**Terrorism: The Boko Haram Phenomenon in Nigeria**



**Msc. Thesis for Development and International Relations**

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**Abbreviations**

AYO - Arewa Youth Organisation

FOS - Federal Office of Statistics

HDI - Human Development Index

MEND – Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta

MOSOP – Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People

NBO – Nigeria Budget Office

NBS – Nigerian Bureau of Statistics

NHRC – National Human Right Commission

OPC – Oodua People’s Congress

PDP – People’s Democratic Party

UNDP – United Nations Development Programme

UNICEF – United Nations Children’s Fund

USA - United State of America

**Abstract**

The Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria has been a source of concern not only to the government of Nigeria, but also to the international community especially when they bombed the United Nations headquarters in Abuja in 2011. After this attack, the sect has carried out numerous attacks in Nigeria killing hundreds of people.

There has been plethora of reason adduced to this development. Some opinion and political leaders within and outside Nigeria adduced the causes of Boko Haram insurgency to poverty, injustice, and lack of civil liberties, while others disagree with this line of thought.

Based on this, using both quantitative and qualitative method of analysis in determine the causes of Boko Haram insurgency. The research found out that the insurgency was not as a result of poverty, injustice, or lack of civil liberties, though, it could be a contributing factor, but deep seated ideology rooted in Islamic fundamentalism was to be blamed for the chaotic development of the sect.

**Key words: Terrorism; Boko Haram; Nigeria.**

**Chapter One**

**Introduction**

The emergence of Boko Haram, an Islamic extremist sect that has been agitating for the introduction of strict Islamic laws and the Islamisation of Nigeria through violent activities such as killing, bombing, and suicide bombing has taken a worrisome dimension. Though, Nigeria is no stranger to violent extremist groups’ crises. These include the 1980 Maitatsine riots in the Northern Nigeria which left thousands death. The Kano riot in 1982, Ilorin crisis of March 1986; crisis over Nigeria membership of Organisation of Islamic Conference in 1986; the Zangon-Kataf riot Kaduna State in May 1982; the recurrent Jos crises from 2001 up to the present, to mention just but a few (Abimbola 2010: 97; Kalu 2008: 77 – 85; Bah 2008: 49 – 52). In addition, there are agitations, which at times turn violent, by different ethnic nationalities that made up Nigeria. For instance, the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), and the Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND) in the South-south of the country, are agitating for a fair share of the oil revenue from their lands. There is the Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), in the South-east, agitating for independence for the Igbo speaking people in that region. There is the Oodua People’s Congress (OPC) in the South-west, whose agitation is the protection of the interests of the Yoruba race in Nigeria. Also in the North, there is Arewa Youth Organisation (AYO) championing the interests of the North (Kalu 2008: 173 – 185; Bah 2008: 49 – 52).

Therefore, Nigeria is not new to agitations from different ethnic nationalities that made-up the country for a fair share in its governance and equitable distribution of its wealth and resources. It however, took an unprecedented violent dimension when Boko Haram, a deadly Islamic sect, surfaced to demand for the introduction and imposition of Sharia, an Islamic penal code, not only in the Northern part of the country that is populated by the Muslims, but also in the entire country. The advent of Boko Haram and its demand added a new phase to ethno-religious crises and insurrectional groups’ agitations in Nigeria. Although, Boko Haram started out as a benign Islamic organisation, providing social services and preaching strict adherence to Islamic injunctions, it, however, along the line made a detour by engaging in violent activities which not only undermine the legitimate authority of the government of Nigeria, but also, posing existential threat to the cooperate existence and unity of the country.

A US congressional report of Nov 30, 2011 on Boko Haram says the sect is an “emerging threat” not only to the US, but also to its interests. The Congressional committee Chairman, Mr Patrick Meeham in an interview said the “fast evolution” of Boko Haram was worrying. He stated further that there was little evidence as of that time to suggest that Boko Haram was planning an attack against the US; he quickly added that for the fact that there was lack of evidence “does not mean it cannot happen” (BBC).

The US Congressional findings (homeland.house.gov/files/ Boko Haram: 4) stated inter alia:

* Boko Haram has quickly evolved and poses emerging threat to US interests and the U.S homeland.
* Boko Haram has the intent and may be developing capability to coordinate on a rhetorical and operational level with Al Qaeda in the land of Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and Al Shabaab.
* Boko Haram’s evolution in targeting and tactics closely track that of other Al Qaeda affiliates that have targeted the U.S homeland, most notably Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and Tehrik – I – Taliban Pakistan (TTP).
* The U.S intelligence community largely underestimated the potential for Al Qaeda affiliate groups to target the U.S homeland, wrongly assessing they had only regional ambitions and threats against the U.S homeland were merely “aspirational”.
* The United States should work with the government of Nigeria to build counterterrorism and intelligence capability to effectively counter Boko Haram.

From the above painted scenario, it is valid to assume that Boko Haram is not only a threat to Nigeria, but also to world peace at large. This was ably demonstrated when it attacked the United Nations headquarters in Abuja, the capital of Nigeria, on August 26, 2011,a suicide bomber drove a vehicle laden with explosive device into the building, killing 23 people and more than 80 people were injured. The United Nations Secretary General, Mr Ban Ki-Moon in condemning the attack described it as “an assault on those who devoted themselves to helping others” (The guardian).

Apart from the United Nations headquarters bombing in Abuja, Boko Haram has carried out numerous deadly attacks in the North. It is estimated that Boko Haram sect has killed more than 1000 people and injured thousands more.

**Problem formulation: Why has Boko Haram, a benign Islamic sect metamorphosed into a terrorist organisation?**

In order to comprehensively explore the above question, then one has to look at the definition of terrorism. Defining terrorism has been a subject of controversy among researchers, while some would include both state actors and non-state actors; some rejected the inclusion of state actors as possible terrorist. Other definitions restrict terrorism to attacks on civilian targets. Some definitions limit terrorism to an act with political goals, and exclude criminal purposes, while some include both political and criminal purposes. Most definitions regard terrorism irrespective of its goal as illegitimate method or means, while few definitions consider it legitimate if it is for a just cause, hence the aphorism “one person’s terrorist is another person’s freedom fighter” (Martin 2008: 11). Nevertheless, there is a consensus that no matter how altruistic terrorism is, it is an extreme method or tactic.

The United State Codes prepared by the US House of Representative defines terrorism “as premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents.” While executive branch codes defines it as “the unlawful use of force and violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives” (Mahan and Griset 2008: 3).

The British on the other hand defines it as “the use of violence for political ends including any use of violence for the purpose of putting the public or any section of the public in fear” (Imobighe & Eguavoen 2006: 14).

Bruce Hoffman defines terrorism as the “deliberate creation and exploitation of fear through violence or the threat of violence in the pursuit of political change.” While Stern defines it as “an act of threat of violence against noncombatants with the objective of exacting revenge, intimidating, or otherwise influence an audience.” Laqueur argues that there is no definition that comprehensively addresses the issue of terrorism, but all the same, he defines terrorism as “the use of covert violence by a group for political ends” (Mahan and Griset 2008: 4).

 For the purposes of this thesis, and to fully understand Boko Haram ideology, I will define terrorism as a premeditated act of violent carried out by extremist organisations, or individuals against unarmed or defenceless civilians, civilian targets, soft spots, and passive military and police targets, to cause maximum carnage and destruction, in order to instil fear, confusion, and apprehension in the minds of people. And in pursuance of political, social, religious, or ideological agenda.

It is very important to note that the above definition does not take into cognisance terrorism from the top, that is, terrorism perpetrated by the states. It only covers terrorism from the bottom, that is, terrorism carried out by non-state actors.

To put Boko Haram in a perspective, it is pertinent at this juncture to distinguish between terrorism, extremism, and freedom fighting. There is a thin line between these three concepts. An extremist holds a radical opinion or view about a belief or political ideology, which does not accommodate contrary opinion. The extremists are intolerant of any other belief systems, they consider their cause as absolutely just and good, and any other cause aside theirs, is considered evil. For the fact that the extremists hold such belief or ideology does not translate into terrorism, but the moment the Rubicon is crossed by forcefully and violently imposing their beliefs and ideologies on the others through killings, bombing, kidnapping, etc., then it becomes terrorism. While a freedom fighter is someone who is perceived to be fighting for a just cause, either the liberation or emancipation of a people, or any other just causes. But when freedom fighters begin to use unconventional means to achieve their purpose, then it becomes terrorism. For example, the Provisional Irish Republican Army in the United Kingdom and the Basque Separatist Organisation known as Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA) in Spain declare that they are fighting for the oppressed, and for a homeland. These causes are noble, but the ways and manners they go about it have resulted into labelling of these organisations as terrorist organisations.

Although, terrorism is not a recent phenomenon, it has been in existence for ages, taking different forms and modes. From the fearful group known as the Thugs, also known as Phansigars or stranglers, that existed in the seventh century, who committed violent acts and atrocities by killing and dismembering the corpses of their victims to prevent cremation or proper burial to satisfy Kali the Hindu goddess of death and destruction. To the Assassins also known as Ismailis-Nizari, which existed between 1090 and 1275, whose objective was to purify Islam, and hasten the eventual emergence of a Mahdi or Messiah who would ultimately lead a holy war or *Jihad* against the traditional establishment. In addition, the Jewish group known as Zealots-Sicarii, whose activities eventually led to the exile and ultimate destruction of the ways of life and Jewish structure and institutions, was dreaded as a violent group (Rapoport in Horgan and Braddock 2012: 9 – 11).

However, terrorism became a topical issue after the attack on world trade centre on September 11, 2001. That is not to say there were no terrorist attacks before 9/11, in fact, the Israeli athletic contingent to the Olympic held in Munich, Germany, in 1977 were taking hostage by the Palestinian militant from the Black September Organisation. The attacks resulted into the death of eleven Israelis, a German police, and five militants (Jackson, et al. 2011: 54). On the 21 December 1988, Pan American Flight 103 was destroyed by a bomb over Lockerbie in Scotland, the aftermath of the attack left all the 259 passengers and16 crew members dead. Eleven Lockerbie residents also died in the attack when parts of the plane fell and destroyed several houses in the town (Mahan and Griset, 2008: 97).

Terrorism, however, took a global dimension whereby either you support America’s adventure on war against terrorism or if you are not in support of the war, you are labelled an enemy. There had been several terrorist attacks after September 11, 2001. On July 7, 2005, there were the coordinated suicide attacks in London underground that killed 56 people including the four suicide bombers who carried out the dastardly act, 700 people were injured. Also in Madrid, there was an attack targeted the train on March 11, 2004, which killed 191, and injured around 1,600 people. In India, on July 11, 2006, seven bomb explosions rocked the Suburban Railway in Mumbai, which killed more than 200 people and injured 700 people (Williams and Mockaitis in Shemella 2011: 298 – 329). The list of terrorist attacks after 9/11 is endless if we have to discuss it.

Having identified Boko Haram as an extremist sect, using the instrument of terror to achieve its ideological belief, it is of primacy to understand the reason(s) behind the chaotic transformation of Boko Haram as posted in the problem formulation. To comprehensively explore the problem field, different perspectives or schools of thought on the root causes of terrorism must be looked into. Could the metamorphoses of Boko Haram to a dreaded terrorist organisation was as a result of poverty, inequality, economic disequilibrium as espoused by strain and deprivation theorists (Forst 2009)? Alternatively, are Boko Haram’s operatives psychopaths who just kill for the sake of killing because they are mentally unstable and deranged? Probably, Boko Haram is just a social movement in the Nigeria’s political firmament making a legitimate claim for the recognition, accommodation, and integration of its ideological beliefs into the governance of Nigeria. Perhaps, Boko Haram was the creation of the Northern political elites who view the governance of Nigeria as their birthright, and threatened to make Nigeria ungovernable if one of them did not emerge as the president of the country during the last presidential election in the country. Alternatively, perhaps, Boko Haram’s metamorphosis was as a result of social conflict between the haves (ruling elites) and the disenchanted have-nots. On the other hand, could it be a response to the extra judicial killing of their leader, Yusuf, and more than 700 of their members by the Nigerian police and security services during the first uprising of the sect in 2009?

**Research Objective and Focus**

**Objective of the Research**

* The study will seek to unravel the root causes of Boko Haram insurgency
* The study will consider different narratives, especially the issue of poverty and injustice as being expressed by leaders as the causes of Boko Haram crisis.
* To determine, if any, the role that the political system or politicians played in the emergence of Boko Haram
* To unravel the ideology driving Boko Haram insurrection.

**The Significance of the Research**

Why has Boko Haram a benign Islamic sect metamorphosed into a terrorist organisation? Nigeria being a secular state has been affected adversely by the activities of Boko Haram. In fact, Nigeria is titling on the brink of religious conflict which could destroy the cooperate existence of the country. Therefore, this study will try to provide an answer for the germane question posed in the problem formulation.

 **Hypotheses**

Since Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria is the nucleus of this research, and knowing full well that hypothesis is the cornerstone or foundation of any scientific research, in view of this, it is pertinent to consider the following hypotheses:

H0: Boko Haram metamorphosis was caused by poverty and inequality.

**H**1: Boko Haram chaotic development was caused by injustice and lack of civil liberties.

H2: Boko Haram insurgency, a political conflict of ideologies.

The aforementioned hypotheses will be thoroughly and methodologically analysed to have a better understanding of the reason(s) for the anarchic development of the sect.

**Research Questions**

This research will try to answer the following questions, because they are germane to understanding the problem formulation. Why has Boko Haram a benign Islamic sect metamorphosed into a terrorist organisation?

* Did poverty contribute to Boko Haram Insurgency?
* Is injustice and lack of civil liberties to be blamed for Boko Haram crisis?
* What impact does revolutionary and radical Islamic ideologies have on Boko Haram Insurgency?

**Chapter Two**

**The Historical Development of Boko Haram**

The evolution of Boko Haram is somehow shrouded in mystery and obscurity. While some believe the emergence of Boko Haram as an Islamist religious sect dates back to 1995 when the sect was led by Abubakah Lawan under the name Ahlulsunna wal’jama’ah hijra, who subsequently left for Saudi Arabia to study at the University of Medina. Others believe that Boko Haram came into existence in 2002 in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno state in northeastern Nigeria under the spiritual leadership of Ustaz Mohammed Yusuf. The sect has in its sight the establishment and the implementation of Islamic legal code known as sharia not only in the northern part of Nigeria that is populated by the Muslims, but, in the entire country that is roughly divided between the Christians south and the Muslims north.(Onuoha 2010).

The name Boko Haram has its root in the local Hausa language spoken by the majority of the people in the northern part of Nigeria and Arabic. Boko in the local Hausa parlance simply means Western or foreign; while haram is an Arabic derivative which means forbidden. Thus Boko Haram rejects everything Western, including Western education and values. Though the people and the government of Nigeria because of the sect’s rejection of Western values use the name Boko Haram derogatively, the official name is Jama’atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda’awati Wal-Jihad, which simply translates “People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet’s Teachings of Jihad”. Its followers reject the constituted authority in Nigeria, and the sect forbids its members from participating in any social or political activity including voting in elections. Boko Haram views the Nigerian structures – political, social, and economic – as evil that they must destroy because it does not adhere or conform to the dictate of Allah and Koranic injunction (BBC).

Boko Haram as a sect draws its membership from every strata in the Nigerian society. You can find in its rank politicians, military, students, unemployed graduate, artisans, professionals, university lecturers, disaffected youths, and even beggars that are on the streets. For instance, in 2004 students from some of the tertiary institutions in the north-eastern states of Yobe and Borno decided to abandon their studies, shredded their certificates, and joined the sect for Quaranic education and the propagation of their belief. The sect has an estimate of about 280 000 people as members spread all over the 19 states in the northern Nigeria, and across the bother to Niger, Chad and Sudan. In fact, Alhaji Buji Fai, one of the former commissioners in Borno state was a prominent member and financier of the sect before his demise. In addition, Kadiru Atiku, who was a lecturer in one of the Nigerian universities, is also a prominent member of the radical Islamic sect (Onuoha 2010: 54 – 65).

According to the alleged confessional statement made by Ali Sauda Umar Konduga (a.k.a. Usman al-Zawahiri) one of the arrested members of the sect, to the State Security Services (SSS), influential Nigerians were mentioned in the said statement including a serving senator of the federal republic of Nigeria named Senator Ali Ndume representing Borno State. The Nigerian Police arrested, arraigned, and released the senator on bail pending the determination of the case. Late Saidu Pindar, former Nigerian ambassador to Sao Tome and Principe also featured prominently in the said confessional statement as one of the sect financial backers (The Nation newspaper, Nov 22, 2011).

**Boko Haram’s Ideology**

In order to contextualise adequately, Boko Haram’s insurgency, one has to put into perspective its ideological belief. Boko Haram insurrection is a manifestation of an ideology that finds expression within the Islamic fraternity. Previous religious riots and conflicts in Northern Nigeria were as a result of this ideology. For example, in 1980, the Maitatsine riots - led by fierce Islamic preacher Muhammed Marwa, a Cameroonian, who emigrated to Nigeria - in Kano and other cities in the North was as a result of the sect’s intolerance of the other orthodox Islamic religious sects, such as, the Tijjaniya and Kaddirya, and its entrenched abhorrence for the constituted authority. The riots “left more than five thousand dead before it was suppressed by the Nigerian army”. In addition, in February 2006, there was a riot in Maiduguri over the Danish cartoons depiction of Mohammed, the founder of Islamic religion. Many Christians were killed; scores were injured (Campell 2011: 44 & 52).

 To put the record straight, majority of the Muslims in Africa, including Nigeria are of the Sunni variant of Islam, thou fraction are of Shia narrative. Sunni Muslims are those who believe in “Sunna”, “the orthodox tradition of Islam”. While the Shi’ites are those who believe in the ascendancy to the Caliphate of the direct descendants of Mohammed, the progenitor of Islam, as represented by his son-in-law Ali and his only surviving child Fatimah (Fage 1990: 149 – 150).

There are four main branches in Sunni Islam, they are: Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi’i, and Hanbali. The Maliki School, the most prominent Sunni brand of Islam in Africa is reputed as the first variety of Islam introduced to Africa as far back as 1730s (Nigerian Tribune, 17 February, 2012). Most of the followers of Maliki form of Islam are Sufi Muslims. Fage describes Sufism as inner “mystical developments in Islam”. He further emphasises that the adherents of Sufism “were those who preached asceticism, and the importance for each individual Muslim of seeking God for himself in his own best way” (Fage 1990: 169 – 170). In essence, the central message of Sufi Islam is that individuals through act of piety can have direct experience of God and the monotheistic nature of God. Though, many Muslims in Africa are not of Sufi brotherhood, nonetheless, they belong to one of the three prominent fraternities namely, Qadiriyya, Tijaniyya, or Mouridiyya. The Qadiriyya was the first Islamic sect to be embraced in West Africa, and those belong to Qadiriyya are the followers of ‘Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani who was a teacher at Baghdad around fifty years after the death of the founder of Sufi sect al-Ghaza in 1166. While the Tijaniyya sect aroused from the teaching of Ahmad al-Tijani (1737 – 1815), a Moroccan divine. The Qadiriyya order approach is quietist than the Tijaniyya, that preaches jihad whenever it is necessary, and when the situation warrants it (Fage 1990: 195).

Amadou Bamba in Senegal established the Mouridiyya order in 1883, and it is the predominant brotherhood in Senegal and Gambia, but less represented elsewhere in the region. Out of the three brotherhoods, the Tijaniyya are the most prominent brotherhood in Africa.

Usman Dan Fodio(1754 – 1817), the man reputed to have introduced Islam to North-west Nigeria was a Sufi-Sunni Muslim, though, Islam had already been embraced in the North-east Nigeria before Usman’s arrival. Sheikh El Kanem of Borno – Borno is the bastion of Boko Haram – a Sufi Muslim was the leader on ground then. Apart from the Jihad Usman waged in 1804 to conquer – though not entirely successful - all the regions that made-up Nigeria of today, the brand of Islam practised was the non-violent traditional form (Harnischfeger 2008: 42 – 43; Campbell 2011: 45 – 46).

The Salafiyya, Wahabis, and Tablighi movements of Sunni Islam activism began to gain ground in Nigeria when Islamic scholars who went to study at Al-Azhar, a religious university in Egypt, and in Saudi Arabia returned to Nigeria. Aided by Saudi’s petrol-dollars, these clerics began to assert themselves; the consequences of their activities were profound. It absolutely changed the non-violent Sufi order traditional form of Islam (Qadiriyya, Tijaniyya, and Mouridiyya) that was prevalent in the North. They became assertive and confrontational towards the orthodox Islamic clerics, criticising their modes of worship as shirk or heresy and innovation.

The Tablighi, an Islamic fundamentalist movement, started in India in 1926, it arose because of the perceived predicament of the minority Muslims in India who were under the authority of a non-Muslim government. Its main preoccupation was the preaching and propagation of Islam as literally written in the Koran. The group rejects the secular political authority, and disenfranchises itself by not involving or participating in political activities such as, elections, party politics, political competitions, etc. Thou, being apolitical does not necessarily mean it does not seek to influence or support certain decisions of the government. For example, the Tablighi’s unalloyed support legitimised the coup that brought General Zia-ul-Haq to power in 1977 in Pakistan, in reciprocity, the government of Zia-ul-Haq supported the movement, and it became prominent in Pakistan (Crisis Group Report, Understanding Islam, Middle East/North Africa, No 37, 2 March 2005).

On the other hand, the Salafiyya started out as a reformist movement. It was founded by Jamal al-Din al-Afghani(1838 – 1897),and Mohammed Abduh (1849 – 1905),with the aim to counter western influence and Power. In pursuance of this objective, they were not unmindful of the delicate nature of Islam; therefore, they sought to balance their quest for reformation or modernisation with the orthodox Islamic belief in order not to be termed heretical. It is instructive to note that Salafiyya movement started out as anti-Western (this would later explain Boko Haram’s ideology, rejecting everything Western); it became more conservative under the leadership of Rashid Rida (1865 – 1935), who succeeded Abduh (ibid.).

Muhammed Ibn Saud, who was the ancestor of the Saudi royal family, though not the founder of Wahhabism, was actively involved in the propagation, and spread of the fundamentalist doctrine of Wahhabis. After conquering and uniting most of the Arabian Peninsula under the kingdom of Saudi Arabia, there was rapprochement between Wahhabism and Salafiyya. It is instructive to note that both movements reject shirk or heresy and innovations, they associate the problems of the world with the deviation from the true teaching of Islam as enumerated in the Koran (ibid.).

Within the Salafiyya movement, two strands of doctrine are in competition, namely the *al-Salfiyya al-‘ilmiyya* known as the scholarly Salafiyya; and *al-Salafiyya al-Jihadiyya* known as the warrior Salafiyya. The scholarly Salafiyya are reputed to possess Koranic knowledge, which confer on them the right to determine what is legal or illegal, legitimate or illegitimate within the stricture of Koran. They also possess the right to issue *fatwas* – judicial pronunciations – within the Islamic fold. While on the other hand, the warrior Salafiyya are the Jihadists. Al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden belong to this latter strand (ibid.).

The diffusion of the Salafiyya movement to other parts of the globe, including Europe (especially in France), was considerably enhanced by the Saudi’s petrol-dollars, and the canons of globalisation such as, media technology. This same Salafiyya movement and ideology has spread substantially to West Africa, displacing the quietist Sufi order. Nigeria close proximity to countries such as, Chad, Niger, Sudan, and its porous border have enhanced the influx of radical imams and the Salafiyya’s ideology to the Northern part of the country, especially Borno and Maiduguri, the stronghold of Boko Haram.

Boko Haram unfortunately belongs to the Jihadist Salafiyya, which was alien to Nigeria. Nigeria traditional form of Islam – Sufi order – was never known to be violent. The entrance of Jihadi Salafis changed the religious equation in Nigeria, while the scholarly Salafis employ intellectual debate to challenge the traditional Muslim, the Jihadist, which Boko Haram belongs, believe proselytising can easily be achieved through Jihad.

**Boko Haram under Yusuf’s Leadership**

Ustaz Mohammed Yusuf was the leader of Boko Haram until the Nigerian Police killed him in a sectarian violence in July 2009. He hailed from Jalasko local government in Yobe State, North-East Nigeria, 4 wives and 12 children survived him. Probably because of his limited academic capability or other extraneous issues, he could not complete his secondary education. He later left for Chad and Niger republics for Quranic education. It was during this period that he imbibed the Salafist radical ideology that would later put him in conflict with other moderate religious leaders in the North. As a trained salafist, influenced by the teaching of Ibn Taymiyyah who preached Islamic fundamentalism in the fourteenth century (Council on Foreign Relations Publication), he was against the Nigerian secular state, and wanted Sharia imposed on the country.

In an interview with the BBC before his death, he totally rejected the notion that the earth is flat, and that the world is round. He refused to accept the scientific theory of Darwinism. To him, any knowledge that runs contrary to the teaching of Allah is sacrilegious or heretical. He argued that, “Like rain, we believe it is a creation of God rather than an evaporation caused by the sun that condenses and becomes rain”. “Like saying the world is sphere. If it runs contrary to the teachings of Allah, we reject it. We also reject the theory of Darwinism” (BBC).

It is, however, ironic that his rabid, zealous, and extreme criticism of science and Western education did not stop him from making use of Western creations through science. He was reputed to live in affluence and enjoyed the good things of life, including, driving a Mercedes Benz car, while most of his followers lived in abject poverty. Membership of the sect attracts 100 naira (Nigerian currency) level to their leader, though this was not the only source of its revenue, but it was the nucleus of the sect’s funding.

There were also donations from organisations within and outside the country. For instance, Mohammed Yusuf and Mohammed Bello Damagun were arraigned and tried in 2007 for aiding terrorism in Nigeria, and for receiving US$300 000 from Al-Qaeda to recruit and train Nigerians in Mauritania for terrorism. In addition, Yusuf was also charged with receiving funding from “Al-Qaeda operatives in Pakistan to recruit terrorists” who would carry out attacks on foreigners especially Americans residing in Nigeria. There were donations too from politicians, government officials, and individuals (Onuoha 2010).

**The Boko Haram Revolt Under Yusuf**

The Boko Haram violence or riots lasted from24 July to 30 July 2009. What precipitated the revolt was the arrest of some sect members by the Nigerian Police in Bauchi State. In retaliation, on the 26 of July 2009, the sect members embarked on a reprisal attacks and destroyed the Dutsen Tanshi Police formation in Bauchi State. The uprising spread simultaneously to Borno, Kano, and Yobe States. The attacks in Bauchi State left more than 40 sect members dead and 200 arrested. Borno State, which is the stronghold of the sect, witnessed unprecedented violence. Boko Haram members attacked the state police headquarters and Police Mobile College. They also attacked both Public and private structures. Churches such as the Celestial Church of Christ, Deeper Life Bible Church, and the Eklesiyan Yan’Uwan were attacked; more than 30 vehicles were set ablaze in the compounds of these churches. Houses and government properties were not spared either. In Yobe State, the police area command in Damaturu the state capital was attacked. Public and private properties were also destroyed. Wudil police station was also attacked in Kano state. At the end of the four-day orgy of violence perpetrated by Boko Haram, between 1,000 and 1,500, people were feared dead and several others wounded. More than 3,500 were internally displaced, about 1,264 children became orphans, and more than 392 women became widows. Yusuf was later arrested while trying to flee the country, handed over to the police, but he was extra judicially murdered (Onuoha 2010; Abimbola 2010; Danjibo).

**Boko Haram under the Leadership of Abubakar Shekau**

Little is known about Shekau apart from the fact that he was the second in command to Yusufu. Though, he was thought to have been killed during the Boko Haram uprising in 2009, but he escaped with bullet wound to one of the neighbouring countries. He came into limelight when he took over the mantle of leadership of Boko Haram after the death of Yusuf in 2009. Shekau is not a charismatic leader like Yusuf. But, what he lacked in charisma; he made it up in ruthlessness. In one of his postings on the internet, he blamed the government of Nigeria and the security agents for the death of their leader Yusuf, he vowed to revenge the death. He also claimed to be revenging the injustice meted out to the Muslims in Nigeria. He condemned democracy and the constitution as paganism that must be destroyed and replaced with Islamic canon laws. He believed he is fighting for the enthronement of Islam, the only religion sanctioned by God, and that whoever that is against him is against God, therefore he would not hesitate to eliminate such in order for God ordained religion to triumph. “I swear by Allah we will kill them and their killing will be nothing to us”. “It will be like going to prayer at 5a.m” (Washington Time; Saharareporters). He emphasised that Western education is evil.

**Major Attacks under the Leadership of Sekau**

 The emergence of Sekau as the leader of Boko Haram heralded the ruthlessness of the sect. Nigeria witnessed the first suicide attack under his watch, and this attracted reproach and public opprobrium to the group. Boko Haram’s ferocious and violent attacks since the inception of Sekau as the leader are enumerated below;

* On Friday, January 28, 2011, Boko Haram killed Borno State governorship candidate on the platform of All Nigeria’s peoples Party (ANPP), Alhaji Modu Gobi and his brother. A 12-year-old boy and four police officers also lost their lives.
* On March 13, 2011, the sect killed a renowned Islamic cleric Ahmed Abdullah at his mosque in Gomari.
* April1, 2011, there was an attack on a police station in Bauchi less than 24 hours to the National Assembly elections.
* On April 9, 2011, Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) office in Maiduguri was bombed.
* April 15, 2011, several people were killed in Maiduguri.
* Another Muslim cleric was killed on April 20, 2011, in Maiduguri, and several police officers were ambushed.
* That same day, in Yola, the capital of Adamawa State, 14 prison inmates were set free during a daring jailbreak.
* May 29, 2011, witnessed the killing of 15 people in Bauchi at the market located next to the barrack.
* June 6, 2011, witnessed the first suicide bombing in Nigeria when a suicide bomber drove a car laden with explosive into the police headquarter in Abuja, the federal capital and detonated it. Many people were killed and scores injured.
* Twenty-five people died on June 26, 2011, when explosive was thrown into a drinking joint in Maiduguri.
* July 3, 2011, witnessed another bombing of a drinking joint when a bomb was thrown into it in Maiduguri. Twenty people lost their lives in the incident.
* Another prominent Islamic cleric, Liman Bana, was killed on August 12, 2011, on his way home after observing his prayers at Ngala mosque.
* The United Nations Headquarters in Abuja, the federal capital was bombed on August 26, 2011, by a suicide bomber, 21 people died in the attack while several sustained injuries.
* In September 2011, Yusuf ‘s brother-in-law, Babakura Fugu, was killed to thwart a peace process initiated by former Nigerian president Olusegun Obasanjo less than 72 hours after having a meeting with Obasanjo.
* On October 26, 2011, Modu Binbute, a politician, was killed outside his house in Maiduguri.
* Borno and Yobe States witness series of bombing on the 5th of November 2011. Sixty-seven people lost their lives to these attacks, government offices and police headquarters were razed.
* On Christmas day – 25, December 2011 - three suicide bombers attacked St. Theresa Catholic church, Madalla in Niger State, the aftermath of the attacks left 35 people dead, and several others were injured.
* The sect attacked Christ Apostolic Church, Jimeta, Yola in Adamawa State on January 6, 2012, killing 16 people including the pastor and his son, scores were also injured.
* January 20, 2012, the city of Kano in Kano State witnessed ferocious terror unleashed on the city by the sect. More than 162 people lost their lives and thousands sustained varied injuries. Between 50 and 100 suspects were set free when the attacked police stations and immigration detention centres. The State Security Service (SSS) office and the zone 1 police headquarter were also attacked by sect members. A journalist with Channel Television, Eneneche Akogwu was also killed in the attacks. Several police formations in the city were also attacked including Fegge police station, Farm centre police station, Naibawa and Jedijedi police posts, and also the immigration office in the city was attacked too.
* On February 26, 2012, Boko Haram attacked Church of Christ in Nigeria (COCIN), a suicide bomber drove a car laden with explosives into the church killing four people.
* St. Finbarr’s Catholic Church was in Reyfield Jos, Plateau State was attacked on March 11, 2012. Eleven people lost their lives in the attack including a pregnant woman, while 22 were injured.
* On April 29, 2011, Christians who were worshipping at Bayero University, Kano theatre were attacked, 15 people killed including a professor, and many injured.
* The motorcade of Taraba State police commissioner Mr Mamman Sule was attacked in Jalingo the state capital by motorbike suicide bomber. The attack killed 11 people, and injured more than 20 people.
* Boko Haram suicide bombers attacked two churches in Bauchi on June 3, 2012, killing 15 people while 38 people were injured.
* On June 8, 2012, a suicide bomber detonated his bomb at the gate of the Borno state police headquarters, killing five people, scores were also injured.
* There was a suicide attack at the Christ Chosen Church of God on Rukuba Road in Jos on June 10,2012, two people were seriously injured.

 Sources (The Sun, Nation, Daily Mirror, Nigerian Tribune, The Punch newspapers).

Looking at the attacks carried out as enumerated above by Boko Haram in Nigeria, it baffles divergent observers of this event as to why Boko Haram has transformed or metamorphosed into a terrorist organisation as posed in the problem formulation. What informed this metamorphosis? Is it poverty or injustice as posited in the hypothesis? The next chapter, which is the methodology, will give a road map to finding an answer to the problem question.

**Chapter Three**

**Methodological Consideration**

In this part, the researcher will present the method of research used for the study. It includes among all things, the researcher’s motivation, methodological approach, the structure of the thesis, theories used as well as limitations encountered during the cause of the study.

**Motivation**

The researcher’s motivation to embark on this study stems from his curiosity about the chaotic development of an extremist group called Boko Haram in Nigeria. Before the advent of Boko Haram, it was believed that though, Nigeria Muslim community harbours some elements of extremist groups, but at the same time, it abhors extremist’s violence. The majority of Nigerian Muslims are of Sufi order, but the incursion of Jihadist Salafists has changed such a perception of peaceful demeanour of Islam. Majority of non-Muslims in Nigeria now perceive Islamic religion as violent, backward, and ungodly.

Therefore, the study will examine the reason behind Boko Haram chaotic development. Why has Boko Haram metamorphosed into a dreaded terrorist sect that is posing existential threat to the cooperate existence of Nigeria through their violent activities? In addition, the study will deal superficially with other terrorist organisations such as, Tamil Tiger in Sri Lanka, Hamas in Gaza, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and the Taliban in Afghanistan, to determine the extend in which Boko Haram has drawn inspiration and copied their modes of operation in executing its own agenda.

The issue of poverty, injustice, and lack of civil liberties being touted by both political and opinion leaders as the root causes of Boko Haram terrorist activities will be thoroughly examined in order to establish the veracity or otherwise of such claims.

**Research Method**

The study will involve mixed research methods – qualitative and quantitative methods. Although, the main research approach will be qualitative. While this researcher understands the fact that qualitative analysis allows for more exploratory processes, however, because of the hypotheses involved, quantitative methods introduced will allow the author to methodologically test these hypotheses and analyse the statistical data involved. As stated earlier, the main research method is qualitative, but quantitative methods will support it. In addition, a post-positive approach is used in answering the research question. The author decides to use post-positivism, which claims reasonable level of objectivity in its epistemological standpoint is attainable when research is carried out, as against positivism, which alludes to absolute objectivity in its epistemological perspective in carrying out a research.

It is instructive to note that the researcher’s background, experience, upbringing, opinions, and attitudes will definitely play a part in the study; therefore, the result of the study cannot be absolutely objective.

**Structure**

The study is divided into six chapters; chapter one deals with the introduction, the problem formulation, hypotheses, research questions, research objectives, significance of the thesis, and most especially the definition of terrorism. Chapter two has to do with the historical development of Boko Haram, the ideology of the sect and various attacks it has carried out. Chapter three explains the methodological considerations, the motives of the researcher, the structure of the research, the materials used for the research, and the research method. And also the limitation of the research. Chapter four is the comprehensive discussion of the theoretical approach of contentious politics by Tilly and Tarrow, and the concepts of fundamentalism. It also involves literature review. Chapter five takes a look at the empirical analysis, discussing exhaustively the issues of poverty, injustice, and lack of civil liberties as related to the research question. While chapter six deals with summary and the conclusion of the research.

**Theories**

It is quite problematic to explain the anarchical development of Boko Haram with just a single theory, attributing it to just one specific cause will be reductionist. Political and opinion leaders within and outside Nigeria have adduced different reasons to the emergence of Boko Haram insurgency. Therefore, in order to understand the root causes of Boko Haram insurgency, we need to look for a theory or theories to analyse what precipitated the crisis. Scholars such as Ted Robert Gurr, Martha Crenshaw, David Rapoport, Johan Galtung, etc., have all espoused or supported one terrorism theory or the other. For example, Ted Robert Gurr postulated the relative deprivation theory, which explains political conflicts or violence as a result difference in social, political, and economic situation of individual. This theory dates back to Aristotle’s theory of revolution. In his book titled “Why Men Rebel” he tried to establish a connection between political violence and the feelings of deprivation that resulted from individuals unfulfilled expectations. It opines that when individuals feel they are deprive, this will lead to anger and frustration, frustration leads to aggression, violence and rebellion. Gurr’s concept introduces some intervening mechanisms such as “dissident institutional support” and “regime institutional support”, but the crux of his approach is still rooted in frustration and aggression (Hafez 2003: 17)

Gurr’s approach has witnessed plethora of criticisms, first, the theory does not really explain satisfactorily that individual or groups who engage in collective struggle are deprived of something. Also, for an individual or group to engage in struggle, both human and material resources are of primacy, therefore, if people are aggressive and engage in struggle because of their economic conditions, then where would they have the material resource viz-a-viz the money to finance their struggle (ibid).

Martha Crenshaw’s rational choice theoretical approach, which opines that terrorism, is as a result of rational choice by its practitioners – a cost-benefit decision. Every terrorist knows the implications of their decisions, therefore, terrorism is a deliberate strategy by political actors as against psychological approaches to terrorism which postulate that terrorists are mentally deranged and psychological unstable (Crenshaw in O’Kane 2005: 319 – 320). According to Italian researchers “A terrorist does not simply weigh risks against the likelihood of success, as is normally the case, but adds into equation the abstract value of the cause for which he or she is fighting. This is the reason why traditional notions of deterrence are ineffective against such subject” (Townshend 2002: 22). The Crenshaw approach also encounters the problem of “free rider” those who would not rather participate in collective action, but are in the position to benefit from the reward of such an action.

Explaining the root causes of Boko Haram insurgency with the theories mentioned above has its limitations and constraints. These theories cannot adequately and comprehensively analyse and explain the sudden transformation of Boko Haram. Although, Jackson, et al., succinctly captured this complex and intricate situation when they suggested the adoption of social movement theory approach in analysing such a complicated social and political processes. The social movement theoretical approach integrates complex social and political interactions such as socio-economic process, political opportunity structures, internal movement dynamics, and framing, which produce circle of protest in contention (Jackson, et al. 2011: 214).

It is not impossible to use social movement theory to analyse the Boko Haram phenomenon in Nigeria, but it cannot adequately capture holistically the enormity of the situation. In addition social movement theory has been subsumed under contentious politics. In view of this, the researcher has decided to use a multi-level, multi-dimensional and integrated theoretical approach as a conceptual framework to analysing Boko Haram insurgency. Therefore, the concept of Contentious Politics by Charles Tilly and Sidney Tarrow, which is a paradigm shift from orthodox and structural analysis to causal approach to understanding political conflicts, and the concept of Fundamentalism will serve as theoretical framework in analysing Boko Haram insurgency.

The concept of Fundamentalism will be used not as descriptive, but evaluative and analytical concept to explain the religious dimension to Boko Haram Insurgency and demand. Because Boko Haram claimed they drew the legitimacy of their demand from God, who they claimed sanctioned their atrocious activities. In addition, Contentious Politics will address the issue of identity formation, mobilisation, and the political opportunity structure that allowed Boko Haram to make their claim or demand on the government of Nigeria. This theoretical approach will illuminate and provide insight into the causes of Boko Haram as posted in the problem formulation.

Tilly and Tarrow explain contentious politics in terms of claim making that bears on another person’s interests, which most of the time result into political struggles. Claim making involves mostly two parties, subjects and objects of claims, it gets into the realm of politics when governments, or governments’ agents are involved as subjects, objects, monitors or guarantors of claims. They opine that in every political conflict, there are mechanisms and processes that are involved which should serve as devices to explaining such a conflict. This is a radical departure from Marxists who emphasised class stratification as the cause of political and social struggles and upheavals. And it is also a paradigm shift from using just a specific theory to analysis social or political processes.

Tilly and Tarrow emphasise the integrated roles of mechanisms and processes such as mobilisation, brokerage, scale shift, certification as crucial to contention. These input variables determine the outcome of contention. They aver that there are connections or similarities between different sorts of socio-political struggles or violent or nonviolent conflicts such as civil war, terrorism, ethnic conflicts, religious conflicts, social movements, genocides, revolutions, military coups, anti-globalisation, etc. And that these connections or similarities are embedded in the processes that threw them up.

Furthermore, Tilly and Tarrow place socio-political struggle at the heart of public politics by emphasising on different forms of regimes and the way they respond to claims made by political actors. They distinguish between democratic and undemocratic regimes, and the capacity that is inherent in each of these regimes to deal with clams. In addition, rather than having social movement as a separate theory, Tilly and Tarrow view social movement as an integral part of nonviolent claim making in contention.

Therefore, contentious politics theoretical approach will serve as the theoretical framework to explain the metamorphosis of Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria. This researcher will discuss the concept comprehensively in the next chapter.

**Literature and Limitations**

The empirical analysis of the study topic is based on secondary sources and data. The secondary sources and data are basically published books and works, online materials, official statistics, newspapers, magazine, journals, articles, and published papers. The study also uses materials from Amnesty International, Human Right Watch, and Freedom House, to analyse the issue of human rights abuse in Nigeria. Materials from UNDP to analyse the Human Development Index; Nigeria Budget Office to examine both the capital and recurrent expenditure of the Nigerian government; and National Bureau of Statistics to investigate the economic disparities among the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria. Different sources are used for data collection in order to ensure that collected data is valid and reliable. Though, there can never be total reliability of the data collated, but it makes the study interesting and enriching when you have conflicting perspectives on issue.

Boko Haram is a recent phenomenon in Nigeria; therefore, the limitation of the research is having enough materials and published books to explicitly and exhaustively analyse in-depth the Boko Haram development in Nigeria. Notwithstanding, this does not alter the focus, reliability, validity and objectivity of the study.

**Research Design**

**Introduction**

 **Problem Formulation**

**Why has Boko Haram a benign Islamic sect metamorphosed into a terrorist organisation?**

**Methodological Consideration**

**k**

*Comparative*

*Data Analysis:*

*Interpretivism*

*SecondaryData: Qualitative/Quantitative*

 **Theoretical Perspectives**

 **Literature Review**

**Contentious politics and Fundamentalism**

**Analysis**

 **Conclusions and Recommendations**

**Chapter Four**

**Theoretical Perspectives**

Let me start by borrowing from Cox who says, “Theory is always for someone and for a purpose.” We also need to understand the fact that theories are not static, they evolve every now and then, old theories are either relegated or realign with new ones, and new theories are springing up to explain the current world phenomenon. In view of this, the researcher will present Contentious Politics by Tilly and Tarrow as theoretical framework, and the concept of Fundamentalism to explaining the metamorphosis of Boko Haram to a terrorist organisation.

**Literature Review**

Finding a generally acceptable theoretical analysis of the causes of terrorism is as difficult as the definition of the concept. There are different perspectives to the understanding of the causes of terrorism. Plethora of reasons or motives has been adduced to why individuals or people engage in terrorism. In this part of the thesis, the researcher will examine scholarly works on the causes of terrorism.

Martha Crenshaw one of the most prominent scholars to address the issue of the causes of terrorism emphasises the arduous task in finding a commonly acceptable explanations for the causes of terrorism. She opines that terrorism is a calculated choice by rational being and terrorist group. In addition, the society in which terrorism occurs must also be put into consideration viz-a-viz economic, political, and social condition that is prevalent in that particular society as related to others. Crenshaw distinguishes between “preconditions” and “precipitants” factors of terrorism. She explains preconditions in terms of the root causes, and precipitants in terms of the triggering causes of terrorism. She further divides and classifies preconditions into enabling or permissive conditions that give room to terrorism to occur, and the situations that motivate the occurrence of terrorism (Hogan and Braddock 2012: 99 – 100)

In essence, Crenshaw believes that terrorism is a matter of cost-benefit assessment on the part of rational actors and terrorist organisation. Her scholarly works have inspired varied scholars in the field of terrorism, and she is often referred to when looking into the causes of terrorism.

Miller explains the causes of terrorism in a three liner stages. “Stage one has to do with an unacceptable condition, that is “it’s not right.” The second stage is the feeling of injustice: “it’s not fair.” While the last stage is apportioning blame for injustice: “it’s your fault.” He opines that these patterns are located in every society, but it does not necessarily have to lead to terrorism (Miller 2006, cited in Mahan and Griset 2008: 10).

Ted Gurr, in his book titled “why men rebel” (1970) explains the causes of political violence including terrorism in terms of relative deprivation as a result of unfulfilled expectations. He opines that the “the primary causal sequence in political violence is first the development of discontent, second the politicisation of that discontent, and finally its actualisation in violent action against political objects and actors (Gurr 1970 cited in Buechler 2011: 97; Hafez 2003: 17).

Gupta in his contribution to the root causes of terrorism emphasises the economic and socio-psychological dimension that determines and motivates individual into joining a terrorist organisation. He opines, “Political violence takes place when a leader gives voice to the frustration by formulating a well-defined social construction of collective identity and paints in vivid colour the images of “us” and “them”. In other words, economic deprivation, lack of political freedom, and religious grievances are not the necessary predictors of terrorism (Gupta in Bjorgo 2005: 19).

Albert Bandura, who developed the theories of social learning of aggression, avers that the motivations behind acts of terrorism and converting social being into combatants or terrorists has nothing to do with the restructuring of their personalities or aggressiveness or their ethical or moral values, but it is located in the recalibration of the way they view the act of killing itself viz-a-viz the moral value of killing (Bandura 1973; 1998, cited in Mahan and Griset 2008: 12 – 13).

Krueger rejects the concept of poverty and deprivation as the causes of terrorism. In the statistical analysis he carried out in Palestine, he opines that terrorists are less likely to be motivated by poverty or economic deprivation; they are motivated by political goals and lack of civil liberties. He concludes by saying “my research shows that civil liberties are an important determinant of terrorism. It is possible that there are some indirect links between economic conditions and civil liberties….The data tell us that terrorism should be viewed more as a violent political act than as response to economic conditions” (Krueger 2007: 88 – 90).

Post on the other hand introduces what is called “psycho-logic” which looks into the pattern of terrorists reasoning. He avers “political terrorists are driven to commit acts of violence as a consequence of psychological forces. In addition, their special psycho-logic is constructed to rationalise acts the are psychologically compelled to commit. Individuals are drawn to the path of terrorism in order to commit the acts of violence” (Post 1998 cited in Mahan and Griset 2008: 10).

Furthermore, Kellen also emphasises on the psychological imbalanced of terrorists. He opines that majority of terrorists have had psychological experience and trauma that has affected their views about the world and stimulate them to commit violent acts. (ibid).

Ruby rejects the notion that terrorists are mentally unstable, or psychologically imbalanced. He asserts in the review he calls “personality defect” sort of terrorism that, the common believe that terrorists are mentally unstable and psychologically different from non-terrorists does not really have any empirical grounding. He opines that terrorists could withstand the same rigour and stress soldiers pass through in killing people. In conclusion, he says terrorist are normally people with balanced mental state of mind, and they are like the solders but they only lack the material wherewithal to engage in conventional war (Ruby 2002 cited in McElreath 2010: 59).

**Contentious Politics**

Tilly and Tarrow (2007: 4) explain contentious politics as “interactions in which actors make claims bearing on someone else’s interests, leading to coordinated efforts on behalf of share interests or programs, in which governments are involved as targets, initiators of claims, or third parties”. There are three convergence characteristics of contentious politics in societal interactions: “contention, collective action, and politics” (Ibid).

Contention according to Tilly and Tarrow (ibid), encompasses claims making by individual(s) or group making claims that bother on the interests of others. For a process to be classified as a claim, at least two important features must be present; a subject, and an object. The maker of a claim is the subject, while the receiver of a claim is the object. Although, claims may come in different forms or dimensions, it could range from mundane demands to vociferous requests, but it always bothers on the interests and the well-being of the objects. That is the reason why the objects of a claim at times find it difficult to accommodate it. Contention, therefore, involves subjects, objects, and claims.

The other feature of contentious politics is collective action, which normally takes place most of the time without any input from the government. It involves coordinated actions on “behalf of shared interests or programs” and it occurs most of the time without any noteworthy contention (ibid.:5).

Tilly and Tarrow opine that contention most of the time “occurs outside politics”, but it gets into the sphere of politics when it involves governments or agents of governments. When claims are bothered on governments interests or rights, or when governments are the subjects or objects of a claim. For example, governments may make a claim on the citizens by demanding they pay their taxes, on the other hand, the citizens too have a right to a claim for the provision of social amenities from the governments.

They further allude to three important impacts of the involvement or absence of governments in contention to be firstly, the advantageous position of those in power over those who are outside the realm of governance. Being in government confers the authority on you to make claims on your subjects such as collection of taxes, and at the same time gives you the distributive authority such as distribution of state resources, and the regulation of their behaviours vis-à-vis adherence to the rules and laws of the state. Secondly, no matter how week a government is the rules and regulations governing contentions are always made by the state. It will not, in normal circumstances allow any form of competitive challenge to the base of its authority within its territorial boundaries. Thus, the government is in the prime position to solely regulate claim making in contention. Thirdly, governments have the monopoly of coercive means, which gives it advantage over political contention. These are; the police, armies, courts, prisons, etc. In addition, major violence could not be ruled out in political contention (Tilly and Tarrow 2007: 5).

Although, Tilly and Tarrow aver that not every contention bothers on claims making on the governments or governments making claims on individual, there are claims making that do not involve governments. There are claim makings that pit non-governmental holders of power against one another. However, all these contentions or conflicts normally stimulate governments to act. It should also be noted that those developments that occur in contentious politics could also be found in non-political setting. But when contention, collective action and politics converge, it brings about what Tilly and Tarrow called “potentially dangerous properties” (Tilly and Tarrow 2007: 4 – 7).

There is an overlapping area between contention and collective action in politics and non-political sphere, which some analysts explain in terms of social movement, these same analysts muddle or incorporate social movement bases into social movement. But Tilly and Tarrow disagree with using the term social movement to cover this area of overlap. They define social movement as “a sustained campaign of claim making, using repeated performances that advertise the claim based on organisation, networks, traditions, and solidarities that sustain these activities”. While social movement base has to do with participants, movement organisation, networks, social background, and cultural frameworks of contention and collective action (Tilly and Tarrow 2007: 114).

Although, social movement describes chiefly societal and cultural changes such as intellectual, scientific, and cultural movements, but to expand its scope to cover all contentious politics is beset by three major problems.

First, such definition makes it difficult to distinguish between different types or forms of contention. Each contention such as revolution, terrorism, military putsch, industrial conflict, social movement, has its own unique properties; therefore, having a broad or all-encompassing definition makes the understanding of these properties problematic.

Second, each contention is episodic, and it has different forms. In addition, every contention has transitory chattels. For example, a protest or social movement at times could lead to a revolution as we now witnessed in Arab countries such as Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya. It could also lead to civil war as is being witnessed in Syria. Therefore, using the broad platform of social movement to describe these conditions is defective, because it fails to explain the major transitions between different forms of contention.

Third, such definition does not take into cognisance the transitory period from the bases of contentious politics to campaigns. This transition is sequential not spontaneous. There are mechanisms and processes that must have incited it, therefore, putting it under the umbrella of social movement will not adequately capture these important differences (Tilly and Tarrow 2007: 113 – 114).

 As explained earlier, Tilly and Tarrow opine that when contention, politics, and collective action converge, it brings about “potentially dangerous properties.” What are these dangerous properties? They explain it in terms of power, shared interests, and government policy that come into play during this convergence. At this point of convergence, rather than claims or demands being solitary, it becomes collective. There arises coordination among the claimants, and claims become political when governments assume the role of either monitors, guarantor, regulators or even direct objects or subjects of collective claims(Tilly and Tarrow 2007: 9).

In the above-defined scenario, the claimants become political actors, with distinctive political identities. Why do they need political identities? Having political identities differentiate them from others. It allows them to create boundaries that separate them from the others, and at the same time allows them to make their demands based on their identities. It activates boundaries that pit them against others who do not fall within such boundaries; it becomes “us” against “them”. Huntington opines, “As people define their identity in ethnic and religious terms, they are likely to see an “us” versus “them” relation existing between themselves and the people of different ethnicity or religion”. Therefore, Identity claims create a boundary, it regulates interactions within the boundary, and also regulates relations across the boundary. (Tilly and Tarrow 2007: 78 – 85; Huntington in Lechner and Boli 2008: 42).

Although, we must understand that boundary formation or creation most often than not already exists outside contentious politics, for example, in Nigeria, there is already a demarcation between the two prominent religions in the country vis-à-vis Christianity and Islam which pit one against the other anytime there is a religious conflict in the country. Also, boundaries exist between ethnic groups, social classes, etc., but these boundaries are flaccid and inactive, contention brings about the activations or the deactivations of the already existing boundaries, therefore, contentious politics most of the time does not create and activate new boundaries, it only makes use of the existing ones (Tilly and Tarrow 2007: 80).

Furthermore, making a claim requires performances: performances could range from writing and presentation of petitions, demonstrations, hostage taking, and even suicide bombing, and it must involve at least two actors – subjects and objects of claims. “All forms of contention rest on performances, but performances range from direct assaults on others to theatricals staged for nearby or distance audiences” (Tilly and Tarrow 2007: 12).

Performances become modular when other groups, individuals or claimants adapt it on a wider range. For example, Liberation Tigers of Tamil in Sri Lanka was the first terrorist organisation to use suicide bombing as a performance in the modern era, but subsequent terrorist organisations including Boko Haram in Nigeria have adopted and adapted it as their *modus operandi* in making their claims. However, when claimants bring different performances together to make it a single performance, Tilly and Tarrow call it repertories. For example, performances such as demonstrations, writing of petitions, release of press statements, newspapers campaigns, etc., are all different forms of performances, but the integration or clustering of these performances is known as repertoires (Tilly and Tarrow 2007: 16 – 17; Tilly 2008: 14 – 15).

As explained earlier, repertoires bring together different types of performances across time, space, pair and place. Majority of these forms of making claim or performances had previously occurred in the past contentions or conflicts. Bringing these performances together as a single unit of claim making has been the most significant innovation of the social movement campaign. Therefore, when individuals, groups, or claimants make collective claims, they are basically making such a claim within the parameter of repertoire already established in previous conflicts. For example, social movement activists in Europe and America always draw on already existed repertoire, avoiding performances such as suicide bombing, self-immolation, and hostage taking (Tilly and Tarrow 2007:16 – 17; Tilly 2008: 14 – 15).

In essence, contentious politics is a complex and complicated social process, which brings together different forms of collective action. Social processes such as military coups, revolutions, vigilante violence, rebellions, terrorism, and social movements are different dimensions of contention, but they all develop delicately and interactively. To explain any complex or complicated social process - be it contentious or otherwise – takes three important steps into consideration: First, the description of the process; second, disassembling of the process into its elementary causes; third, recalibration of the causes into a broad-spectrum description of how the process evolves ( Tilly and Tarrow 2007: 27).

However, because of the complicated nature of contentious politics, and in order to have a good description of the process, any explanation of contention requires an unassailable guide to description. A good guide to description will clearly identify the feature(s) and give an insight into the event an observer is to explain. As mentioned earlier, political actors, political identities, contentious performances, and repertoires constitute the nucleus of any contention. But additional concepts such as “events and episodes of the streams of contention and the mechanisms and the processes” are quite important too in order to be able to comprehensively understand, and at the same time, capture the dynamics of contention (ibid).

Tilly and Tarrow describe mechanism as a “delimited class of events that alter relations among specified sets of elements in identical or closely similar ways over a variety of situations”. Every mechanism has as its component cognitive, relational, and environmental mechanisms. Cognitive mechanism is characterised by changes of individual as well as collective opinion and perception. Relational mechanism changes connections between social groups, while environmental mechanism on the other hand has to do with the impact of external ambient on the political and social processes (Tilly and Tarrow 2007: 29; Tilly 2008: 139).

Mechanisms connect into wider processes. Processes are “causal chains, sequences, and combinations of mechanisms that produce similar transformations of those elements” (ibid). What this simply means is those sequences of mechanism and the integration, combination, and convergence of these different mechanisms will ultimately produce an outcome that is referred to as process. Thus, contentious politics is a complex and intricate outcome that involves the input of different mechanisms.

In explaining contentious politics, there is no single causal mechanism to illuminate the intricate nature of contentious politics, but three most prominent mechanisms are of primacy to understanding contentious politics, these are: brokerage, diffusion, and coordinated action. Brokerage simply means the creation of a new connection between hitherto unconnected locations. Diffusion is the process of spreading of contention from one point to the other. Coordinated action is when two or more claimants are making the same claims on the same object (Tilly and Tarrow 2007: 31).

Tilly and Tarrow explain that brokerage brings a very significant alteration into contention and contentious politics by stimulating further mechanism such as diffusion. The linkage and activation of diffusion also produces an outflow of ideas, practices, and resources that have a significant bearing on claim making on both sides of the divide – the sources and the destination. Diffusion on the other hand allows the activation of the third mechanism known as coordinated action (ibid.).

Furthermore, coordinated action generates other effects such as the creation of new alliances across different boundaries, and these alliances could lead to the process Tilly and Tarrow called upward scale shift. Scale shift is an intricate process in contention, though, most of contentious episodes start from the local level, but scale shift diffuses contention across social spectrum, physical boundaries, and space. It produces new coordination either at a higher or at a lower level than initially initiated. Downward scale shift is when coordinated action remains at the local level or even spiral downward than its initiation. Upward scale shift on the other hand is the upward trajectory or diffusion of the process of collective action from the local level to state or national or even international level (Tilly and Tarrow 2007: 94 – 95).

Tilly and Tarrow aver that upward scale shift is one of the “most significant processes in contentious politics”. Because as explained earlier, it expands the scope of contention beyond the original locality to a new and unfamiliar territory where such actions will affect relatively unknown new actors, and it could also threaten other actors, or even the entire socio-political system (ibid). For example, Boko Haram insurgence started as a local problem before its upward trajectory to national issue, but it has now taken international dimension after the bombing of the United Nations headquarters in Abuja. Boko Haram is a potential threat to global peace as espoused by the United State Congress.

 For the sustenance and continuity of contention, other mechanisms and processes come into play besides brokerage, diffusion, and coordinated action. These other mechanisms are “social appropriation, boundary activation, certification, and Identity shift” (Tilly and Tarrow 2007: 34). Social appropriation is the transmutation of hitherto non-political organisation or group into a political actor or player by re-launching their organisation into a political movement, for example, Hamas in Gaza did not start as a political organisation, but it is the de facto government in Gaza today. Also, Hezbollah started out as a terrorist organisation, but today it is part and parcel of the political process and the government in Lebanon. The Taliban in Afghanistan was not a political organisation before taking over the mantle of leadership and imposed theocracy in the country, though today they are back to the trenches fighting against the NATO imposed government in the country.

Boundary activation is the formation and delineation of a new boundary or the activation of an existing one to create a new frontier between groups jostling for position and recognition. Certification on the other hand is the recognition and support from external authority or power for a political group’s claims and demands. Identity shift has to do with the creation of new identities within opposing groups whose coordinated action brings into fore their similarities (Tilly and Tarrow 2007: 34).

The above-mentioned additional mechanisms are quite important to the continuation of contention. Without it, contention would die a natural death or go into extinction at attainment or unfulfilled groups’ claims. In addition, in order to understand the dynamics of contention, all the processes and mechanisms vis-à-vis brokerage, diffusion, coordinated action, boundary activation, social appropriation, certification, and identity shift that propel contention are of primacy, and they must be adequately synthesised.

Moreover, two additional processes – mobilisation and demobilisation – are also important to the study of contentious politics. Mobilisation simply means the point where groups that hitherto not known to make claims converge to start making claims, while demobilisation is the withering away of people or groups who are previously known to be making claims (ibid.: 35).

Tilly and Tarrow emphasis that eventually most of the mobilisation processes always decline, but the downward spiral depends on the conditions or situations that initially produced it. They explain the mechanisms and the processes of demobilisation as: (1) “competition among different sources of support”, (2) defection – claimants or political actors abandoning their claims, (3) disillusionment – political actors become disenchanted by their experience with collective action, (4) repression by the authority using coercive means, (5) “a modest degree of institutionalisation” – the state inviting political actors or claimants for a meeting to discuss a way out of the situation or impasse (ibid.: 97 – 98).

In addition, episodes and events are also important to contention as mentioned earlier. Episodes according to Tilly and Tarrow are “bounded sequences of continuous interaction, usually produced by an investigator’s chopping up longer streams of contention into segments for the purposes of systematic observation, comparison, and explanation” (ibid.: 36).

Regimes too play a very important role in contention. Tilly defines regime as “the set of relationships among a government and the major political actors within the government’s jurisdiction that interact routinely with each other and the government” Tilly 2008: 148). The ways and manners different regimes respond to claims vary from one regime to the other. The way a democratic regime would respond to demands by claimants or political actors would be quite different from how an authoritarian regime would naturally react to claims. For example, the way Muammar Gaddafi – the deposed and dead leader of Libya – responded to claims for political freedom and participatory democracy by a segment of Libyans was to send tanks and troops to suppress such an agitation. We could also see that in Syria and Bahrain. All these regimes are authoritarian in nature.

Tilly and Tarrow opine, “In both democratic and undemocratic regimes, most people who engage in contentious politics see themselves responding to threats they passive to their interests, their values, or their identities”. They classify regimes into four different categories: high-capacity undemocratic; low-capacity undemocratic; high-capacity democratic; low-capacity democratic regimes (Tilly and Tarrow 2007: 55 – 56; Tilly 2008: 150 – 151).

Every of the above-mentioned regimes harbour one from of contention or the other. In high-capacity undemocratic regimes, clandestine or nocturnal organisations engaging in subversive activities to undermine the regime, but most often than not, it always end up in repression. In low-capacity undemocratic regimes, there you have the concentration of most of the civil wars happening in the world. Low-capacity democratic regimes – which Nigeria belongs – have their fair share of military intervention in politics, and also communal, linguistic, and ethno-religious conflicts. High-capacity democratic regimes harbour most of the world’s social movement (Tilly and Tarrow 2007: 55 – 57, 144).

The different types of regimes mentioned above affect contention considerably. It explains the danger or opportunity faced by political actors or claimants. Changes in the topographies of a regime bring about changes in the nature of contention. Tilly and Tarrow explain the changes in the structures of regimes as political opportunity structure (ibid.: 57). Political opportunity structure means the crucial or major facilitator of political conflicts such as strikes, lethal conflicts, revolutions, terrorism, etc., is the degree to which the existing political structure enable collective action and claim making. Political opportunity structure according to Tilly and Tarrow comprises six components of a regime: (1) “the multiplicity of independent centres of power within it”, (2) “its openness to new actors”, (3) “the instability of current political alignments”, (4) “the availability of influential allies or supporters for challengers”, (5) “the extent to which the regime represses or facilitate collective claim making”, (6) decisive changes in all the aforementioned points (Tilly and Tarrow 2007: 57).

Tilly and Tarrow assert that in intermediate regimes, and where governmental capacity is low, most often than not it harbours large-scale lethal conflicts such as civil wars, religious conflicts, and revolutions. We need to understand that large-scale lethal conflicts could arise as a by-product or consequence of a nonviolent claim making, or primarily as part of claim making strategy in contentious politics (Tilly and Tarrow 2007: 135 – 136).

Although, lethal conflicts as a form of contention have some features that separate them from other forms of contentious politics, these include the huge risks involved and the sustainability of armed force. In addition, large-scale lethal conflicts such as civil wars, revolutions, terrorism, genocides, interstate wars, religious, linguistic, and ethnic conflicts requires substantial amount of resources – both human and capital – to maintain. However, large-scale lethal conflicts also employ similar mechanisms and processes in contentious politics in making claims (ibid.: 136 – 137).

In conclusion, contentious politics harbours similar mechanism and processes in different forms of claim making. Also, prevailing political opportunity structures and existing repertoires determine the extent or scale and the configurations of contention. For instance, the repertoire of contention in representative democratic regimes, most often than not are nonviolent forms of contention mixed with democratic institutions, which engender social movement campaigns. On the other hand, in authoritarian regimes the repertoire of contention most of the time incline towards lethal conflicts and the resultant effects are revolutions, terrorism, religious and ethnic conflict. However, we need to understand that the above classification of regimes is not an iron-cast typology. There are exceptions (ibid.: 160 – 161).

**Fundamentalism**

Armstrong in a seminar on intolerance and fundamentalism on 26 January 2005 opines that in order to fully understand fundamentalism, we should begin to understand the concept by looking at what it is not. She says “fundamentalism should not be equated with religious conservatism: second, it should not be linked automatically with violence: third, it is not an exclusive Islamic phenomenon”, and that it could be found in all the religions – Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, etc., which challenge the secularity of the world system (Armstrong 2005). Giddens supports this assertion, He avers that “fundamentalism protects a principle as much as a set of doctrines, and hence can arise in religion such as Hinduism and Buddhism that had hitherto been ecumenical and tolerant.” He argues further that fundamentalism is not limited to religion, it could also manifest in every sphere of life when a change is undermining traditional beliefs and ideologies. He says that this concern could be “idea of nation, relations between men and women (Hoffman and Graham 2006: 396).

 Armstrong defines fundamentalism as “a revolt against modern secular society.” She further says that when there is the establishment of secular ideology which separate religion and state, there is always an appearance of fundamentalist movement to protest (Armstrong 2005).

Hoffman and Graham on the other hand define fundamentalism as “a tendency that manifests itself as a strategy or set of strategies, by which beleaguered believers attempt to preserve their distinct identity as a people or group.” They aver that when the believers perceive that their identity is at risk, they take a cause of action to fortify it “by a selective retrieval of doctrines, beliefs and practices from a sacred past.” And that “these retrieved fundamentals are redefined, modified and sanctioned in a spirit of shrewd pragmatism, as a bulwark against the encroachment of outsiders” (Hoffman and Graham 2006: 396).

Hoffman and Graham aver that fundamentalism “relate to the interpretation of a creed that is intolerant of argument and debate, so that those oppose a particular variety of fundamentalism are deemed enemies and traitors” (ibid).

Although, Sidahmed and Ehteshami argue that fundamentalism is not an ideology or a concept, it is just a label which can be used in what they called “dogmatic manner” without thinking about the meaning and its implication. Hoffman and Graham disagree with this position, they argue that fundamentalism can be used as a concept – “something with a proper theoretical basis” – and that “it is not merely a descriptive but an evaluative term.” And that fundamentalism is both descriptive and evaluative concept like every other political concept. They further argue that fundamentalism is on the same pedestal with concepts such as liberalism and secularism which when used often generate controversy, but according to them does “not make it so ambiguous that coherent exposition is impossible” (ibid: 394).

Fundamentalism as a term or concept was first used in a religious perspective. It signified the defence of Protestant religious orthodoxy which was believed to be infringed by modern secular ideology. But this concept has found its way to every other religion as stated earlier and other concept such as market-fundamentalism etc. (ibid).

There are people that see fundamentalism as a fall-out of modernity. Ali opines that fundamentalism is a “product of modernity” (Ali 2002 cited in Hoffman and Graham 2006: 397). But, if it is a product of modernity, why then is it against or hostile to modernity? Kepel opines that “Christian fundamentalists seek not to modernise Christianity but to Christianise modernity, just as Islamic fundamentalist seek to islamise modernity” (Kepel 1994 cited in Hoffman and Graham 2006: 397).

Fundamentalism is seen as “modern movement opposed to modernity” and that fundamentalism used modern creation such as technology to spread their views and recruit new members. They fiercely oppose modern concepts such as freedom, equality, democracy, secularism, etc., which they regard as the symbol of modernity (ibid). Armstrong opines that fundamentalisms are “essentially modern movements” which “could take root in no time than our own.” She further argues according to Hoffman and Graham that “they have absorbed the pragmatic rationalism of modernity that enables them to create an ideology which provides a plan of action” (Armstrong 2001, cited in Hoffman and Graham 2006: 397).

According to Hoffman and Graham, fundamentalism holds the sanctity of a set of belief or doctrine not because of “setting them against other doctrines, but because it rejects the idea of debate and discussion with people who have different points of view” (Hoffman and Graham 2006: 397). Fundamentalism is antithetical to what Giddens calls “dialogic engagement of ideas in public space” (Giddens 1994, cited in Hoffman and Graham 2006: 397). Therefore, fundamentalism is a doctrine or concept that does not compromise on its ideology and could use any means to enforce its ideological beliefs.

Fundamentalism arises as a result of the state inability to provide an alternative structure to the old communal ideology, hence the aggrieved elites in the cities or urban areas “who are alienated to project their frustrations on a wold scale, seeking to create a community of believers who share a similar *weltanschauung* – word outlook” (Zoubir 1998, cited in Hoffman and Graham 2006: 398).

Fundamentalism as stated earlier does not believe in dialogue in projecting its ideology, and this make it to be a very dangerous concept, because most often than not its intransigence could lead to violence. Fundamentalism rejects doctrines such as democracy, equality, and freedom. Choueiri in his analysis of Islamic fundamentalism says they view democracy as a violation of “God Sovereignty.” He stresses that in the opinion of fundamentalist, the world has gone back to the Stone Age. Though, he agrees that some of them support democracy, but they only support it in order to use it for their selfish end – using democracy to bring about undemocratic end (Choueiri 1996, cited in Hoffman and Graham 2006: 399). For example, Ali Belhaji, a preacher with Islamic Salvation Front in Algeria opines “democracy is no more than a corruption or ignorance that robs God of his power and seek to bestow this power upon his creatures” (Kepel 1994, cited in Hoffman and Graham 2006: 399).

Although, it is not as if all variants of fundamentalism reject democracy. Kepel argues that different “reChristianisation” cannot argue that democracy is not an integral part of their system, that they must actually embrace democracy, this imposes what he calls “democratic constraint” on what the movement stands for (ibid). But Armstrong rejects this view, he cites as an example a US fundamentalists whose adoration of the early puritan in opposing democracy is glorified. In addition, she makes allusion to US fundamentalist who argues for the abolition of democracy and the restructuring of the society in line with biblical laws (Armstrong 2001, cited in Hoffman and Graham 2006:399).

The above-discussed theories are crucial and of primacy to the analytical chapter in answering the problem statement, why has Boko Haram a benign Islamic sect metamorphosed into a terrorist organisation.

**Chapter Five**

**Empirical Analysis**

Political and opinion leaders within and outside Nigeria have attributed the emergence of Boko Haram insurgency to poverty, inequality, economic dislocation and disequilibrium, injustice, lack of civil liberty, etc. But, could it be a truism that the stated social and political inadequacies were the root causes of Boko Haram insurgency? In this part of the thesis, the researcher will explore the plausibility of these arguments and analyse it to determine its veracity or hollowness. In addition, the theories discussed will be adequately employed in the later part of this analysis.

**Poverty and Inequality, as the causes of Boko Haram.**

The emergence of Boko Haram crisis has been attributed to poverty and economic deprivation. Leaders from all walks of life such as John Campell, former United State of America ambassador to Nigeria; the present USA ambassador to Nigeria Terrence McCulley; ambassador Johnnie Carson, the US assistant secretary of state for Africa; Wendy Sherman, US undersecretary of state for political affairs; Mallam Sanusi Lamido, Central Bank of Nigeria governor; Rauf Aregbesola, the governor of Osun State in the South-west Nigeria; Alhaji Bamanga Tukur, PDP National Chairman; Alhaji Kashim Shettima, governor of Borno State in the North-east Nigeria where Boko Haram crisis started, etc., have all supported the socio-economic deprivation argument as the root of Boko Haram Insurgency.

Ambassador Johnnie Carson, the US assistant secretary of state for Africa in an interview granted the Nation newspaper laid emphasis on the issue of poverty as the underlying factor fuelling Boko Haram insurgency. He opines, “There has to be sound security strategy, but there also has to be a sound socio-economic strategy to address the enormous poverty that exists in northern Nigeria.” Carson believes that without tackling the issue of poverty that is prevalent in the north, it will be almost impossible to deal with Boko Haram crisis (The Nation Newspaper).

The US undersecretary of state for political affairs, Wendy Sherman, stated after her visit to Nigeria, “In the Northern Nigeria, it is critical that the government address to social and economic disparities that have contributed to the Boko Haram crisis.”

 Both John Campell, the former ambassador of US to Nigeria, and Terrence Mcculley the current US ambassador to Nigeria have argued in support of this line of argument. Campell avers that the Boko Haram insurgency is a manifestation of the alienation of the Northerners; he says the president of Nigeria, Jonathan Goodluck, should address what he called the “legitimate grievances” in the Northern part of the country (Reuters News).

The BBC Africa analyst, Richard Hamilton supported the issue of poverty as the reason Boko Haram crisis is thriving in the Northern Nigeria. He emphasises in his report “In the North-west and North-east of the country poverty rates were recorded at 77.7% and 76.3% respectively, compared to the south-west at 59.1%. It is perhaps no surprise that extremist groups, such as Boko Haram, continue to have an appeal in northern parts of the country, where poverty and underdevelopment are at their most” (BBC).

Within Nigeria, political leaders have also paddled into this predominant narrative. For example, Governor Rauf Aregbesola of Osun State in the South-west Nigeria, in a speech he delivered at the National symposium on “Islam and peaceful co-existence in contemporary multi-religious state” at the Shehu Musa Yar’Adua centre in Abuja, stressed the issue of poverty as the cause of the crisis in the North. He suggested the creation of the Ministry of Northern Affairs to oversee the development of the North (Daily Independent).

Alhaji Kashim Shettima, the governor of Borno State, the base of Boko Haram insurgency, in an interview with VOA Hausa service monitored in Kaduna ascribed the Boko Haram murderous crisis to poverty. He says, *“The truth is that the main factor responsible for Boko Haram insurgency, not only in Borno State, but the whole Northern Nigeria is the abject poverty ravaging us. If we don’t take action to address this situation, to enable our people to get employment and access quality education as well as other issues of agriculture and infrastructure, then problems will continue to envelop us; and this is even little of what we will see in the North. If a boy has no work he will be very dangerous” (Blueprint).*

The chairman of Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), the ruling party in Nigeria, Alhaji Bamanga Tukur, and the governor of Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Mallam Sanusi Lamido, also agreed with poverty as the driving force behind the Boko Haram insurgency. Sanusi in an interview granted The Financial Times of London stresses, “There is a link between the very uneven nature of distribution of resources and the rising level of violence.” Sanusi is of the opinion that the distribution of the nation’s wealth, which gives 13% derivation, to the oil producing states in the south-south is at the heart of Boko Haram deadly attacks (Financial Times).

Looking at the socio-economic narrative of Boko Haram insurgency, we need to ask some very important questions; to what extent is poverty the driving factor of Boko Haram crisis? If truly poverty is the cause of Boko Haram, is poverty the exclusive preserve of the Northern Nigeria? Why are other states in the country, especially in the Southern part where poverty level is also high not engage in the act of terrorism to show their grievances?

At this juncture, we need to look at the issue of poverty in Nigeria. Poverty is the inability of individual to have the basic necessities of life such as clothing, food, education, shelter, and healthcare. It is characterised by unemployment, lack of social amenities such as electricity, and water. Sen defines poverty as “the status of a person who is deprived of opportunities to realise human capability inherently given to him, including access to such public services as education and health care” (Sen 1999, cited in Hayami & Godo 2005:195).

The United Nations statement on poverty issued in 1998 and signed by the heads of all UN agencies opines, *“Fundamentally poverty is a denial of choices and opportunities, a violation of human dignity. It means lack of basic capacity to participate effectively in society. It means not having enough to feed and cloth a family, not having a school or clinic to go to, not having the land on which to grow one’s food or a job to earn one’s living, not having access to credit. It means insecurity, powerlessness and exclusion of individuals, households, and communities. It means susceptibility to violence, and it often implies living on marginal or fragile environments, without access to clean water or sanitation” (un.org).*

According UNICEF, 56.6% of the Nigerian population lived below poverty line in 1995, and the figure was 45% in 2010. In the same 2010, 60% of the population lacked access to clean water (UNICEF/FOS 1997). Empirical studies have shown that Nigeria is one of the most unequal countries in the world despite its massive mineral, natural, and human resources. The issue of poverty in the country is due to high inequality which is characterised by “unequal income distribution and differential access to basic infrastructure, education, training and job opportunity” (UNDP REPORT).

The table below shows the huge disparities between different geo-political zones in terms of access to social amenities in Nigeria. The North-east where Boko Haram crisis started from and the North-west where it has spread to are lagging behind in terms of access to basic infrastructure.

**Table 1: Statistics of Social Conditions in Nigeria**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Zone**  | **Grouping of State**  | **Access to safe water (% of household) 2009/2010** | **Access to electricity (% household) 2009/2010** | **Average population per doctor 2010** |
| North East | Adamawa BauchiBornoTarabaYobe | 23.18 | 14.8 | 44.55 |
| North West | Kano KatsinaKebbiJigawaSokoto | 25.76 | 11.94 | 88.52 |
| North Central | Benue KadunaKogiKwaraNiger Plateau  | 28.55 | 34.22 | 9.05 |
| South East | AbiaAnambraEnugu EbonyiImo  | 35.93 | 38.43 | 6.38 |
| South West  | Lagos OgunOndoOsunOyo | 44.36 | 66.7 | 6.90 |
| South-South  | AkwaIbomCross RiverDelta Edo Rivers  | 30.7 | 35.1 | 81.80 |

Source: Democracy in Nigeria: Capacity Building Series 10, P. 157

The recently released report by National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) made a comparative analysis of the socio-economic conditions of Nigerians between 1980 and 2010. The report showed that while just 6.2% were living in extreme poverty in 1980, the figure had increased to a record of 38.7% in 2010 in spite of increase in oil revenue. The percentages of the extremely and moderately poor were 38.7% and 30.3% respectively, while non-poor was put at 31% in 2010 (NBS Report).

**Table 2: Relatively Poor: Non-poor Moderately poor and the Extremely poor 1980 – 2010**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year  | Non-poor  | Moderately poor  | Extremely poor  |
| 1980  | 72.8  | 21.0  | 6.2  |
| 1985  | 53.7  | 34.2  | 12.1  |
| 1992  | 57.3  | 28.9  | 13.9  |
| 1996  | 34.4  | 36.3  | 29.3  |
| 2004  | 43.3  | 32.4  | 22.0  |
| 2010  | 31.0  | 30.3  | 38.7  |
| Source: NBS, Harmonized Nigeria Living Standard Survey, 2010The NBS report also discovered that about 100 million Nigerians were earning less than one dollar ($1) a day in the year under review – 2010. That means out of more than 150 million Nigerians almost 100 million were living in abject poverty. In addition, the report stressed that almost 112.47 million Nigerians were living below poverty line.**Table 3: Relatively Poverty Headcount from 1980 -2010**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year**  | **Poverty Incidence (%)**  | **Estimated Population (Million)**  | **Population in poverty (Million)**  |
| 1980  | 27.2  | 65  | 17.1  |
| 1985  | 46.3  | 75  | 34.7  |
| 1992  | 42.7  | 91.5  | 39.2  |
| 1996  | 65.6  | 102.3  | 67.1  |
| 2004  | 54.4  | 126.3  | 68.7  |
| 2010  | 69.0  | 163  | 112.47  |
| Source: National Bureau of Statistics. HNLSS 2010Furthermore, the report looked at the disparities between the six geo-political zones in Nigeria and discovered that poverty was at its highest level in the North-west and the North-east the bastion of Boko Haram insurgency, whilst the South-west and the South-east had the lowest level of poverty in the country.Table 4: Zonal Incidence of Poverty by different Poverty Measure

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Zone  | Food Poor  | Absolute Poor  | Relative Poor  | Dollar Per Day  |
| North Central  | 38.6  | 59.5  | 67.5  | 59.7  |
| North East  | 51.5  | 69.0  | 76.3  | 69.1  |
| North West  | 51.8  | 70.0  | 77.7  | 70.4  |
| South East  | 41.0  | 58.7  | 67.0  | 59.2  |
| South-South  | 35.5  | 55.9  | 63.8  | 56.1  |
| South west  | 25.4  | 49.8  | 59.1  | 50.1  |

As earlier stated, the UNDP report stresses that in terms of Human Development Index (HDI), the disparities between the six geo-political zones in Nigeria are among the worst in the world. The report ranked Borno State the lowest with an HDI of 0.156. In addition, the average life expectancy in Borno State, which is the home of Boko Haram, according to the report, was put at 40years, and adult literacy was less than 12%. The report added a caveat that such economic disparities could lead to major socio-economic and political upheaval.Table 5:Highest and Lowest Regional Disparities in Nigeria

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| State  | Life expectancy  | Adult literacy  | H.D.I |
| Edo  | 59.5 years  | 79.5%  | 0.666 |
| Borno | 39.6 | 12%  | 0.156 |

Source: UNDP Human Development Index Report 2010. P 157A comparative analysis between Nigeria and its neighbours such as Ghana, Benin Republic, and Cote D’Ivoire that are less endowed than Nigeria in terms of mineral, natural and human resources shows that Nigeria expended less on health and education than Ghana and Cote D’Ivoire. In addition, unlike Cote D’Ivoire, Nigeria did not have provision for social security. Nigeria spent a meagre of 2.7% on education, though was increased to 6.4% in 2010, and 0.9% of its income on education and health respectively as against the 26% recommended by UNESCO for education.**Table 6: comparative public expenditure on health, education, and social security.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Country**  | **Health**  | **Education**  | **Social security**  | **Agric** | **Labor force**  |
| Nigeria  | 2.7% | 0.9% | - | 37% | 31% of population  |
| Ghana  | 3.5% | 3.3% | - | 53% | 58% of population |
| Cote D’Ivoire  | 3.3% | 3.5% | 0.5% | 38% | 39% of population |

 Source: UNDP Human Development Report, 2009, P. 164.Moreover, in terms of agricultural production percentage in relation with the population, Nigeria with 37% and 31% respectively was trailing behind both Ghana which had 53% and 58%, and Cote D’Ivoire with 38% and 39%.In the recently released 2011 report by UNDP on Human Development Index (HDI), Nigeria was in Low Human Development Level. Its HDI was 0.459, ranked 156 out of 187 countries. Whilst countries such as Ghana, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea are all in Medium Human Development Level (MHD). Malaysia and Singapore that started out with Nigeria in the 60s are now both in HHD and VHHD respectively (UNDP 2011 Report).Nigerian government has not shown any iota of seriousness in addressing the issue of regional disparities and poverty that permeate the land. Rather than addressing this problem, it has continued to expended resources in recurrent expenditure instead of capital expenditure that would allow the citizenry to be gainfully employed and lift them out of poverty. In the 2012 budget presented to the national assembly, out of N4, 877.21billion naira that the Nigerian government would be spending, a whopping 51% was on recurrent expenditure, 7.9% on statutory transfers, and 11.9% for debt service whilst a paltry 28.5% goes to capital expenditure (Budget Office).**Pie Chart of 2012 Budget.** Considering the grim state of Nigerian economy, Nigeria has no reason to be poor being an oil producing country that produces two million barrels a day. But due to corruption, mismanagement, and lack of accountability on the part of the country’s leadership, millions of Nigerians are wallowing in abject poverty, and this has led to the country being ranked in the Low Human Development Index (LHDI).The argument now arises, could the parlous state of the Nigerian economy and the poverty that permeate it have led to the emergence of Boko Haram? Or, is Boko Haram insurgency predicated on poverty, and economic inequality? If the answer is in affirmative, then this leads to the other question; is there any correlation between poverty, economic inequality, and act of terrorism being carried out by Boko Haram? If the answer to the second question is also in affirmative, then it validates the first question. But if the answer is negative, then it renders the first question invalid.In order to determine the validity or fallacy of the socio-economic causes of Boko Haram insurgency, we need to look into the socio-economic argument as predictor of terrorism. Many scholars, authors, researchers, opinion and political leaders have argued in respect of economic deprivation as the root of terrorism. In the General Assembly of the United Nations in 2001, delegates from different countries such as Netherlands, Costa Rica, Croatia, etc., accepted the narrative that poverty and economic disequilibrium are the causes of terrorism. In addition, most of the agencies under the auspices of the UN also agree with this line of narrative. For instance, Klaus Toepfer, who was the Executive-Director of UN Environmental Programme (UNEP) from1998 to 2006 noted, “When people are denied access to clean water, soil and air to meet their basic human needs, we see the rise of poverty, ill-health and sense of hopelessness. Desperate people can resort to desperate solutions”. Also, former World Bank President, James Wolfensohn, who was in charge of the bank from 1995 to 2005 concurred with this argument, when he raised the issue of poverty and inequality between the south and the developed economies aftermath of September 11 attack. He further opined, “Let us move forward to fight poverty, to establish equity, and assure peace for the next generation” (Mani in Boulden & Weiss 2004: 225 – 226; worldbank.org). Furthermore, political leaders such as former US Presidents Bill Clinton and George Bush, former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan, King Abdullah of Jordan have all claimed poverty to be the root of terrorism. Former President Bush in his address in Monterrey, Mexico, on March 22, 2002, averred, “We fight against poverty because hope is an answer to terror”. Laura his wife also claimed, “A lasting victory in the war against terror depends on educating the world’s children because educated children are much more likely to embrace the values that defeat terror.” Also, former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, at different fora linked poverty or economic condition with terrorism. For instance, on November 12, 2001, Blair stated, “The dragon’s teeth of terrorism are planted in the fertile soil of wrongs unrighted, of disputes left to fester for years or even decades, of failed states, poverty and deprivation.” Also, aftermath of the bombings of the London underground transit in July 2005, he stressed, “Ultimately what we now know, if we did not before, is that where there is extremism, fanaticism or acute and appalling forms of poverty in one continent, the consequences no longer stay fixed in that continent.” Professor Elie Wiesel, a political activist and Nobel Laureate noted, “The fanatic has no questions, only answers. Education is the way to eliminate terrorism.” Kofi Annan, the former United Nations Secretary General while addressing the UN General Assembly in 2001 declared, “No one in this world can be comfortable or safe when so many people are suffering and deprived.” He described terrorism as the “dark side of globalisation” (Krueger 2007: 12 – 13; Piazza 2006: 159 – 160).This “rooted-in-poverty hypothesis” as Piazza (2006) called it, has dominated the discourse of the causes of terrorism. This approach views terrorism as a direct result of socio-economic deprivation. Impoverish countries are fertile grounds for the breeding of terrorists. But, is there any empirical evidence or statistical data to back-up this line of argument? Let me begin by looking at the evidence of those who participated in terrorism as written and published by a former UN relief worker stationed in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, but now the Director of United Nations Information Services in Vienna, Austria, Nasra Hassan, in the New Yorker. She conducted interviews with 250 militants who were part of the Palestinian struggle against the Israelis in the 1990s. One of the militants who failed in his suicide mission to Israel and was brought back to Palestine with a brain damaged, but later recovered was asked about his “attraction of martyrdom”, in his reply, he said “the power of the spirit pulls us upward, while the power of material things pulls us downward. Someone bent on martyrdom becomes immune to the material pull.” Nasra Hassan in her submission concluded that out of the 250 militants interviewed, “none of them were uneducated, desperately poor, simple minded or depressed. Many were middle class and, unless they are fugitive, held paying jobs. Two were the sons of millionaires.” In addition, she said one of the Hamas leaders told her, “Our biggest problem is the hordes of young men who beat on our doors, clamouring to be sent on suicide missions. It is difficult to select only a few” (The New Yorker). In a survey carried out by Alan B. Krueger and Jitka Maleckova, they found that Palestinians suicide bombers were of diverse backgrounds. Moreover, when public opinion on suicide bombing as a weapon against the Israel Occupation was conducted, a cross section of Palestinians across socio-economic line supported suicide attacks. The survey showed that socio-economic background does not influence their support or participation in suicide attacks. They also carried out an analysis on members of Hezbollah by obtaining the profile of 129 martyrs who were honoured in al-Ahd, a newsletter that belongs to the sect. In their final analysis, they discovered that in the Southern part of Lebanon where Hezbollah is situated, and draws its recruit from, which is heavily populated by Shiite, Hezbollah members are relatively better off than the Lebanese population. In addition, they also discovered that members of Hezbollah were “better educated than the relevant segment of the Lebanese population, less like to come from impoverished families, and younger” (Krueger and Maleckova 2003, cited in Krueger 2007: 35 – 36).Berrebi who wrote his dissertation on the characteristics of those who were involved in terrorist activities submitted that suicide bombers were mostly from the families that live above poverty line, and that 60 per cent of the suicide bombers are educated beyond high school certificate (Berrebi 2004, cited in Krueger 2007: 34 – 35).Piazza (2006) corroborates the findings of Krueger, Maleckova, and Berrebi in his statistical analysis of the ten top countries in the world that witnessed terrorist attacks, and top ten countries that recorded terrorist attacks casualties between 1986 and 2002, coupled with their per capita GDP, and Human Development Index (HDI). He discovered that most of the countries that witnessed terrorist attacks during the aforementioned period were mostly in Medium and High HDI; only two countries were in Low HDI. Moreover, most of the countries that recorded high casualties’ rate were in Medium and High HDI (ibid.: 160 – 161).The tables below show Piazza’s findings:**Table 7: Top ten countries for terrorist incidents – GDP per capital and human development indices.** **2001 Human** **Incidents Average development****Country 1986-2002 (Rank) GDP per capital index rank****India 237 (1) $2,358 115 (Medium)****Colombia 129 (2) 5,615 62 (Medium)****Yemen 59 (3) 1,608 133 (Low)****Turkey 56 (4) 5,805 82 (Medium)****Greece 48 (6) 11,862 23 (High)****Israel=Palestine 48 (6) 12,651 49 (High)****Angola 45 (8) 2,510 146 (Low)****Peru 45 (8) 4,622 73 (Medium)****Pakistan 40 (9) 1,928 138 (Low)****France 39 (10) 22,897 13 (High)** **Source: Piazza (2006), page 160. Figures for per capita GDP and Human Development Index ranking are population-weighted averages for the State of Israel and Occupied Territories.** **Table 8: Top ten countries for casualties due to terrorism – GDP per capital and human development indices.** **2001 Human** **Casualties Average development****Country 1986-2002 (Rank) GDP per capital index rank****Kenya 5,365 (1) $1,211 123 (Medium)****United State 4,011 (2) 27,816 6 (High)****India 2,779 (3) 2,358 155 (Medium)****Isreal=Palestine 2,257 (4) 12,651 49 (Medium)****Sri Lanka 1,815 (5) 3,365 81 (Medium)****Iraq 1,646 (6) 3,413 106 (Medium)****Russian Federation 1,314 (7) 8,377 60 (Medium)****Saudi Arabia 1,037 (8) 10,348 68 (Medium)** **United Kingdom 984 (9) 19,627 14 (High)****Colombia 835 (10) 5,615 62 (Medium)****Source: Piazza (2006), page 161. Figures for per capita GDP and Human Development Index ranking are population-weighted averages for the State of Israel and Occupied Territories.****GDP per capita and HDI given in pre-1991 figures only.**Scholars such as Water Laqueur, Samuel P. Huntington, etc., reject the myth of socio-economic factor as predictor of terrorism. Laqueur states that terrorists are from diverse socio-economic background, though, mostly terrorist are young, educated, and majority are male, but they also have female members in their rank. He avers, “As far as social origin and educational level is concerned, the extreme left has traditionally been from a higher social class and been better educated than the extreme right” (Laqueur 2001: 80).Huntington also stresses that poverty or economic disequilibrium is not the precursor of terrorism or fundamentalism. He argues that economic modernization and social change in the world have created a gulf between the people and their traditional identities, and these processes too have weakened the states as a foundation upon which identities are built. He therefore, concludes, that the void created are filled by the so-called religious fundamentalist movements. These movements are found in every religion in the world. He says, “In most countries and most religions the people active in fundamentalist movements are young, college- educated, middle-class technicians, professionals and business persons” (Huntington in Lechner and Boli 2008: 41).Having gone through the arguments against socio-economic condition as the predictor of terrorism; why are political and opinion leaders within and outside Nigeria attributing Boko Haram insurgence to poverty? Are they doing it for political convenience? Or, are they just ignorant of the fact that there is a weak link between poverty and terrorism? Jackson, et al., answer this question by saying politicians would always link poverty with terrorism because of the benefit they get in terms of aids. They mentioned Yemen as one of the recipients of development aid because of the war on terrorism. Therefore, politicians are not arguing in favour of poverty out of ignorance (Jackson, et al., 2011: 206).The president of Nigeria, Jonathan Goodluck, inadvertently declared on Sunday, 8th of January 2012, during the inter-denominational service to mark the 2012 Armed Forces Remembrance Day, that Boko Haram members had infiltrated his government. He stressed further that they were in every arm of the government vis-à-vis the executive, the legislative, and judiciary as well as the armed forces (Punch newspaper). The argument now arises, if Boko Haram members are in every political segment in Nigeria, that means Boko Haram members are very influential and well to do. Then it invalidates the argument that Boko Haram insurgence is basically a direct result of poverty.If the proposition that poverty begets Boko Haram was true, we need to pause for a moment and ask a very important question; who brought about the so-called poverty that is ravaging not only the northern part of Nigeria, but also the entire country? Nigeria is an oil producing state with abundant human and natural resources. The country attained its independent from the British in 1960, of the fifty-two years of independence; people of northern extraction have ruled the country, either as President or as Military Head of State for almost thirty-eight years. Rather than using their positions to position the North and the entire country for greatness, they decided to shamelessly loot the common patrimony of Nigerians. They were inept, corrupt, and dishonest. They turned Nigeria into a rentier and predatory state, and inflicted chronic and acute poverty on the land by squandering the revenue from oil. Instead of these leaders to develop other sectors that could generate income for the country, they would rather rely on income from oil, which led Nigeria to seek for IMF loan after the decline in oil prices in the 1980s. Therefore, the issue of poverty lies squarely on the door steps of these leaders. I do not think the churches being bombed or the innocent citizens that are killed every day through their violent activities should be the object of their grievances, if they have any (Kohil 2004: 329 – 363; Harnischfeger 2008: 31). Furthermore, the leadership of Boko Haram has never for once attributed their insurgence to poverty. They have consistently maintained that the only solution is the imposition of Islamic sharia Code and Islamisation of the country. So, where does the issue of poverty come in? Avalanche of evidence has shown that most of the people who involve in terrorism have informed opinion about how things ought to be. They are educated, well to do, and mostly live above poverty line. For example, Osama bin Laden the leader of Al Qaeda before he was killed by the US, was from a very prominent and affluent background in Saudi. A Nigerian, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab popularly known as the “Underwear Bomber” who attempted to detonate concealed plastic explosives hidden in his underwear on a flight to the US on the 25th of December 2009, came from a very affluent background, and he had one of the best educations that money could buy. He attended British International School, Lome, Togo, and University College, London. In a country where majority are living below poverty line, the suicide bomber who drove his explosive laden car into the Headquarters of the Nigerian Police in Abuja was reported to have given his family about fifteen thousand dollars ($15, 000) as “pocket money” before he left Maiduguri for Abuja to carry out his mission. If he was poor, where did he get the money? In addition, Mohammed Yusuf, the man who founded Boko Haram, was driving a Mercedes Benz and was living in affluence before he was killed during the first uprising of the sect.Although, I cannot absolutely discountenance the issue of poverty in the metamorphosis of Boko Haram, we could look at it as one of the minute input variables which Tilly and Tarrow called mechanisms in contentious politics. Jackson, et al., put it thus, “In short the level of poverty alone cannot explain why terrorism occur, which is not to say poverty should not be tackle in its own right.” In addition, looking at World Bank data, 1.4billion people in the world live below poverty line, if poverty is the cause of terrorism, then everybody could imagine what the world would look like (Jackson, et al.: 206).In conclusion, therefore, the myth of poverty as being espoused by political leaders within and outside Nigeria as the cause of Boko Haram insurgence is not sufficient to explain the insurgency. Although, it could be part of the solutions to the crisis because based on the data enumerated earlier on the level of poverty in the Northern Nigeria, this could present Boko Haram a fertile ground to recruit those that are disenchanted with their socio-economic conditions as cannon folders in their terrorist activities.If poverty has been discountenanced as the root cause of Boko Haram insurgence, then we need to look at the second hypothesis which attributed it to injustice and lack of civil liberties.**Injustice and Lack of Civil Liberties as the Root Causes of Boko Haram Insurgency.**Many people have attributed the root of Boko Haram crisis to injustice and lack of civil liberties. For example, Dr O.B.C Nwolise, the acting Head of the Department of Political Science, University of Ibadan in the speech he delivered at the 25th annual general conference of Retired Army, Airforce, and Naval Officers Associations of Nigeria in Ibadan, Oyo State, attributed the Boko Haram insurgence to injustice perpetrated by the Nigerian government and its coercive agents against the sect when Yusuf Mohammed and 700 members of the sect were extra judicially murdered by the Nigerian police without the perpetrators brought to book. He opines “There would have been no Boko Haram today, if our state gave justice to the sect and dialogued early enough. But the state always believe in the Lugardian style of using military strategy to crush every dissent group” (Nigerian Tribune).But, is injustice or lack of civil liberties the cause of Boko Haram crisis? In order to determine if injustice or lack of civil liberties is the cause of BH insurgence, we need to look at the issue of injustice in Nigeria. There is a wide spread abuse of human rights and curtailment of civil liberties in Nigeria by the Nigerian and its agents of coercion. Although, under the 1999 Nigerian Constitution, Section 33 explicitly lays out and places civil and political rights over social, cultural, and economic rights. It says, “Every person has a right to life, and no one shall be deprived intentionally, save in execution of the sentence of a court in respect of a criminal offence of which he has been found guilty in Nigeria….” Also, Nigeria is a signatory to Article 4 of the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights, which avers, “Human rights are inviolable. Every human being shall be entitled to respect for his life and the integrity of his person.” In addition, Article 6 (1) on International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which Nigeria is also a signatory explicitly says, “Every human has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life” (NHRC, UNDP and NORAD Report 2005 – 2006; Falana in Adejumobi 2010: 134 – 135).These rights include, right to life, right to fear hearing, freedom of speech or expression, freedom of movement, freedom of association, freedom of religion, right to personal liberty and dignity, freedom from discrimination, etc. However, these rights also impose a duty on the government to make sure that the “security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government.” Over the years, these rights have been abridged and abused by successive Nigerian governments because Section 45 of that same Constitution provides its restriction “in the interest of defence, public safety, public order, public morality or public wealth or for the purpose of protecting the rights and freedom of other persons” (Falana in Adejumobi 2010: 135 – 136).Despite the rights guaranteed by the constitution, the security and law enforcement agencies have continued to disregard the sanctity of human life. There have been reported cases of extra judicial murders and politically motivated killings by security agencies that are supposed to safeguard and uphold the rights of every citizen. Motorists who refuse to part with their money as bribe as demand by the police are sometimes killed or robe in as criminals on fabricated evidence. Summary execution without trial of suspected criminals is widespread, and where there is trial, there is denial of fair public trial. The judiciary that is supposed to be the bastion of hope for the common man is also riddled with corruption. There is overbearing executive influence on the judiciary that is supposed to be a separate organ of the government which most of the time leads to manipulation and miscarriage of justice. In spite of the constitutional provision that guarantees freedom of speech and association, journalists are either arrested and charged with sedition for writing reports against the government, or even assassinated. Civil society groups are violently supressed and repressed when they converge without police permit, which the court had declared illegal, and when they try to obtain such a permit, they are always refused (Amnesty International; Human Right Watch; NHRC, UNDP and NORAD Report 2005 – 2006 ; Falana in Adejumobi 2010: 139 – 140). For example, in October 2011, Osmond Ugwu, a labour union leader, was arrested and detained without trial for three months on trump-up charges by the Nigerian Police in Enugu. He was charged with attempted murder and assault, but there was no evidence to back it up. He indicted the whole system after his release, “The incident exposed the raw, crude nature of Nigeria’s justice system. The Nigerian Police unfortunately serve as an instrument-settling scores and intimidating people with the judiciary complements this role” (Amnesty International).In 2007, Nigerians political right was circumvented when the elections were massively rigged in support of the ruling party. Both local and international observers adjudged the election to be a setback for democracy in Nigeria. The president who emerged acknowledged that the election was flawed and promised to embark on political reforms that would make future elections to be free, fair and transparent. Many Nigerians were embittered with this development, the opposition parties went to court to challenge the results of the election, but in the end, the court refused to upturn it.On the 7th and 8th of June 2005, six young vibrant Nigerians were murdered in cold blood by the Nigerian Police at Apo District in Abuja for refusing to bribe the police, though the police claimed they were arm robbers, investigation later revealed that they were innocent citizens killed because they refused to yield to the police demand (BBC; Falana in Adejumobi 2010: 137).Nigerian Journalists were not spared in this act of impunity, In October 2011, six journalists were arrested for publishing a letter purported to be written by President Obansanjo, they were abused and detained before their lawyers applied for their bails. In addition, Gbenga Mike Aruleba, a television journalist with African Independent Television (AIT) was arrested and detained in an underground cell on the order of the Director General of SSS, Col. Kayode Are on June 14, 2006 in Abuja for anchoring a programme tagged “Focus Nigeria” where he insinuated that the purported new aircraft purchased by the presidency was second-new and that the price was inflated. Also arrested and detained with him was Mr Rotimi Durojaye, a reporter with the Daily Independent Newspaper who published a similar story (NHRC, UNDP and NORAD Report 2005 – 2006: 52).With the level of injustice and the abuse of human rights in Nigeria, could this have led to Boko Haram uprising? Going by Sekaru the Boko Haram leader who claimed that Boko Haram insurgence was as a result of injustice meted out to their former leader and the Muslims in the north by the government of Nigeria. How valid is this claim? Is there any correlation between injustice, lack of civil liberties and terrorism?Krueger believes that the major facilitator of terrorism is lack of civil liberties. In his statistical analysis, he examined the countries of origin of most of the terrorists by classifying countries according to political rights and civil liberties using data from Freedom House. He distinguished between political rights and civil liberties. He explained political rights in terms of democratic practices such as open and transparent, and free and fair election, while civil liberties has to do with freedom of association , press freedom, etc. In the interpretation of the data collated, he realised that most of the terrorists are from countries that do not respect civil liberties. He concluded by saying, “a lack of civil liberties seems to be the main cause of terrorism around the world. Support for civil liberties should be part of the arsenal in the war against terrorism, both home and abroad” (Krueger 2007: 72 – 89). If injustice and lack of civil liberties are at the heart of Boko Haram Insurgence, then, every geopolitical zone in Nigeria should be teeming with terrorists because every region in the country has valid reason to engage in political conflict with the government. For example, in 1993, the military government headed by General Babangida, a northerner annulled an election which was adjudged by both local and international observers to be freest and fairest election in the history of the country, and won by Chief M.K.O Abiola, a southerner of Yoruba extraction. He was arrested, incarcerated and died in the gulag of the military. The annulment of the election was interpreted by the southerners as a ploy by the northern hegemony to perpetuate their stranglehold on the governance of Nigeria, and by extension control the oil resources from the south. That episode alone could have prompted the Yoruba to take up arms against the government; but rather, they resulted into legal means to engage the government (Falola 1999: 191; Harnischfeger 2008: 80 – 81). In 1995, the military regime headed by another northern called General Abacha executed Ken Saro-Wiwa, a writer and environmentalist, and eight prominent Ogoni leaders. They were representatives of Ogoni, an oil rich community in the Niger Delta, who were agitating for a fair deal in the oil being extracted from their land. These leaders were accused without any concrete evidence of masterminding a riot that killed four Ogoni chiefs who were accused of sabotaging their efforts to self-determination. This horrendous crime and great injustice perpetrated against the Ogoni people could have led them at that time to engage in terrorism, but they decide to take the government of Nigeria to international court of justice (Falola 1999: 199; Bah 2008: 60 – 62).Furthermore, the constitution of Nigeria guarantees freedom of religion, but in the northern Nigeria, Christian are finding it difficult to practice their religion because of the imposition of Sharia Penal Code in some states in the region. Harnischfeher in his observation of Kano State opines, “insecurity has grown, above all, for the Christian minority. The state governments, elected by the Muslim majority, appear more hostile or partisan than before 1999. They have asserted Islamic identity of schools, radio stations and other public institutions, so non-Muslims see themselves more than ever as outsiders” ( Harnischfeher 2008: 30). But this situation did not lead the minority Christian community in the north to subvert the government through act of terrorism.In addition, according to Freedom House report list of countries with human right violations, Burma, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Libya, North Korea, Somalia, Sudan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tibet under Chinese jurisdiction were tagged “worst of the worst”, while countries like Cuba, China, and Saudi Arabia completed the list. Nigeria was not named as one of the worst countries with human right violations, though, human rights abuse is prevalent but compared to the countries mentioned above Nigeria still ranks high (Freedom House Report).Apart from Somalia that is bedevilled with terrorism, and Uzbekistan with pocket of insurgence, none of the countries named above is grasping with the issue of terrorism even though their human rights records are abysmal. If injustice and lack of civil liberties are the causes of terrorism, China, with its appalling human rights record, North Korea under authoritarian regime, Saudi Arabia under despotic and absolute monarch, Cuba with its dictatorial communist regime, Burma under repressive military government, these countries should be bastions of terrorism.Although, I am not absolutely disproving injustice and civil liberties as part of the root causes of terrorism, but attributing it solely to the causes of Boko Haram insurgence would be reductionist. Injustice and lack of civil liberties could be part of the input variables in what Tilly and Tarrow called mechanism in contentious politics. These mechanisms influence an outcome, which could lead to political conflict.If injustice and lack of civil liberties are not the causes of Boko Haram Insurgence, then, why has Boko Haram metamorphosed in to a terrorist organisation? What could have led to this chaotic development? Could Boko Haram insurgence be a political strategy to impose their Islamic ideology on the country? In short, is Boko Haram insurgence a political strategy?**Boko Haram Insurgence, a Political Conflict of Ideologies.***“The fight in defence of religion and belief is a collective duty; there is no other duty after belief than fighting the enemy who is corrupting our life and our religion” – Ibn Tamiyya c.1300, quoted in Townshend 2002: 96.* In order to adequately comprehend the reason why Boko Haram metamorphosed into a terrorist organisation, we need to look into the ideology of the sect. What does Boko Haram stand for? What is the ideology underpinning Boko Haram insurgency? What is the motivation behind Boko Haram insurgency?Primarily, we should understand that Boko Haram is an Islamic revolutionary movement that believes in the demolition of the secular democratic structure in Nigeria through jihad, and replace it with structures based on Islamic rule. Like the anarchists, Boko Haram rejects the secular authority in Nigeria, though, they are not calling for the abolition of the state, but they are calling for the reconfiguration of the state’s structure in line with Islamic tenet and ideology. In order to make their voice heard, they have resulted into what the anarchist called “propaganda by deed.”The concept of “propaganda by deed” was described by the Italian Federation of the Anarchist International in 1876 as the “insurrectional deed” that was intended to “promote the principles of socialism.” It was seen as “the most efficient means of propaganda and the one most capable of breaking through to the deepest social strata” (Townshend 2002: 55). This concept has been adopted my various terrorist organisations including Hezbollah in Lebanon, Hamas in Gaza, Boko Haram, etc., to press home their demands, and create awareness of their existence.We need to pause for a while and examine the ideology that prompted these organisations including Boko Haram to adopt the concept of “propaganda by deed” as their *modus operandi.* Boko Haram as mentioned earlier is an Islamic revolutionary group, which draws the legitimacy of its action from the Koran, an Islamic religious book that specifies and sets out the rules under which a true Muslim should live. Based on this assertion, we can validly say that Boko Haram ideology is rooted in Islamic religion.Having understood that Boko Haram ideology stems from Islamic religion, it is pertinent then to examine Boko Haram demand from the perspective of this religion. What does Islam or Islamism as an ideology stand for? It is important to understand the viewpoint of Islam concerning the society. Islam is a religion that does not accept any authority outside that of God. To them the sovereignty of God is absolute, and any authority that does not conform to this supreme being is regarded as illegitimate and ungodly. Islam as a religion resists the separation of secular from spiritual jurisdiction. Bernard Lewis opines, “The very notion of a secular authority is seen as an impiety” (ibid: 102). Based on this, it is incumbent upon the true believers or adherents of this faith to fight for the imposition of the authority of God in their society. Democracy or liberal-democratic structure is antithetical to the Islamic culture. According to Moaddel and Talattof, “an Islamic State has neither parliamentary form of government in which people elect a group of people who enact laws and impose them upon people, nor is an Islamic State a presidential form of government in which the people elect a president who, along with his other colleagues, makes laws and impose them upon people” (Moaddel and Talattof 2002: 247). Therefore, it as an article of faith for a true Muslim to engage in jihad - which is one of the fundamental requirements in Islam - whenever there is a system they perceive as an obstacle or hindrance to the establishment of the rule of God. “The inexorable might of the state, the system and traditions of the society, and the entire human environment are all stumbling blocks in the way of Islam” (ibid: 242), and it must be violently put down through jihad in order for the rule of God to manifest. Qutb who succeeded al-Banni as the leader of Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt puts it chillingly “there is only one place on earth which can be called the house of Islam, and it is that place where Islam State is established and the Sharia is the authority and God’s laws are observed….The rest of the world is the house of war” (Sayyid Qutb 1997, cited in Townshend 2002: 109). Boko Haram has embraced this ideology in its fight against the secular authority in Nigeria. They perceive the government of Nigeria as ungodly, and like the fundamentalist chose not to negotiate with the Nigerian government because their belief is absolute and they cannot compromise on their belief. Fundamentalism holds the sanctity of belief or set of doctrines, and it does not compromise on those doctrines, because of the uncompromising nature of fundamentalism, therefore, dialogue is rejected, and this makes it to be a dangerous ideology whereby violence is the only avenue to air their grievances.If Boko Haram is absolutist, could it be validly argued that religious ideology rooted in fundamentalism the primary motivation or the cause of its metamorphosis? One of the surveys in the late 1990s according to Townshend claimed “religious imperative for terrorism is the most important defining characteristic of terrorism today”, one of the American college textbooks author placed “religious fanaticism” as top of the motives for terrorism. Also, Canadian Security Intelligence report published in 2000 averred “one of the prime motivators of contemporary terrorism is Islamic religious extremism” (Townshend 2002: 96 – 97).US State Department on its Pattern of Global Terrorism avers “a change from primarily politically motivated terrorism to terrorism that is more religious or ideologically motivated” (ibid: 97). Hoffman on the other hand explains how to measure religious motivation by examining what he called “the core characteristic of religious terrorism.” First, it is transcendental rather than political: it is “executed in direct response to some theological demand or imperative.” Second, religious terrorists seek “the elimination of broadly defined categories of enemies.” Lastly, and very important, “they are not attempting to appeal to any other constituency than themselves” (ibid: 98).Looking at the above categorisation of religiously motivated terrorism, does Boko Haram fall into this classification? As mentioned earlier, Boko Haram is a fundamentalist Islamic revolutionary movement that draws its inspiration from the Koran, it does not appeal to any worldly imperative, and its demand is transcendental. It sees Nigeria as an evil society that is being ruled by secular ungodly people, it views Western education as evil, and also the liberal-democratic structure in Nigeria as ungodly, based on this assertion, like any fundamentalist movement, the only solution is the demolition of the secular structure and the imposition of God rules in Nigeria. Juergensmeyer calls the situation a “cosmic struggle of Manichaean proportion” and that it is a “combat between evil and good.” He further opines that “the absolutism of cosmic war makes compromise unlikely, and those who suggest negotiated settlement are as excoriated as the enemy” (Juergensmeyer 2000: 153 – 154). Could we then accept that Boko Haram insurgence or metamorphosis was purely or primarily motivated by its fundamentalist religious ideology? Or does Boko Haram metamorphosis have political undertone? Basically most of the terrorist organisations including religious, that have emerged over the year aside Aum Shinrikyo in Japan which was millenarian have one political demand or the other. For Example, Hezbollah in Lebanon started as a fundamentalist religious movement, but its members are today part of the government in Lebanon. Also, Hamas started as a benign religious organisation, providing social services to its community, but it has transformed from just being a terrorist organisation to the de-facto authority in Gaza after taking part in an election in which they won the majority. Townshend opines “Hezbollah has always mixed strident fundamentalist calls with firmly grounded local political action”, he added “for all their messianic semitones, Hezbollah and Anal are very real political forces engaged in an earthly power struggle, as indeed is Hamas in Palestine” (Townshend 2002: 104, 107). The Taliban started out too as a revolutionary religious movement before they became the government in Afghanistan, though, they are back to the trenches. The Islamic Salvation Front in Algeria started not as a political party, but as a fundamentalist religious movement, but they decided to take part in Algerian elections in which they won the majority. Based on their antecedent as a terrorist organisation, the government in power in Algeria annulled the election; this resulted into political violence where the organisation decided to embark on another sage of terror. In addition, Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt was considered a terrorist organisation. In fact some of their leaders were arrested, jailed, and some were executed for terrorist activities, but the Brotherhood is the leading political party in Egypt today, one of its leaders has just being elected as the president of Egypt after the revolution that ousted Mubarak the former president. The Abu Sayyaf Group in Philippines, the radical Islamist in Chechnya are all using religion to advance their political claims (Engeland and Rudolph 2008).Looking at all the organisations that have metamorphosed into political forces in their different domains, could we then assume that Boko Haram insurgency has a political undertone? Is Boko Haram just hiding under the umbrella of religion to advance a political cause? We could adequately understand these questions by examining Tilly and Tarrow contentious politics which opines that when government or state is involved in contention as either monitors, guarantors, regulators, or even direct objects or subjects of collective claim, such a claim becomes political (Tilly and Tarrow 2007: 9). Therefore, going by this assertion, we could also look at Boko Haram metamorphosis not just from religious angle, but also from political angle.Having examining the role that religious fundamentalism played in the metamorphosis of Boko Haram, is the concept of fundamentalism enough to analyse the causes of Boko Haram insurgency? We need to look at the processes that led to the point where Boko Haram decided to make a claim on the government of Nigeria. In order to understand these processes the researcher will draw on the theoretical approach of contentious politics to explain it.Boko Haram started out by mobilising and creating an identity for the sect. For any terrorist organisation mobilisation is very important. Mobilisation ranges from material to human resources. Material resources have to do with finances, property, weapons etc. While human resources have to do with personnel and activists who will be committed to the group’s ideology. Hafez opines, “material and organisational resources provide Islamists with the capacity to mobilise people to marches, demonstrations, and strikes, as well as terrorism and guerrilla warfare” (Hafez 2003: 20). In order to be able to make a claim, they created a religious identity, which separated them from the society. The identity created allowed for boundary formation and demarcation. This pitted Boko Haram against those who did not fall within the boundary they had created including the government of Nigeria. We have to understand that every organisation goes through the process of identity formation. For example, Hezbollah in Lebanon created an identity for itself by naming the organisation “party of God,” identity says a lot about an organisation, calling itself party of God connects them to a transcendental power, and in their activities they always claim they draw their inspiration from God. Also, Hamas in Gaza created an identity for themselves as an Islamist group; this differentiates them from PLO that they consider as secular organisation. Boko Haram through the process of diffusion created its own identity as a group that is committed to the propagation of ancient Islamic belief and laws. They rejected everything Western including Western education, and anything that is associated with modernity. They also rejected the secular political structure in Nigeria.From identity formation to boundary creation, this allowed them to make a claim based on their identity on the government of Nigeria. Tilly and Tarrow explain that “when contention, politics, and collective action get together, something distinctive happens: power, shared interests and government policy come into play. Claims become collective, which means they depend on some sort of coordination among the people making the claims. They also become political by assuming the presence of governments as monitors, guarantors, regulators, or directly as subjects or objects of claims” (Tilly and Tarow 2007: 9). Though, Boko Haram started as a religious extremist sect, agitating for the introduction of strict Islamic rule and preaching adherence to the principle of Sharia. And like the concept of fundamentalism explains, they refused to compromise on what they called the sanctity of their belief. This was initially an ordinary agitation from a group without any tendency to move upscale. But the moment they made a claim on the government by insisting the whole country must be islamatised, and every citizen including Christians in the country must abide by the principle of Sharia, this is not a religious demand, it is political. Therefore, Boko Haram has become a political actor with a distinctive political identity which allowed them to make a political claim based on their political identity. After creating an identity, Boko Haram needed performances for them to be recognised. Performances range from just writing a petition to hostage taking or kidnapping according to Tilly and Tarrow (2007). And this must involve at least two actors – the subject and object of a claim. “All forms of contention rest on performances, and performances are meant to attract attention” (ibid). For example, Hezbollah in Lebanon was not reckoned with not until they bombed the US embassy in Beirut in 1983 (Forst 2009: 230 – 231), such a performance brought the group to lime light where both national and international audiences were jolted. Performances are very crucial to the sustainability of political claims, and it becomes modular when other groups adopt it. Boko Haram adopted a modular performance when it delved into suicide bombing. It is of primacy to look at the particular point where Boko Haram decided to up the stake, make a political claim and follow it up with performances. Juergensmeyer (2002) opines that “performance also implies the notion of *performative*.” He further stresses that “terrorist acts can be both performance events, in that they make a symbolic statement, and *performative* acts, insofar as they try to change things” (ibid: 124). This they did when they refused to obey traffic laws in Borno State in 2009. We need to examine two things that are also very crucial to the metamorphosis of Boko Haram at this juncture, first, the political authority in Nigeria was very weak in that there was an ailing president who was terminally ill, but refused to hand over to his vice president anytime he was out of the country for medical care, therefore, Nigeria was like a rudderless ship without any captain to navigate it. Second, the highhandedness of the security agents in dealing with Boko Haram when they refused to obey traffic laws, which resulted into the killings of more than 700 of their members, and the extrajudicial killing of their leaders, led this sect to go underground for almost a year before they resurfaced in 2010 for vengeance. What does this tell us? It simply means that you could kill people who believe in an ideology, but an ideology can never be destroyed, such an ideology would always be the rallying point of the remnant of such a group, which was exactly what happened to Boko Haram as a sect. Furthermore, Boko Haram demand could not have come if not because of the change in political opportunity structure in Nigeria. Tilly and Tarrow (2007) opine “political opportunity structure means the crucial or major facilitator of political conflicts such as war, terrorism, lethal conflict, etc. (ibid: 57). It is quite important to understand that though Boko Haram is a fundamentalist sect, but it metamorphosed into a terrorist organisation at the point where the political structure changed in Nigeria. Groups like Boko Haram were rear if not nonexistence during the military era in Nigeria. When democracy was ushered in in 1999, various radical and fundamentalist groups that could not operate during the military regime decided to make a claim. Therefore, the change in political opportunity structure was the major facilitator of Boko Haram metamorphosis coupled with its fundamentalist ideology.Tilly and Tarrow distinguish between regimes; they opine that a semi-democratic state is susceptible to terrorism, political and social conflicts, war etc. Nigeria could be classified as a semi-democratic regime. The transition from military regime to semi-democratic regime opened the political firmament in which different groups started making different claims which they could not make during the military era. The opening of the political space in Nigeria aided the transmutation of Boko Haram from just being an Islamic sect to a deadly terrorist organisation. Looking at the above scenario, we could argue that Boko Haram insurgency was as a result of ideology that is antithetical to the secular democratic ideology in Nigeria. Based on this ideology, Boko Haram decided to make a political claim, which is the imposition of Islamic legal code. This is a resemblance of other terrorist organisations that have turned around to embrace politics. Therefore, Boko Haram is a fundamentalist religious organisation, hiding under the umbrella of religion to make a political demand. “The ultimate aim of most of the terrorist organisations is to gain control of political power or at least to be part of the political processes in their domain.” We could then conclude that Boko Haram metamorphosis was rooted in politics.**Chapter Six****Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations**This academic endeavour has tried to discountenance the myth of poverty as the generator of Boko Haram insurgency, though it could be a necessary factor, but it is not sufficient to explain why Boko Haram metamorphosed in to a terrorist organisation. It disagrees with Gurr’s theory of relative deprivation as the precursor of Boko Haram crisis, and also disagrees with Krueger position that lack of civil liberties is the major cause of terrorism. Having just a theory to explain terrorism viz-a-viz Boko Haram insurgence is fraught with inadequacies. For example, what led to Tamil insurgency in Sri Lanka is quite different from that of Boko Haram, using the same yardstick to measure both insurgencies will ultimately result into the distortion of facts.This work has been able to traced Boko Haram metamorphosis to the ideological belief of the group which is rooted in Islam. This belief system rejects any form of rule that is not based on Koran. And I have clearly demonstrated the influence of fundamentalism and the role that political opportunity structure played in the metamorphosis of the group. It was as a result of the structural change that allowed them a space to make their demands. Such a thing wouldn’t have happened during despotic military regime in which the only word in their dictionary is repression. Groups like Boko Haram knew the implication of this that is the reason they activated their boundary during democratic regime in Nigeria.In addition, this work has clearly shown that the metamorphosis of Boko has to do with their ideology, which is at variance with the secular democratic ideology in Nigeria. This is a political conflict of two different ideologies. Juergensmeyer (2000) opines that “an act of terrorism usually implies an underlying power and legitimising ideology” (125). It goes without saying that Boko Haram was trying to legitimise its own ideology over the secular ideology in Nigeria, and this invariably led to the political conflict ravaging the country today. I agree with Tilly and Tarrow that contentious politics including terrorism involves mechanisms and processes, it does not happen spontaneously. In view of this, Boko Haram metamorphosis did not just happen overnight, it followed some processes as explained in the analysis, yes, they had their grievances, coupled with their fundamentalist ideological belief system, but it came to the fore when they activated their boundary through the creation of their identity, and aided by the opening of the political space to accommodate shades of opinions.It is quite pathetic that the activities of Boko Haram has impacted negatively on the country, Nigeria has been considered a terrorist country. A country that is yearning for foreign direct investment in order to boost its economy has been finding it difficult to attract international investors. Also Boko haram activities have paralysed social and economic activities in the northern part of the country.Southerners who live and carry out their economic activities are moving back to the south in drove, this has even fuelled speculations that the country could disintegrate if the Boko Haram insurgency is not adequately tackled by the government. In addition, there has been reported cases of retaliatory attacks by Christians whose churches were bombed in Kaduna fuelling sectarian violence, this could spell doom for the existence of the country if the situation degenerates into religious conflicts.Be that as it may, though I discountenance the issue of poverty, injustice and lack of civil liberties as the facilitator of Boko Haram insurgence, but all the same, the government of Nigeria must try as much as possible to embark on programmes that would alleviate disenchanted Nigerians out of poverty, so that groups like Boko Haram would not have already-made tools for their dastardly activities. Nigerian government must intensify border patrol especially with Chad, Niger, and Cameroon, and adequately equip the Nigerian Immigration in order for them to be able to carry out their statutory duty of monitoring the inflow and outflow of people, so that groups like Boko Haram would find it difficult to penetrate and operate in Nigeria.The security agents, especially the Police and State Security Services should be adequately equipped too, rather than being reactive, they should be proactive by making intelligence gathering as the key to fighting Boko Haram instead of the display of brutal force after every terrorist attack.The Nigerian government should put a mechanism in place that would allow the financial institutions to be able to monitor every unusual financial transactions, this would enable the government to be able to track the financial backers of the group.Nigeria should also collaborate with international community in the fight against Boko Haram by sharing information that could lead to the weakening of the group’s capacity.The government should be ready to dialogue with the moderates among this group, because brute force and repression alone cannot solve the Boko Haram issue.Finally, no matter how imperfect this research is to the understanding of why Boko Haram metamorphosed into a terrorist organisation, it has however contributed in its own little way to the existing literature on the subject matter. For me, this endeavour could not capture holistically in a swoop the issue of Boko Haram, but it has opened a new vista for me in a future research project. **Bibliography**Abimbola, Adesoji (2010*) The Boko Haram Uprising and Islamic Revivalism in Nigeria in: Africa Spectrum, 45,2, 95 – 108.*Adejumobi, Said (2010) *Governance and Politics in Post-Military Nigeria. Changes and Challenges (Palgrave MacMillan, USA).*Bah, Abu Bakarr (2008*) Breakdown and Reconstitution: Democracy, the Nation-State and Ethnicity in Nigeria (Lexington Books, USA).*Boulden, Jane & Weiss, Thomas G. (2004) *TERRORISM AND THE UN. Before and After September 11 (Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Indiana).*Buechler, M. Steven (2011) *Understanding Social Movements. Theories from the Classical Era to the Present (Paradign Publishers USA).*Campbell, John (2011) *NIGERIA Dancing on the Brink (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 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