, facilities, or systems..., resulting from or likely to result in major economic loss, when the purpose of the conduct, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population or to compel a Government or an international organization to do or abstain from doing any act"*²

However, countries haven't adopted this definition leaving states to define terrorism on basis of their national interests. These varying definitions of terrorism have been exposed to abuse by states thus threatening human security. Despite the challenges in defining terrorism, there is no doubt that destruction, suffering, a threat to human dignity, and insecurity continue to be felt across the world from governments that are responding to terrorism (Bincof 2019).

The premise which this paper wishes to argue is that the violent activities of terrorism have a debilitating effect on the lives of civilians. The focus unit here is an individual who suffers the major brunt of these acts. Though these organizations claim to 'better the lives of the people by weeding out western culture and influence and introducing traditional orthodox ways of life. Their aggressive and brutal activities have had an impact for the worse in the lives of people and it was a deliberate attempt to do so. This directly impacts the human security of the people of the region as it creates insecurity of lives, property, food, livelihood, health, etc. Not only the terrorist activities have impacted the people but also the 'war on terror' which seeks to address the problem of terrorism by using the right to the human security of threatened populations as the necessary rationale for attacking the enemy has resulted in several civilians casualties. For this paper, Terrorism is basically meant to achieve a political goal while insurgency is a movement aimed at realizing a political goal. Therefore, Boko Haram is an insurgent group using the terrorist methodology.

According to Gilbert (2014), since the insurgency began, there have been over 12,000 deaths and 8000 persons maimed. Food insecurity has further worsened as farmers have fled their farms in fear of being attacked especially in the northern region which is the country's main food-growing region. Insecurity may also trigger long-term consequences in the region, as Nigeria serves as Africa's largest supplier of staple cereals (USAID 2014). The health sector has also received its share as the numbers of injured persons are increasing with little or no facilities to cater for them as well as health workers abandoning their posts in fear of being killed. The killings and abduction of school children and college students by the sect have forced the closures of schools indefinitely and the withdrawal of children and wards by parents from schools still operating, therefore denying them access to education. There has also been gross human rights violence. There are inadequate shelters for internally displaced persons (IDPs) and yet, the number of IDPs is increasing drastically. "Agreed that the North-east is the epicenter of the insurgency but its effects reverberate through the entire country..." (Awortu 2015) It is against this backdrop that this paper examines Boko Haram insurgency and its impacts on human security in Nigeria and failed government intervention to protect the lives of people.

² United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2018). *Treaty-based crimes of terrorism - universal counter terrorism instruments*. Module 4: Criminal Justice Responses to Terrorism. Retrieved June 27, 2021, from <https://www.unodc.org/e4j/en/terrorism/module-4/key-issues/treaty-based-crimes-of-terrorism.htm>

THE NIGERIAN STATE AND HISTORY OF BOKO HARAM

“Nigeria is currently facing its most daunting set of challenges for decades” is rightly put in by Ms. Navi Pillay, United Nations High Commissioner Human Rights in March 2014. The current situation is not spontaneous or had abrupt eruption but instead has its roots in its history. Ogunyemi (2011) refers to Frantz Fanon’s dimensions of violence, argues that any attempt for explaining the emergence of problems in the security of the country must recognize the physical, structural, and psychological violence unleashed on people over years by a tiny class of oppressive and manipulative rulers of the Nigerian state. Fanon said that true liberation is possible when we manifest our resentment outwardly towards oppression. One of the indirect manifestations can be the emergence of Boko Haram whose anti-colonial and anti-western stance is quite evident.

Boko Haram emerged in the 2000s in Nigeria as a Small Sunni Islamic sec advocating a strict interpretation and implementation of the Islamic Law. It was named Boko Haram due to its call for rejection of Western education and culture that is viewed as un-Islamic-haram or forbidden. It is guided by Salafism, a conservative interpretation of Islam.

Around 2002, Mohammed Yusuf set up an Islamic school and a mosque in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno state in Nigeria which drew people not only from poor sections of society but also educated and wealthy people. It was his charismatic personality and valid issues against corruption and police violence in Nigeria that made people sympathetic to his cause against the establishment. In 2009, Boko Haram launched a rebellion against the Nigerian government that was quashed, and Yusuf was killed. Though it was thought that this organization has been crushed before it could grow and manifest, the outcome was the quiet opposite. Boko Haram became more radicalized under the leadership of Abubakar Shekau. In 2021, he has died and the Nigerian government claims that it has ‘technically defeated’ the insurgent group. However, attacks continue. There is a possibility of reduction of the scale of destruction after the death of its leader, but it shall only be revealed in times to come.

IMPACT OF TERRORISM ON HUMAN SECURITY

The after-effect of any act of violence is magnificent, appalling, and long-term. The analysis of the impacts of the insurgency on human security shall be based on a broader spectrum of human security with particular emphasis on food and nutrition, education, human rights, and protection which are basic needs of all individuals.

1. Food Security

UN Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) said that at least 9.3 million people in Nigeria faced a crisis or worse levels of food security between March and May 2021 amid the armed conflicts, COVID-19’s effects, and climate change. The major sufferers are estimated at 3.3 million are in Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe state which is the north-eastern states of Nigeria majorly affected by activities of Boko Haram. “This figure is expected to increase to over 12.8 million people, of whom 4.4 million are in the three north-eastern states, during June–August 2021, unless resilience-focused and humanitarian actions are taken,” it warned.

World Bank (1986) defines food security as a condition where everyone has access to sufficient food to live a healthy and productive life. Food security is when there is no hunger or fear of starvation. Indicators of which include availability, access, adequate utilization, and stability of food supply at all time (FAO 2002).

Boko Haram has affected major crop growing areas as mentioned above. They produced cowpeas, rice, millet, tomatoes, onions, yams, corns and sorghums, livestock, and fish. According to UNHCR on Refugees 2.9 million people are internally displaced persons (IDPs) in north-eastern Nigeria, most of which are farmers who are forced to flee due to increasing Boko Haram activities. Terrorists also make agricultural grounds as their hideouts and exploit the farmers for their agricultural subsistence. Not only production is affected but also transportation and distribution are disrupted due to the breakage of links between the north and south regions of the country as there are posts of Boko Haram and fear of attack. Many times perishable food items are destroyed before they reach the consumer. The Central Bank of Nigeria stated that the problems of food distribution due to insurgency are among the largest inflationary danger faced by the economy. Boko Haram stopped the supply of beans. Two major common usage vegetables pepper and tomatoes are in short supply and thereby exponential increase in prices. Agriculture which used to be a major chunk of GDP generation is showing the severe strain.

Nigeria remains a food import country. Food insecurity has led to widespread malnutrition in the entire country, especially in rural areas. The figures differ with geopolitical zones, with 56 percent reported in a rural area of Southwest and 84.3 percent in three rural communities in the northern part of Nigeria. Nationally, the overall prevalence of stunting, wasting, and underweight are 42.0 percent, 9 percent, and 25 percent, respectively (Akinyele 2009).

If these ferocious acts of violence by the sect continue, it will push the country into a state of chronic food insecurity which is persistent and long-termed. The prices of food will continue to rise making it challenging for individuals and households to purchase sufficient and nutritious food for a healthy life. This will put individuals at the risk of hunger, starvation, malnutrition, and even death. According to the 2020 Humanitarian Needs Overview, the marked deterioration in food security is linked to

the upsurge in insecurity as evident in renewed attacks by Non-State Armed Groups (NSAGs), which have led to a new wave of displacements, and limited access to farming and grazing land essential for livelihood opportunities. Food and nutrition insecurity are the fundamental threats to human security and the need to curb this insurgency in totality cannot be overemphasized.

2. Educational Development

Among other human security variables, education occupies a major function and relevance for the development of an individual. Achieving quality and even basic education in Nigeria especially in the Northern region has been a far-fetched dream ever since Boko Haram has set its foot about a decade ago. Education is peculiar to study since the premise of an ideology of Boko Haram is a 'ban on western education'. There are many incidents of terrorist attacks that have impacted education sectors by causing school closures and destruction of Information-based technology that aid in teaching and learning which are seen as a Western implant.

The most notable and reference is linked to the Chibok girls kidnapping. It occurred on April 15th, 2014, when 276 female students at Government Secondary School, Chibok in the Borno State of Nigeria were kidnapped, and allegedly brainwashed and recruited into the Boko Haram terrorist group to divert the attention of security operatives and were successfully used in suicide bombings (Nnam et al 2018). Teachers, students, educational officers, parents, other locals in Northern Nigeria have been educationally, physically, psychologically, economically, socially, culturally, and structurally displaced and all this poses a grave challenge to human security.

Various studies done by African scholar's studies have established that following the abduction of Chibok schoolgirls, a series of suicide attacks targeting Kano, Maiduguri, and other major cities in the Northern region of the country was not a casual attack but was done by carried out by the kidnapped women and school children, most of which were girls.

Jones and Naylor (2014) underlined several ways in which terrorism can negatively affect education. These include school closures due to targeted attacks, collateral damage, the military use of school buildings, death, and injury to teachers and students, the fear of sending children to school, and teachers' fear of attending school due to their being threatened with targeted attacks. Other reasons include the forced recruitment of teachers and students by armed forces (state and non-state), forced population displacement, interrupting education, and the public health impacts of conflict, which reduce the possibility of achieving meaningful academic development. These disruptions have the effect of preventing access to education and diminishing the quality of teaching and learning experiences.

The present state of insecurity in Northeast of Nigeria has been harrowing for school children at such young age. They have been forced to flee from their homes in fear, witnessed killings, lived as a refugee, and if kidnapped then perform heinous crimes, be sexually harassed, and exploited. Over a million children have been forced out of school while teachers are forced to stay away from school. The schools of North-eastern have been converted into shelters for internally displaced people.

These attacks have led to the abuse, neglect, and death of many children. In July 2013, in Mamudo Village in Yobe State the insurgents invaded a government-owned boarding school and killed 42 students and teachers, and burnt the school building. In 2014, another incident took place where Boko Haram terrorist group invaded Federal Government College, Buni Yadi, Yobe State, and gruesomely murdered about 59 students and burnt several buildings in the school. In the same year, a suicide bomber entered a secondary school by disguising himself as a member of the school and killed about 47 school pupils and injured many others during their Morning Assembly.

This has discouraged parents/guardians from enrolling their kids in school and those already in school have been withdrawn. These have all happened in a region that was already educationally backward and further attacks have only weakened the region further and have increased the dropout rates, illiterates, and unemployed youth who in need may be more vulnerable to join terrorist organizations. Therefore, we can assert that when the rate of illiteracy and school dropout is high, there is a high tendency that violence will increase in Nigeria. Thereby directly impacting human security.

3. Protection of Life-

The right and duty of the states to protect the right to life of all the persons living within their jurisdiction are well acknowledged by both regional and international human rights laws. Terrorism grows on the idea of generating fear among the people through any way including killing carried out by suicide bombers, random shooters, driving vehicles through crowded areas, bombing streets, and buildings. They target the most vulnerable sections of society without differentiating between combatants and non-combatants.

Boko Haram has killed 40,000 people and displaced around two million in the northeast. In 2017 alone, the group has claimed responsibility for a total of 150 attacks spread across Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, and Niger that led to the deaths of 967 civilians which is an increase compared to 2016 where 910 people were killed from Boko Haram attacks (Wilson 2018). The attacks

were a serious threat to the right to life as they often target civilians. More and more attacks were directed towards political, religious, markets, and busy centers than police and military. Children and women are mostly used as suicide bombers and have committed the crimes openly. Millions of men, women, girls, and boys are facing psychological and physical trauma related to the insurgency. There are high instances of early child marriages with health and maternal complications. The basic needs of protection of those affected by insurgency especially internally displaced people are often not met. The refugee camps lack camp management and protection. A lot of attacks were conducted on the refugee camp itself.

Protection of life is highly in danger. Not only the insurgents have wreaked havoc, but the counter-insurgency operations have been equally characterized with human rights abuses. In a keynote presentation at Nigeria Development and Finance Forum (NDFF) 2014 Conference, Femi Aribisala, former special Adviser to Prof Bolaji Akinyemi as Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic of Nigeria stated that:

“The Nigerian has fought against Boko Haram the Nigerian way, attacks on the innocent; illegal searches and torture; extrajudicial killings; wrongful and indefinite detention of suspects without trial; random burning of homes and farms; revenge attacks on the innocent. This is a blueprint for losing the war. As a result, the military has alienated the local population it is sworn to protect, making it difficult to fight the insurgency.”

The matter here is that security forces whose principal objective is to safeguard the citizens from the Boko Haram insurgency have been utterly unsuccessful in their responsibilities. This has created more panic, chaos, fear, and anxiety as citizens no longer have faith in them. Protection is a serious human security issue and must not be undermined.

4. Human Rights Violations

Boko Haram has committed massive human rights violations. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has gathered information on violations and abuses committed by Boko Haram, including the intentional killing and abduction of civilians and the targeting of protected civilian objects, the use of children in hostilities, rape, and other forms of sexual violence, and torture and ill-treatment. The apparent systematic targeting of civilians and the widespread nature of the violations committed in territories where Boko Haram is active may, if established in a court of law, amount to crimes against humanity and war crimes if committed in connection with the armed conflict. OCHR Report 2015 states the following:

- Civilians living in areas and villages controlled by Boko Haram and abductees have been subjected to various forms of torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment. According to interviewees, women and children were subject to repeated beatings when they were unable or unwilling to walk to different Boko Haram strongholds, unable to recite the Koran, or refused to adopt the group's beliefs. Boko Haram ill-treated those in captivity through deprivation of food and water. Most of the victims interviewed by OHCHR in Nigeria, including a 14-year-old girl from Gwoza, recalled that they had been deprived of food and water for up to two to three days. Some women reportedly starved themselves in order to give food to children.
- Since 2009, Boko Haram has subjected women and girls to widespread and severe forms of abuse, including sexual slavery, sexual violence, forced marriages, forced pregnancies, and forced conversions. The group justifies such practices by its conception of the role of women and girls in society. In one video message in which the group claimed responsibility for the abduction of the Chibok girls, Shekau declared that “God instructed me to sell them, they are his property, and I will carry out his instructions”. In another message, he spoke of abducted girls as “spoils of war”.
- Victims consistently reported that Boko Haram systematically destroyed, appropriated, and looted homes during attacks. These practices were widespread and part of the group's fighting tactics to gain control over territory and to prevent escapees from returning. Many described how Boko Haram fighters had appropriated and resided in their homes and stole their possessions and food. For example, in Mabas, Maxi, and Tourou (Cameroon), Lamana and Ngoumao (Niger), and Baga (Nigeria), thousands were left homeless and fled overnight following Boko Haram attacks.
- Boko Haram has targeted civilian objects protected under international law, including schools, mosques, churches, prisons, hospitals, and markets, and has contaminated water installations. According to testimonies received by OHCHR, Boko Haram has recruited and used boys and girls for active hostilities. Some boys were forced to attack their own families to demonstrate their loyalty to Boko Haram, while girls were forced to marry, clean, cook, and carry equipment and weapons. OHCHR received consistent reports that some boys and girls were increasingly used as human shields and to detonate bombs, a pattern that has intensified since 2014. In May 2015, for example, a 12-year-old girl was used to detonate a bomb at a bus station in Damaturu, State of Yobe, killing seven people. Similar incidents were reported in Cameroon and Niger. During attacks by Boko Haram, abducted boys were used to identify those who refused to join the group, as well as unmarried women and girls.

Human rights form an integral pillar of human security which is under threat due to insurgent's activities.

WHOM TO GO TO: COUNTER-TERRORISM ACTIVITIES AS VIOLATION OF HUMAN SECURITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The responsibility to protect as also mentioned above mostly lies with the government of the country. It is supposed to provide security to its people to nurture and flourish. The insurgent group has tarnished the lives of people.

Various counterterrorist actions have been taken by the government. Efficacy of them shall be studied after that. The Terrorism Prevention Act and The Money Laundering Prohibition Act came in 2011 to curb terrorist activities and aimed to cut off financial aid to these groups. This step came after the USA's pressure after it decided to blacklist Nigeria for terrorism.

In the same year, Special Joint Task Force was constituted in Maiduguri. It consisted of the Military (Army, Navy, and Air Force), The Department of State Security, and the Nigerian Police Force. It allowed for coordinated intelligence gathering and sharing among these security forces. Experts have questioned the kind of intelligence gathered by the Joint Task Force. It used a military approach to fight an organization whose identity, structure, hierarchy was fluid, and all linkages are yet to be established. Boko Haram still keeps on attacking the military bases and communities. This group gets financial strength, manpower, and support from the international terrorist network. This is a serious weakness in the government's response and that is why the Boko Haram insurgency continues to thrive. There have been occasional failures when the state has failed to respond adequately by not responding to the warnings. As suggested by Amnesty International, 110 girls were again abducted from Government Girls Science and Technical College in Dapchi, Yobe state, on 19 February 2018. There were ample warning signs when insurgents left, and it clearly shows no lessons being learned from Chibok 2014 incident.

A comprehensive National Counter-Terrorism Strategy was adopted in 2014. This strategy stipulated who would be involved and what mechanisms would be used. The borders with Niger, Chad, and Cameroon were closed to prevent infiltration of the insurgents and cut its supplies. Yet, they found their way and continue the attacks. The Joint Task Force was often overpowered by the insurgents with superior firepower and guerrilla tactics.

The Nigerian state has received support from external actors, both within the West African sub-region and outside the continent. A Multinational Joint Task Force was formed in 1998 by Nigeria, Cameroon, Niger, and Chad, and joined in the fight against Boko Haram in 2012. The Benin Republic joined in 2014. The multinational troops also received support from the African Union and the Lake Chad Basin Commission. But their activities triggered attacks by Boko Haram in the Lake Chad region, causing the security situation to deteriorate further. Countries outside Africa provided training, technical and intelligence support, and arms. Some sent troops to assist in the fight, but they were frustrated with the way the Nigerian military handled the intelligence they supplied. The United States then withdraw its military (Okunade 2021).

In Nigeria, few pieces of research emphasized the inhuman activities of the Nigerian counterterrorist operatives, especially the extra-judicial killings and illegal detention without a fair trial. As studied above, there have been massive human rights violations by Boko Haram. It then becomes difficult to imagine that there have been activities of state counterterrorism activities that constitute security and human rights violations. Lack of knowledge on human security, freedom, and rights has led to the belief that these are impediments to achieving national security.

The link between security and human rights is important. This link is reinforced if we consider that human rights define human security. Individual, international, and national development requires the protection of human rights; therefore, one cannot have security without the protection of human rights. Development requires respect for human rights, and respect for human rights prevents conflicts. Peace-making must be built on human rights foundations and peacekeeping and peacebuilding must likewise give a central place to human rights considerations as indeed must incorporate human rights strategies (Ramcharan n.d.).

States confronted with terrorism are expected to carry out counterterrorism operations in conformity with the provisions of international human rights and humanitarian law, as required by the UN General Assembly Resolution 60/288 (Isokpan and Ebenezer 2016). However, it is very questionable that this rule was observed. It was evident through various studies that instead of deterring human rights violations by Boko Haram, the counterterrorism operatives are alleged of heightening the insecurity of the residents of North-east Nigeria. Innocent children have been murdered, orphaned, and exiled by the counterterrorist operatives. The more impact is on children as they were the ones being recruited to plan and execute the attacks like suicide bombing, kidnapping, etc. This debilitating situation led African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights to admonish the Government of Nigeria to conduct counterterrorism procedures following universal and regional human rights principles. Not only African Union but Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the USA, and other global actors have raised concern over illegal detentions without hearing and other violations due to military counterterrorism operations.

The already fragile economic situation in some parts of the affected areas has been exacerbated by security and counter-insurgency measures of the Government, such as by those limiting the circulation of traffic or those leading to the closure of borders, motorcycle bans, curfews, the suspension of fishing and the seizure of truckloads of goods, because they may be

intended for Boko Haram. Consequently, many people have been deprived of their means of subsistence (The Reports of United Nations High Commissioner and Office of High Commissioner 2015).

The Joint Task Force engaged in unlawful killings, arrests, extortions, and intimidation of residents. Freedom from Fear is a very long road to go when those whose ambush people take are themselves the culprits of violence. Women bear the major burden of this. They are being taken as sexual slaves for the army men and are kept for having sex. Women left after their men join the military have to suffer from the burden of maintaining a household and live continuously.

Nigerian counterterrorism agents have reduced the menace to a great extent. But the impacts it has had on human rights is an indication that the battle is far from being over. Human-security based approach is required for peace to be restored and sustained in Nigeria. After almost a decade of denial of basic necessities, violation of rights of people, and utter violence caused by both Boko Haram and counterterrorist activities- there is an urgent need for government to realize its duty and carry out counterterrorism based on international best practices. Most importantly, the operatives found unethical should be held accountable.

CONCLUSION

Threats to human security are becoming more and more diverse and pervasive be it the threat of disease, natural disasters, the environment, and terrorism. While there are more dangerous threats than terrorism, but we should not underestimate the impact of terrorism. The main thrust of the paper is to establish that the Boko Haram insurgency has had a negative impact on the human security of Nigerian citizens. It is well evident from the above facts that the Boko Haram insurgency has claimed a lot of lives, exacerbated the food and nutrition insecurity, further worsened the health and education sector, and has generated intense fear, anxiety, and trauma among people. To these, an urgent solution is needed as the most vulnerable section of the society who is neither involved with the government or the insurgents is bearing the burnt. But it is tormented by both. The government's response though has alleviated the situation to some extent in all these years, its excessive use of force has elevated different types of threats and heightened insecurity among people. Many people have 'lost hope' in the 'promises' of the government. Therefore, the focus should now be two-fold: on removing the remnants of the insurgent group after the death of its leader and improving the standard of living of its people so that country can move in the path of progress.

Hassan (2014) stresses that establishing security for the people is the first step to counterinsurgency; hence, "this goes to show that no nation is secured which does not guarantee the security of its citizens" (Danjibo 2013). In essence we can take following recommendation (Amalu 2015)-

- The government should ensure that the basic needs of man's survival are met. There is a need to invest in the agricultural sector to improve food production; build more health care centers that will be fully equipped; education should be free for all at least at the primary level and more schools with quality facilities are put in place. There is a need to resettle the internally displaced persons with appropriate shelter as well as compensate persons affected by the insurgency. Provide the citizens with adequate protection from internal and external aggressors and ensure that the security forces bequeathed with such responsibilities do not fall victims to the same crime or engage in the violation of the citizen's human rights.
- The crux of human security is that people should be empowered and act as agents of change. The government should work on improving all the sectors and have a citizen-centric approach. Every countermeasure commenced by the Government will also only be successful if issues of poverty, corruption, and bad governance are addressed transparently.
- Insurgency is a global phenomenon, and a global solution cannot be overemphasized. The government should strengthen its collaboration with the global community in combating the Boko Haram insurgency.

Boko Haram is a major human security threat to the people of Nigeria and hence, through this, we can try to tackle the worsening situation created by Boko Haram.

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