

Analyzing The Impact Of Counterterrorism Operation Against Boko Haram In Nigeria

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Abstract

Boko Haram is a jihadist terrorist group based in northeast Nigeria, whose aim is to establish an Islamic state in Nigeria. This group has perpetrated violent attacks on the civilians and security agencies in northern Nigeria, creating massive human rights abuses. The security agencies responded with counterterrorism initiatives. However, these actions have created more human rights abuses. This study aims to explain why the Nigerian counterterrorism measures, originally aimed at curbing violence and abuses, have instead inflicted more human rights abuses. The study adopts the human security paradigm as its theoretical framework. The study uses a qualitative research design as its methodology. Data for the study were collected from primary and secondary sources. In-depth interviews from 29 purposively selected informants were used for the collection of primary data. The content analysis method was used to investigate the interview data, which was organized into themes corresponding to the research questions. The study reveals that both Boko Haram activities and the Nigerian military's counterterrorism measures have contributed to extreme human rights violations attributable to the internal dynamics of Nigeria. The study finds that unemployment, poverty, illiteracy, and domestic political situation have created militancy in society. The violations of the 'right to life' and education are the most abused human rights.

Keywords: Boko Haram, Human rights, Counterterrorism, Nigeria.

Introduction

Boko Haram is not Nigeria's first manifestation of terrorist activity. Before the establishment of Boko Haram, there were symptoms and indicators of terrorism in Nigeria. Nigeria was and continues to be a state marked by severe food scarcity, population growth, limited production capacity, low technical advancement, inadequate public infrastructure, periodic unemployment, and a high level of inequality. These characteristics constitute fertile ground for terrorism. Boko Haram appears to have emerged as a result of this permissive climate, and it is growing like wildfire. Boko Haram has taken and controlled 22 local governments in Northeast Nigeria at one point. The terrorist group wreaked devastation in various parts of Nigeria, as well

as in several of Nigeria's neighbours, including Cameroon, Chad, and Niger Republic. The gang posed a severe security danger not only to the Nigerian government. This is evident in their unsystematic attacks on security officers, citizens, abduction of foreigners, and destruction of public and private structures, as well as religious houses.

Nigeria gained independence in 1960, with the potential to become one of the world's richest and most influential countries in terms of both human and natural resources. Despite these advantages, Nigeria is still classified as a developing country. The Nigerian state has suffered from a lack of proportionate progress in all domains. Nigeria appears to be doing poorly in terms of human security as well. This is evident in the country's current economic,

food, health, environment, personal, community, and political security circumstances. The worst-affected area is political security, which is concerned with citizens' basic human rights and the right to live in a society free of state or group tyranny. (UNDP, 1994). The problem of human rights violations in Nigeria predates the Nigerian state. The military's engagement in Nigerian politics early after independence in 1966 exacerbated the human rights situation.

When the Nigerian military seizes power from a democratically elected government, it suspends the constitution and imposes rule by decree. Their constitutional attacks are a direct attack on human rights. Nigerian military juntas used to transform the entire country into a military zone where commanders issued instructions to the populace to follow. Nigerians witnessed the imprisonment of journalists under "Decree 2" from 1984 to 1985. The height of human rights violations occurred during Abacha's military regime (1993-1998). The public execution of Ken Saro Wiwa and eight other nonviolent human rights activists from Ogoni area on November 10, 1995 was a particularly egregious example of his human rights violations (Danfulani, 2017). During this time, most people would agree that military authority was to blame for Nigeria's human rights violations. Because military governments were viewed as an outlier, they were not expected to meet the standards of democratic governance in terms of human rights.

Many Nigerians believed that with the return to democratic rule in 1999, human rights violations would be a thing of the past, but their hopes were dashed. Boko Haram's actions and counterterrorism activities of the Joint Military Task Force (JTF), Civilian Joint Military Task Force (CJTF), and Multinational Joint Military Task Force (MJTF) are suspected of committing human rights violations ranging from secret detentions and extortion, house burning and stealing of money and other useful materials during raids, to extrajudicial killings of suspects (Ford, 2013). Human rights violations occurred, particularly under the administrations of Presidents Obasanjo and Yar'Adua. Nzarga (2014) depicts a scene in which unarmed Nigerian nationals were massacred by the military in Odi, a community

in Bayelsa State, in 1999. Aside from the heinous incident described above, a similar incident occurred at Zaki Biam in Benue state, where Nigerian soldiers massacred over 100 civilians in several villages (Vasae, Anyiin Iorja, Ugba, Sankara, and Zaki-Biam) to avenge the killing of 19 soldiers who were allegedly adopted and killed by Tiv Militia (Human Rights Watch, 2001).

During Yar'Adua's presidency (2007-2009), Boko Haram evolved into a lethal terrorist organisation. Boko Haram is a terrorist organisation that operates in northeast Nigeria and parts of the Lake Chad Basin. In northern Nigeria, the group has waged a decade-long struggle against western education and any activities associated with it. The organisation is officially called as Jama'atu AhlusSunnah Lidda'Awati Wal Jihad, translated as 'People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad' (Alhaji-Ali et al, 2018; Eyo & Collins, 2018). The dreadful nature of the Boko Haram terrorist organisation that we have today is the result of the extrajudicial assassination of one of its major leaders, Sheikh Yusuf. The Boko Haram era was characterised by heinous human rights violations. Since 2009, Boko Haram has been conducting serious human rights violations in regions of northeast Nigeria. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), some 20,000 civilians, including an unknown number of women and children, have been slaughtered by Boko Haram since 2009 (OHCHR, 2015).

The heavy-handed attitude taken by government security officials in an attempt to quell Boko Haram's savage actions is seen to have resulted in serious human rights violations. In this regard, the 2013 Baga incident might be cited, in which the Military Joint Task Force (JTF) raided Baga, a fishing hamlet in Borno state. This invasion had devastating consequences. To say that there was a major breach of human rights during this invasion would be an understatement. Between 187 and 400 individuals were murdered, the majority of whom were civilians (Nzarga, 2014).

Furthermore, another instance of a military violation of human rights may be seen in the 14 March 2014 attacks on Giwa barracks in Maiduguri, Borno state, in which the

combined military task force killed over 200 alleged Boko Haram terrorists (Mutum, 2013). Aside from the foregoing, there have been cases of people being caught in crossfire between terrorists and armed forces, arbitrary arrests on suspicion of connection to the Boko Haram terrorist organisation, and other alleged transgressions such as summary execution (UN, 2015). This shows that civilians are frequently caught in the crossfire between JTFs and terrorists, and their rights and freedoms are reported to be abused by both terrorists and JTF agents (Odomovo, 2014).

The rise of Boko Haram and counterterrorism operations in Northeast Nigeria are the most concerning episodes of human rights abuse in Nigeria. The cult has maintained a campaign of anti-government extremism over the years. These Boko Haram attacks and counterterrorism measures have created a number of human insecurities in Nigeria. Food insecurity has stemmed from the frequent attacks in northeast Nigeria. To halt this crisis, the United Nations issued a \$1.05 billion dollar appeal in January 2017 to aid approximately 6.9 billion people in Northeast Nigeria (Harrison, 2017). The Nigerian government's heavy-handed response to Boko Haram attacks is also being accused of contributing to human rights breaches. This could be because of the challenges involved in battling terrorism in densely populated areas, or because the armed forces believe that certain residents are hindering their efforts by collaborating with Boko Haram to thwart their efforts and endanger their lives (Musa, 2012). The violation of human rights guaranteed by various international treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, both of which Nigeria has ratified, has become a source of concern for both the international community and well-meaning Nigerians.

Aside from military zones, schools were the next target in Yobe state, Nigeria, with numerous casualties. Terrorists from Boko Haram assault schools and kill male students and teachers (Akwen et al., 2019). Terrorists use technology to disseminate their message as well. Terrorists can transmit information across boundaries thanks to their access to technology. Terrorists use the internet and social media to influence and recruit individuals all around the

world (Akwen et al., 2020; Moorthy et al., 2020). They use Facebook, blogs, websites, Twitter, and YouTube to persuade a big number of individuals all over the world (Aliyu, 2016). Terrorism has the ability to wreak havoc on human rights. Negatively, economic activities in some Northeast states almost came to a halt, affecting both individuals and governments in places like Maiduguri and Damaturu, as a result of the closure or reduction in working hours of many business centres and commercial banks as a result of ongoing terrorist attacks (Aliyu et al, 2015a & b).

Human rights abuses in Nigeria have been in the increase. Since the start of violent attacks by Boko Haram in 2009, and an attempt by the government to curb the senseless onslaught, over 30,000 people have lost their lives and more than two million people displaced. This human right situation is different from the pre-2009 era, because of the continuous killing of innocent citizens by both the activities of Boko Haram and government counterterrorism agents. More disturbing is why counterterrorism approaches that are supposed to end the human right abuses caused by Boko Haram also wreak human right violations. This current human rights situation in Nigeria requires an innovative solution. Such a solution could be an improvement in Nigeria's human security condition and proper training for counterterrorist's agents on how to respect human rights during counterterrorist operations. This would change the status quo, as continued reliance on the military approach would lead to more violations of human rights by the government counterterrorist agents. This leads to loss of confidence in the government counterterrorism measures and more support to Boko Haram by the local populace.

Based on the foregoing, the study tries to address the following questions: What variables impact the emergence of Boko Haram terrorism? How do Boko Haram's activities result in human rights violations in Nigeria?, and how do counterterrorism operations result in human rights violations in Nigeria?

Methodology

Design of the Study

The design of the study was based on qualitative research approaches using the case

study method. The choice of qualitative method was bone out of the fact that it best suits the interpretation and understanding of social realities (Mohajan, 2018). Since the researcher intend to make an in-depth analysis of how Boko Haram terrorism and counterterrorism activities affect human rights in Nigeria, it was appropriate to use a case study design in other to achieve the desired result. The structure of qualitative research makes it possible for the researcher to get beneath superficial responses through the oral interview approach. The adoption of a purposeful section of informants gave room for the right categories of respondents to be interviewed.

Data Source

The data for this research was sourced from primary and secondary sources, further identified to include selected key informants, expert informants, community informants and review of related publications. Details of these data sources are as follows:

Primary Data

The primary sources of data included key informant, expert and community informants. The first category was made up of nine (9) individuals who were purposively selected from the various security agencies that constitute the counterterrorism force. They constitute the Key Informants (KI). Their selection is informed by their official designations and direct involvement in the fight against terrorism in Northeast Nigeria. The nine KIs were selected from the security agencies listed below:

- (i) Nigerian Air force (2 commanders of the Air component of Nigeria's counterterrorism operation)
- (ii) Nigerian Army (5 informants involving, one intelligence commissioned officer and four soldiers from the army special force battalion who took part in the fight against Boko Haram)
- (iii) State Security Service (1 field officer operating in the northeast)
- (iv) Nigeria Police force (1 Mobile police field commander, heading a unit in the northeast)

The second group comprised of eight (8) individuals who are authorities in terrorism

and human rights. They were selected from various universities within Nigeria based on their knowledge in terrorism and human security particularly human rights. They constitute Expert Informants (EIs). The third group was a selection of twelve (12) non-security personnel four each from the three local government areas-Bade, Damaturu, and Potiskum. The three local government selected represents the three senatorial districts of Yobe state. They represent Community Informants (CIs). Their selection was based on their first-hand information about the activities of Boko Haram and the counterterrorism agents. The list of this category are as follows:

- (i) Bade Local Government (4 informants: One Catholic Priest, One businessman and two people who were displaced in Borno state and sort refuge in Bade Local Government Area).
- (ii) Damaturu Local Government (4 informants comprising one youth leader, one senior lecturer from Yobe state university and two community members).
- (iii) Potiskum Local Government (4 informants comprising of the Emir of Figa (represented by a senior adviser on youth affairs), one assistant Chief Imam Potiskum Central Mosque and two other community members.

All together, a total number of twenty-nine (29) informants were purposively selected and interviewed for this research. The names of the informants cannot be displayed due to the sensitive nature of the research. Most of the informants pleaded to be anonymous.

Secondary Data

The secondary data for this research were collected from various sources. Secondary data here refer to the data that are already available. In other words, they are data already collected and analyzed by other scholars or authorities. Since exiting literature is an important source of information, the research relied heavily on data from Library sources. In this case, magazines, journals, newspapers, online materials like e-books, e-journals, reports, and publications of specialized agencies like

National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) was used to generate information on the problem of human rights violation and past efforts made at enhancing political human security in Nigeria and Northeast region in particular. Some of these materials were accessed from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia Library, the library of Federal University Gashua Yobe State, Veritas University library Abuja, National Human Rights Commission's library Abuja and other public libraries in Nigeria.

Other secondary sources of data that were used include reports and publications of various associations or organized groups related to the problem of study; reports prepared by research scholars; and public records, historical documents and other sources of published information. Apart from the published data found in both online and print sources, the sources of unpublished secondary data were used also. These include unpublished essays, dissertations/theses, biographies, and autobiographies. All these secondary sources were used to review and analyze, based on their relevance to this study which helped to buttress the primary sources of data.

Data collection Technique

Qualitative research design places emphasis on inductive reasoning and seeks to build theory from observation of phenomena as they occur in their natural setting. This based on the ability of qualitative research to offer sufficient descriptions of the experience of phenomena by presenting data for easy understanding (Willemse, 2015; Wayas, 2020). The semi-structured interviews is a design in qualitative research, which is use in collecting data from informants via interviews and observation (Johnson, 2002). Using this method, the researcher impartially asks questions to the informants to gain satisfactory insight, understanding, and feelings of the informants. In most cases, using the semi-structured approach entails conducting face-to-face interviews to obtain the best result. This does not rule out the possibility of phone interviews. This study made use of the face-to-face interview method. On the part of the documented records, related published and unpublished materials were consulted and reviewed. Secondary data collection method included physically sourcing relevant data

libraries and the internet. Books and journal articles, unpublished theses, government publications were collected to complement and validate claims in primary data and other related literature.

Data Analysis

This research espoused the qualitative method of data analysis. This included descriptive, explanatory, and content analysis. The descriptive and explanatory approaches were used for the interpretation of data from the interviews. While the content analysis approach was employed in the interpretation of materials from secondary sources. In line with the principles of qualitative analysis, the data generated through interviews were recorded, transcribed and evaluated. This data was subsequently reported under suitable headings utilizing the manual method. The transcription of the primary data collected from the field was done by converting audiotapes into written data.

Data transcription was followed by coding in order to obtain themes. This was done with the help excel spreadsheet. The excel sheets were labelled accordingly, to display the view of the content at a glance. The themes generated were redefined by adding more words where necessary (Amoo et al, 2017). The need for coding was to look for regular patterns that emerged in the data. The excel spreadsheet helped in the breakdown of the data into smaller parts which gives room for detail examination of resemblances and differences. It was through this process that the themes that occurred more frequently in the interviews were gotten. To avoid what Frosh & Emerson (2005) called the fallacy of textual meaning, much attention was paid to precision during the in-depth interviews and data analyses. This was to ensure that the views of the informants were adequately represented.

Findings & Discussions

The study reveals significant findings as highlighted in the discussion below.

Finding 1: The findings also showed that from the onset Boko Haram activities were not violent. Boko Haram's initial intention was to eliminate the practices of the secular government in Nigeria through peaceful means

and establish an Islamic caliphate that would be governed by Sharia law.

Discussion 1: Socio-economic dynamics in northern Nigeria such as massive unemployment, abject poverty, high-level illiteracy, and politics are the primary reasons for Boko Haram adopting terrorism. Poverty is a major cause of Boko Haram terrorism. Nigeria with a population of about 200 million people, over 110 million people are alleged to be living in utter poverty. Again like the issue of unemployment, the northern region of Nigeria is most affected by poverty. The study shows that poverty is disproportionately shared in Nigeria with northern Nigeria carrying the lion share. With about 70% of the people living in the Boko Haram stronghold living on less than one US dollar per day. Boko Haram leaders have over the years taken advantage of the poor condition of the people in their recruitment attempts. The poor masses are given business loans by Boko Haram commanders that they cannot repay. Any defaulter of such a loan is usually conscripted into Boko Haram terrorist fold. Aside from poverty, a lack of quality western education as part of the causes of Boko Haram terrorism. Nigerian educational sector is in bad shape. This can be evident in the mass exodus of both lecturers and students out of Nigeria in search of greener pasture and a conducive learning environment respectively. The findings further show that the Nigerian educational sector has been poorly funded in the last decade.

Finding 2: Ideology and support for Boko Haram are the result of the survival instincts of groups of people in an oppressive State that lacks a monopoly on the use of force.

Discussion 2: Most Nigerians have lost their sense of nationalism and they have turned to their ethnic and religious enclaves for survival. The ideology of Boko Haram is rooted in the preaching of Mohammed Yusuf. This ideology is anchored on the refutation of westernization, democratic state, western education, and the exclusion of Islam from public life. Boko Haram has both local and foreign sponsorship. Local sponsorship or funding comes from four sources, which are dues from members, supports from politicians, taxes from business

owners, bank robberies and ransom from kidnapping. Whereas, the external sources come from ties with renowned foreign terrorist organizations like Al-Qaeda and ISIS. The study also suspects that some state actors are sponsors of Boko Haram. The Nigerian state allowed the socio-economic and political conditions of the masses to deteriorate to a point where the people have resort to self-help.

Finding 3: Tactics and scope of Boko Haram's operation. Although Boko Haram terrorist group was based in northeast Nigeria, its operations go beyond national border, and covers the Lake Chad region, which include Cameroon, Niger, and Chad.

Discussion 3: During the pre-2009 era of Boko Haram, they adopted 'withdrawal from society' strategies to express their dissatisfaction with the condition of Nigeria. However, further investigation into the question of tactics revealed that Boko Haram then adopted new techniques based on the direction of the Nigerian counterterrorism strategy. For example, Boko Haram's attacks on military targets were intended to generate publicity, destabilize security agents, and instill fear in the minds of the general public that if the government cannot protect its forces, it cannot also protect the general populace. Boko Haram's tactics and weaponry got more advanced. They learned to use machetes, knives, swords, and locally produced guns before moving on to IEDs, AK-47 rifles, grenades, rocket-propelled grenades, automatic rifles, surface-to-air missiles, vehicle-mounted machine guns with anti-aircraft visors, and T-55 tanks. Boko Haram's female wing has carried out over 150 suicide strikes. In comparison to other terrorist organizations such as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, Al-Qaeda, and the Islamic State, Boko Haram presently leads the world in the use of female suicide bombers.

Finding 4: Violation of the right to life. Around 30,000 people have perished in numerous Boko Haram's violence actions. Although there are other terrorist groups perpetrating violence in Nigeria, by far, Boko Haram is the most vicious

Discussion 4: The number of attacks and fatalities in 2015 was at an all-time high. The findings demonstrate that in some cases, like as the Rann explosion and circumstances where Boko Haram employs defenseless civilians as human shields to assault government troops at night, the crimes are not intentional. For example, during the Giwa Barracks jailbreak, 64 captives from the presidential lodge in Damaturu, the Yobe state capital, were killed indiscriminately.

Finding 5: The right to an education is being abused. Boko Haram fighters systematically violated the right to education.

Discussion 5: Boko Haram dislikes western-style schooling. They feel that Western education is to blame for Nigeria's dismal human status. Between 2009 and 2015, Boko Haram's activities destroyed over 910 schools and forced the closure of over 1,500 others. The expense of rebuilding the damaged schools is enormous. For example, in Yobe state, the government spent 619 million naira to rebuild three of the 209 schools that were destroyed in 2014. Northern Nigeria has seen a rise in the number of children who are not attending school. Schools are no longer safe places for children to go. Aside from safety, most schools in northeast Nigeria have been converted into IDP camps and security bases. The temporary occupation of schools by IDPs and security personnel has overstretched the limited resources.

Finding 6: Disruption of cultural and economic ways of life. Terrorism by Boko Haram has violated the people's economic and cultural rights in northeast Nigeria.

Discussion 6: Boko Haram attacks continue to affect people's lives and economic activity. Agriculture accounts for around 5% of Nigeria's GDP and employs approximately 35% of the country's youth. Boko Haram's continuous attacks in the northeast region have reduced agricultural production, and created socio-economic problems for the people.

Finding 7: Abuse of the female population rights. The study discovered that Boko Haram's operations exacerbate the already marginalized

and impoverished female population of Northeast Nigeria.

Discussion 7: The women and girls are sexually abused by Boko Haram terrorists. Their husbands are killed for refusing to join Boko Haram, their daughters are abducted and used for suicide bombing, their sons are conscripted. Boko Haram is in the habit of regularly abducting women and school girls. In 2014 they abducted about 276 female students from a school in Chibok-Borno state. In another instance, in early 2018 they also abducted over 100 female students from Dapchi, Yobe State. Between 2009 and 2015 about 843 female population abduction took place around the Boko Haram operational areas.

Finding 8: The finding shows that military approach to counterterrorism is not effective to deter Boko Haram terrorism.

Discussion 8: In order to combat Boko Haram terrorists, the Nigerian government has used a greater proportion of the military strand. The use of police force resulted in the wrongful murder of Yusuf Mohammed, the group's then-leader. Following the end of the police regime in 2010, the Nigerian armed forces were massively deployed. They worked together in a framework known as the Joint Task Force (JTF). The investigation also demonstrated that this military approach was fraught with difficulties. The problems include a lack of inter-agency cooperation, a lack of knowledge about Boko Haram's organisational design, and information distribution constraints.

Finding 9: The finding shows that Boko Haram has acquired and use sophisticated modern weapons in their campaigns.

Discussion 9: Another key reason that contributed to human rights violations by Nigerian counterterrorism operatives is their inability to acquire the latest weapon technology. In response, Nigeria's counterterrorism agency utilizes the cyberspace for intelligence gathering regarding movement and weapon procurement. The use of modern weapon by the terrorists had led the killing of IDPs at Rann in Borno State.

Finding 10: The findings from the study also revealed that counterterrorism in Nigeria has claimed the lives of innocent citizens.

Discussion 10: Some civilians in the northeast have died while attempting to flee the terrorist-military conflict. In the fight against Boko Haram, there have been instances where innocent civilians have been victims of circumstance. The analysis discovered how military actions on Baga town in Borno state on April 21, 2013 resulted in the deaths of several civilians. In an endeavour to apprehend terrorist suspects, counter-terrorism agents killed over 200 noncombatant civilians in a single day. The 17 January 2017 accidental bombardment of an IDPs camp at Rann in Borno State by the JTF's Air Component, which killed about 234 persons, exemplifies how Nigerian counterterrorism operations have cost the lives of innocent individuals.

Finding 11: Detention related violations. The study discovered that Nigerian counterterrorism operators illegally arrest and hold people in their military facilities for long periods of time without trial.

Discussion 11: Children and pregnant women are not excluded from such unlawful detention. Over 4,900 individuals were imprisoned at the military detention facility Giwa Barracks. This is just one of a number of such detention facilities. From April to October 2017, the military released approximately 1,353 inmates. In relation to illegal detention, there are daily reported cases of dead detainees due to the overcrowding of the facilities, those detailed were not allowed to contact their lawyers or relatives, and the majority of these captives were unaware of the crime that warranted their arrest, thereby prolonging their detention.

Finding 12: Abuse of possession and property rights. Counterterrorism actions destroyed possessions and property of civilians.

Discussion 12: The investigation found that counterterrorism operatives violated the right to possess property, which is recognized globally and is also incorporated in Nigeria's 1999 constitution. Their methods of infringing on

this right are inherent in their ways of operation, the most notable of which being house-to-house pursuit and forceful ejections. When Boko Haram attacks a town, the JTF would cordon off the area and order the residents to flee their homes without letting them to retrieve their personal belongings. The analysis also indicated that at least five wards, namely Bulabulin, Bayan Tasha, Panpan Gajagaja, Adam Kolo, and Bagadaza, were fully torn down by the army in a single operation. While fire destroyed homes worth millions of Naira, it also destroyed thirty (30) vehicles, fifty-seven (57) motorcycles, and one hundred bags of beans and maize.

Finding 13: Harassment and extortion by counterterrorism forces.

Discussion 13: Military personnel stationed at the checkpoints have a reputation of extorting money from motorists. Commercial drivers are required to pay a fee before passing through checkpoints. Refusing to obey incurs the fury of the on-duty military authorities.

Conclusion

The findings clearly shows that the Nigerian counterterrorism measures have contributed to severe abuses to the civilian populations in Nigeria in many aspects of their lives. The military approach to counterterrorism has failed to deliver the desired outcome. The violation of 'right to life' and access to education are the most abused aspects of human rights. The poor socio-economic conditions, in terms of massive unemployment, abject poverty, high-level illiteracy, and corrupted politics in northern Nigeria is the core causes of Boko Haram's terrorism. Some 70% of the people living in the Boko Haram stronghold live on less than one US dollar per day, and are easily susceptible to Boko Haram propaganda. Boko Haram ideology is anchored on the refutation of westernization, democratic state, western education, and the inclusion of Islam in in both personal and public life.

The Nigerian security forces has undertaken counterterrorism campaigns in the affected areas. However, the study shows that these initiatives have created more human rights abuses and misery to the civilian population. The Nigerian counterterrorism

strategy demonstrates a military-oriented approach. This counterterrorism strategy neglected the core reasons of Boko Haram terrorism, which are entrenched in the Nigerian state's human insecurity. The analysis also finds that Nigeria is only a signatory to a few of the various treaties on the banning of terrorism. Furthermore, even the few that existed were not domesticated. Actual law on the issue of terrorism began in 2001, when Boko Haram became a big problem for the government. This development not only slowed the legal element of combating Boko Haram terrorists, but it also encouraged impunity for Nigerian counterterrorism officers. The finding also shows that the Nigerian counterterrorism approach is more military-oriented. In conclusion, the research suggests that the inclusion of the non-military approach, which tackles the root causes of Boko Haram terrorism, can help mitigate this menace and reduce the incidences of human rights abuses in Nigeria.

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