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**RELIGION AND TERRORISM: A CASE STUDY OF BOKO  
HARAM IN NIGERIA**

Master's thesis

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I hereby declare that I have compiled the paper independently and all works, important standpoints and data by other authors has been properly referenced and the same paper has not been previously presented for grading.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis aims to find out, how much if at all religion has influenced the Boko Haram terrorist attacks in Nigeria. The incessant Boko Haram Terrorist attacks in Nigeria has threatened the peace and security of its citizens and other neighbouring countries and has grown into a transnational terror group, thus, the work is set out to look at the factors that engender this attacks whether it is motivated by Religion or if there are other causes, furthermore it will seek to unravel how this extremist sect has been able to recruit and fund its operations and what so far has been the Nigerian Government and the International response in the fight against the Boko Haram. The study employed the theoretical perspective of Radicalisation to examine how the group thrives in the recruitment of its members and the process of radicalizing them to be extremist, Secondary sources such as books, academic journals, videos, newspaper articles, archived documents are among the sources used in this qualitative research. As a method, the case study approach was used. The findings indicated that though religion is a fundamental factor, there other factors that motivate the Boko haram terrorist attacks such as the fight against westernization, corruption and poverty. The work at the end recommends how the government with the support of other affected countries can tackle the problem to restore peace and security in Nigeria and its neighbouring countries that have been plagued by the Boko haram terrorist attacks.

**KEYWORDS:** religion, terrorism, radicalization, Boko Haram.

## **INTRODUCTION**

After the 9/11 terrorist attacks in America, the gravity of the damage which terrorist group can do or inflict on humanity was experienced first-hand, and this has made international security networks beam its searchlight on terrorist activities as it can start small and grow in large scale if not checkmated. This development underlines the essence of researching the terrorist activities of the Boko Haram as a Peace and Conflict student of international relations.

The terrorist attacks have become a thorn in the flesh of Nigerians wellbeing and have threatened for over a decade the political stability of Nigeria. This thesis will focus on the strategic assets of Boko Haram, critically looking at the reasons behind their attacks, how they build up their strategies in terms of recruitment and funding of their operations and the global and regional responses needed to stand against their attacks.

The Boko Haram has made their mission and objectives very clear which connotes that Western Education and way of life is sinful and must be put to an end. they advocate that the secular Nigerian state needs to be overthrown while the sharia law must be enthroned to govern the State, They have gone a step further to achieve this mission by employing unconventional and inappropriate means to realize the above aim. They have launched attacks on innocent unarmed citizens including women and children, The Christmas day bombing in St Theresa's catholic church Madalla and the mountain of fire and miracles church in Jos which occurred on December 25<sup>th</sup>,2011 is a good example, over 44 persons were confirmed dead in that blast with a lot of properties ranging from cars, buildings near the church vicinities damaged.

Furthermore, the kidnapping of the Chibok school girls numbering about 276 from their School and the attack on the United Nations building on August 21, 2011, killing 23 United Nations staff drew International condemnations and concerns over the activities of the Boko Haram sects.

Their continuous engagement in the crime against humanity has become a source of great concern as they randomly kidnap in mass young unwilling boys which they forcefully engage to work for them and unwilling girls like in the case of the Chibok girls which they sell as sex slaves or held them captives in prison to get either ransom or prisoner exchange (Onuoha 2012). This nefarious action has been condemned both by the local and international human right groups as a violation of the human right and a serious crime against humanity (Human Rights Watch,2013).

Consequently, following the above development which has become a threat to peace and security in Nigeria and its surrounding neighbours such as Chad, Niger and Cameroun and is also undermining the sovereignty of the Nigerian state, in addition to attacks on Global institutions and foreign expatriates working in Nigeria which can be evidenced by the attack on UN building in Abuja, that killed twenty -three people and left 60 injured with lots of properties destroyed, hence it becomes essential for this study to take a critical look at the strategic assets of the Boko Haram to salvage the situation and it will do so by asking the research questions below:

Firstly, to examine if to what extent Boko Haram attacks are religiously motivated or are there some other causes?

Secondly, how does Boko Haram build-up strategies used for the recruitment and funding of their operations?

And thirdly what kind of the regional and global responses are needed to stand against the attacks carried out by the Boko Haram?

In the conduct of this research, the researcher employed the secondary means of data collection through gathering information from Journals, scholarly works of literature, books, newspapers, reviews from analysts, who specializes in the Peace and conflict studies in line with the topic.

This paper has adopted the radicalization theory in explaining the activities of the Terror group and how the Nigerian government in corroboration with its affected regional neighbours' and the International community can partner to end the Boko Haram crisis.

The work was divided into five chapters, The first chapter was dedicated to the methodology used, while the second chapter examined literature review laying a foundation for the empirical background for the study, the third chapter dealt with the theoretical framework which employed the radicalization theory to analyse the Boko Haram attacks, the fourth contained the results and analysis while the final chapter of the study was concluded by answering the research questions which were posed at the beginning of the research while proffering solutions that will help the government to drastically reduce Boko Haram attacks to the barest minimum and if possible eradicate it.

## **1. METHODOLOGY**

This thesis will employ the use of qualitative research while the case study approach will be used because of its appropriateness for this nature of research.

Yin (2003) opined that the case study approach fits aptly when the research is set out to examine the how and why of the occurrence of a given phenomenon and the circumstances or conditions that gave rise to it, This aptly fits the description of the research at hand. There is another befitting justification that made case study aptly fitted for this research. Primarily, the use of case studies provides the possibility of data evaluation which can be performed within the context of its use. In other words, typically explains the situation that the activity is carried out. For instance, in this research, the main focus of the researcher examining the motives behind the Boko Haram terrorist attacks in Nigeria, and how it affects the wellbeing of the population. By making use of the case study approach, the researcher can explore in-depth the context of this issue which aids his understanding of the issue at hand.

Secondly, a case study can be employed to capture reality. This lends credence to (Saunders et al,2009) assertion that case study is perfect and possesses the potential to exhibit the real-life eventualities and situations of an event as showing clearly in this case, the research was used to critically study the connection between Religion and Boko Haram terrorist attacks in Nigeria, the motives or reasons that Boko Haram chose to conduct terrorist attacks in Nigeria and other neighbouring countries that share common borders with Nigeria, to show how they recruit new members and fund their operations while carefully analyzing the regional and global responses that means the support of the International community in fighting this terror group in Nigeria.

Case studies as opined by (Creswell 1998,61) serves as a good research approach when “detailed and in-depth data collection which involves or makes use of multiple sources of information-rich in context”. As it proves details beyond the surface explanations.

(Saunders et al.’s 2009) supported this argument by stating that the Case study method provides a unique platform to enable the researcher dive deep to investigate particular contemporary phenomenon using the real-life context and offering the opportunity of using multiple sources of evidence and that brings out the uniqueness of the case study method.



Yin (2003,12) encouraged that the employment of the Case study methodology will be best applied to answer the research questions and guide the researcher to achieve the research objectives and strongly recommends it when:

- Studying how and why things happen;
- When you want to determine if a given situation is the main problem or merely a situation surrounding the problem (as applicable in this study)
- When you cannot manipulate variables but still expected to carry out the research
- Determining if the situation surrounding the problem contributes or are the triggers that cause the problems itself.

Based on the above descriptions, the use of the case study approach is well justified in this research. Yin (2003) recommended six vital steps that should be adopted while employing the case study approach and detailed as a structured process that must be followed:

- Determine what the research work will involve and take a step in proposing the relevant questions that will guide the research
- Carefully select the cases in a structured manner to have a consistent flow, or and ensure to determine how the data will be gathered and explaining the processes clearly
- Establish a background that will enhance the understanding of the reader about the case being discussed.
- Collect the data and ensure that quality research standards are adhered to strictly
- Analyze and evaluate the data to answer the research questions and address the research objectives
- Prepare and finalize the report while making recommendations as to how the discovered problems or gaps will be addressed or covered.

The following steps were carefully taken into consideration and duly addressed in the course of this research work.

## **1.1. Data Collection and Analysis**

The Research will employ the secondary source of data collection by leveraging on many articles and materials that have been researched and written about Boko Haram terrorist attacks in Nigeria, journals, books, videos, archived records, newspapers, magazines etc., this research shall utilize the information gathered about the terror activities in Nigeria from the perspective of Boko Haram attacks, to be able to determine the relationship between Religion and the Boko Haram terrorist activities in Nigeria.

For the set objectives to be realised, secondary data was collected. The secondary data were acquired from Academic works of literature related to the subject matter, published literature written by scholars who are experts in this field of study, essays and articles from professional analysts, and archival records.

Also, the researcher used other sources of the secondary data that were acquired by extracting recorded accounts from eyewitnesses, victims and media archives.

Data will be analyzed through the search for general themes, that points out to the radicalization theories which is used in this study to explain the terrorist activities, the data collected will be duly reviewed in tandem with the research objectives and questions and carefully analyzed and the preceding chapters will provide both discussions on the findings and results before the conclusions and recommendations are made which will be the hallmark of this research work.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW: EMPIRICAL BACKGROUND**

### **2.1. Background to Terrorism in Nigeria**

The background of terrorism in Nigeria will not be complete without looking at the makeup of the country which is heterogeneous and is therefore extremely diversified both culturally and religiously. (Abimbola 2010,96).

The British incursion of the territories in the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> century to colonize the country in which various territories and kingdoms were merged, accounts for the coexistence of people from different origins with diverse cultures and languages. to enable the British colonizers to govern these acquired territories, they established administrative and legal structures while retaining the traditional system of their government which is known as chiefdoms.

While the Northern area did not welcome “Western Education” and had other views to life, the southern protectorates welcomed the European missionaries that brought Christianity and embraced education, this was contrary to the conquest of the Fulani jihadist in the North that we're able to penetrate the Northern borders through the Sahara Desert and this explains why the North extending to some part of the middle belt were converted to Islam, (Burns and Burns 1972; Falola and Heaton,2008). hence, because of the difference in the religious inclination of the North and the South, Nigeria became divided based on ethnic diversification and religious sentiments.

(Kwabiah 2010,16) clearly stated that before the advent of Colonialism that the traditional system of worship is what holds sway and involves the worship of demi-gods and ancestral spirits. This was before Usman Dan Fodio who is regarded as the founder of modern Islam established the Sokoto caliphate by forceful jihad to establish Fulani emirates. he was dissatisfied that some of his followers were displaced by Hausa leaders whom he accused of not practising pure Islamic religion as he had in mind to enthrone a theocratic state with an application of stricter Islamic interpretation. The quest to create this Islamic state is what gave rise to the emergence of the Boko Haram sect in the Nigerian state.

The definition of Terrorism might be quite a difficult concept as aptly argued by (Laquer 1999: 6) because there is little consensus among decision-makers. The ways of conducting the attacks, the actors of the attacks and the reasons behind the attacks are constantly changing over time, hence making it hard to agree on one definition for it. This thesis chooses after analyzing other opinion and views of other policymakers, the Global Terrorism index(2015) definition which it considers holistic because it is not only focused on the physical act of the attack but also takes cognizance of the long-lasting psychological effect it has on the society, Terrorism is stated to be the act where a non-state actor threatens or executes the use of illegal force and violence to reach the goal, be it political, economic, religious or social with the help of fear, coercion or intimidation. (GTI 2015, 6)

However, it is important to note as argued by (Sampson 2015,29) the Nigerian state which has come up with the Terrorist Prevention Act to categorize the actions of the Boko Haram sect as acts of terrorism but fail to draw a clear line between some acts of criminality and the TPA which in essence overlaps and has posed a new challenge for the law courts because of the thin line between just the act of criminality and terrorism.

There has been emphasis both by the United Nations and the African Union that Nigeria should abide by its resolutions in their counter-terrorism efforts, as not to breach human rights rules. Thus, a comprehensive counterterrorism approach which complies with provisions of these international bodies on counter-terrorism strategies while ultimately ensuring that the rights of anyone are not trampled upon and that due processes are strictly followed.

## **2.2. A Brief Overview of Boko Haram**

The origin of the Boko Haram extremist group has various accounts, paramount among them is the one by (Onuoha 2010,55) which holds that the radical rejectionist has a long history of violent outbreaks especially in Northern Nigeria and was known as Ahlulsunna wal'jama'ah hijrah under the able leadership of Abubakar Lawan, Their activities were pronounced in December 2003 when the members of the group flew flags inscribed with the word "Afghanistan" and also claimed responsibility for several attacks against Nigerian security officials in Yobe and Borno.

Furthermore, the group carried out more attacks against the Nigerian security forces in Yobe and Borno and in October 2004 laid an ambush against them which led to the death of 15 officers, the police retaliated brutally and dispersed this group into Maiduguri, Niger and Chad, the fighters that settled in Maiduguri was coached and developed by Mohammed Yusuf into Boko Haram (Crisis Group Africa,2010).

**Ideological Background:** The idea behind the group's agitation is primarily based on two key reasons, one is the opposition to the western-style education and secondly the quest to establish a secular state which should be governed by sharia law.

According to (Hackett,2001 cited in Lise Waldek & Shankara Jayasekara (2011) the belief that Western education in the North is mostly associated with attempts by evangelical Christians to convert to Moslems, and this triggers the fears of political and economic domination as can be clearly explained by the British non.-intervention policy in the North while establishing missionary schools in the south which was massively embraced by the people of the South, and this, in turn, affected access to wealth, employment, social mobility and caused an uneven development in the North and the South, while most of the people in the south were educated, their Northern counterparts saw it as a way that the British wanted to change their Religion which they vehemently refused.

Besides, the second reason which is rooted in the strong belief that Western education is a sacrilege prompted the sect to reject all forms of a secular state or authority and seeks to establish a Nigerian state entirely governed by the Sharia law and this contradicts the provisions of the Nigerian Constitution which provide for freedom of worship for all its citizenry notwithstanding your religion.

Furthermore, the ideology is rooted in orthodox Islam which abhors western education and working in the civil service, seeing Islamic religion and culture as supreme, which must be enthroned by force, thereby overthrowing the Nigerian State and imposing very strict sharia laws. members of the sect through their teaching and radicalization process has this conviction that the Nigerian state is filled with corrupt and social vices and needs to be purged "they held that the best action from a devout Moslem was to move away from the corrupt and morally bankrupt society to an isolated place and strive to establish an ideal Islamic society which is bereft of any political corruption and moral deprivation", (Onuoha 2014,23). Members of the group conduct themselves in certain ways such as the way they dress, it is assumed the

members wore black or red headscarves, wore long beads and avoid the use of western goods such as safety helmets and wristwatches.

However, their continued use of cars, cellular phones, motorcycles and sophisticated guns has questioned their commitment of the non-use of the (purported western) products and other value derived from western civilization.

### **2.3 Boko Haram Evolution and Philosophy**

The account of the evolution of the Boko Haram sect has been given in different versions while the first version holds according to Nigeria's intelligence community that the emergence of the sect dates back to 1995 when the Ahlulsunna wal'jama'ah hijra, was established by Abubakar Idris Ali Modu and it is also called the Shabaab group (also popularly referred to as the Muslim Youth Organization) which is located in Maiduguri the Borno state capital, (Onuoha 2010,55).

While another account narrates that Mohammed Yusuf in 2002 who is a highly renowned Islamic scholar and also a charismatic preacher emerged as the leader, while the group before now has existed as a non-violent organization, but with the emergence of the new leader the group came up with various names such as Nigerian Taliban, Ahlis Sunnah Wal Jama'a, Muharijun, Hijrah, Yusufiyah.

The ideology of the Boko Haram is anchored on an extremist ideology which teaches Islam and perceives anything western as un-Islamic, it is this act of rejection that earned them their name which is the Boko Haram which means "Western education is forbidden" and the core objective of the group is to overthrow the secular state of Nigeria and enthrone a strict regime that will adhere strictly to Islamic sharia law which should be applicable throughout the whole country in Nigeria and not just a section like the one introduced in the whole twelve of the nineteen states in the North. (Waldek, L., & Jayasekara, S 2011,169)

And in a related development, the group insisted that they want to be addressed by their real names, Jama'atu Ahlissunnah Lidda'awati wal jihad which means "people committed to the teaching and jihad of the prophet, This philosophy of violence has been shown in the conduct of their activities and the attempt to attack government institutions to create an Islamic state, this act was depicted in the acts of the violent attack on December 24, 2003, when it launched a massive attack on public buildings and police stations in Kanamma and Geiam towns in Yobe

state and raised the flag of dreaded Afghanistan's Taliban movement over the seized camps and they occupied the camps for two days, although its actual connection with the Taliban movement has not been established, it took the joint efforts of the soldiers and police teams to launch an attack, killing eighteen of their members and arresting dozens of them, (Onuoha 2010,56).

The sect has successfully established a base where they called Afghanistan in Kanamma rural village in the northern part of Yobe state(Onuoha 2014). It was noted that this act of insurgency by this extremist was fueled through the action of their leader Mohammed Yusuf who continuously mobilizes new members through his preaching about the excess of the government and the need to ensure that an Islamic state is forcefully entrenched as secular education is forbidden(haram) and he mobilized youths who are passionate about this cause from Borno and Yobe states with a far spread to neighbouring countries – Chad, Niger and Cameroon.

The group raised International attention when it bombed the United Nations building in August 2011 in Abuja, killing twenty-three people with the destruction of properties and severe injuries to many, (Onuoha 2014,46). towards the government effort in handling the crisis, a state of emergency was granted by the then regime of President Goodluck Jonathan in fifteen local governments across the most affected four states in the North, despite this state of emergency which was declared in July 2012, the security situation has not been resolved which necessitated the declaration of another state of Emergency in May 2013 in Yobe, Adamawa and Borno states of Nigeria which were the hotspots of the crisis and the most affected states.

A worrisome trend is that despite the efforts of the government and the security personnel, the foot soldiers of this extremist group continue to increase and they consist of young people who solidly believe and are ready to die for the purpose and with available statistics, it indicates that most of this fighters are young people with an average age of thirty years and these fighters are radicalized by teachings that have enabled them to change the dynamics of the violence and more and more of them became suicide bombers to attain martyrdom, one of the instances is the suicide bombing carried out on June 16, 2011, in the premises of the Police headquarters in Abuja by Mohammad Manga, a thirty-five-year-old member of the dreaded Boko Haram gang and this underlying ideology is what has enabled the continuation of attacks by Boko Haram until they achieve their purpose to convert Nigeria to an Islamic state, (Onuoha 2014,9).



Figure 1, A cross-section of Boko Haram sect members with their leader Abubakar Shekau at the middle adapted from genocide watch (2015) on the Historical Background of Boko Haram Accessible(Online)<http://genocidewatch.net/2015/02/24/the-historical-background-of-boko-haram/Accessed> November 11, 2020.

## 2.4 Religion and the Nigerian state

The Nigerian state with its large population has lots of multiple religion but the country is majorly divided into three religious lines namely the Christians, Moslems and the Traditional worshippers and because of the geographic locations most of the Moslems occupies the Northern part of Nigeria while the Christians dominate mainly the South and Eastern parts of Nigeria and the Traditionalist are shared across the board as they are not the majority. The arrival of the Europeans that came for missionary work in Nigeria and arrived via the Atlantic Ocean accounted for a majority of the Southern Protectorate Regions and extending to some Central regions converting to Christianity, this development no doubt heralded the importance of religion in the eventual development of Nigeria and prepared the stage for the emergence for the Boko Haram sects. the North-Eastern part and the Middle belt extending to some areas of the Southwest who were converted to Islam can be attributed to the conquest of the Fulani



jihadist in the North, at this point Nigeria became divided into ethnic and religious lines (Falola and Heaton 2008,13).

Ojie and Ewhrudjakpor,(2009) aptly opined that the lots of this diversities and the existing divergent ethnolinguistic did not foster oneness but rather laid the foundation for the successive clashes which was fueled by sectarian tensions and ushered in the evolution and emergence of the Boko Haram sect.

Boko Haram is sorely an Islamist movement, like some other terrorist groups that justify some of its unconventional and nefarious ways of achieving its mission, Boko Haram states that its major aim is to enthrone the Islamic law that will apply strict sharia laws after it has destroyed the circular state, (Adesoji 2011,15)

Currently, the crisis is spreading and the threat to internal security of lives and properties of citizens of Nigeria and their other neighbouring West African countries that shares the same border like Chad, Niger Republic and Cameroun is jeopardized, (Onuoha 2014,17). These incessant attacks have reduced Nigeria which was once regarded as the “Giant of Africa” and very instrumental in the restoration of peace in many war-torn countries of West and the entire African region helpless, needing the support of the international community to fight the insurgency group and restore peace, (Onuoha 2014,18).

The Boko Haram sect believes in violence to achieve their mission while some of the Moslem groups condemn their mode of operations and preaches that Islam is a religion of peace, this was aptly captured in the reaction of the President of Nigeria Mohammed Buhari concerning the beheading of “Eleven Christians” by the Boko Haram when the sects released a disturbing video on the 26<sup>th</sup> of December 2019, on the Christmas Eve of the killing of the Christians. President Muhammadu Buhari condemned the disdainful killings and enjoined Nigerians not allow divisions prompted along religious lines and divides "We should, despite whatever happens, not allow the terrorists divide us by turning Muslims against Christians because these barbaric and wicked acts are not an epitome of an ideal and law-abiding Muslims all over the world.

However, (Hickey 1984,254) pointed out that the ingroup feeling is there which is anchored on the supremacy of the Islamic faith and not because they lack belief in the extremist's position but the only differing terms were in the method, rather than ultimate aims. while the extremist makes no difference between religion and the state and sees both as unitary and should not be separated, this in essence advocates that the Nigerian state should be administered according

to the principles of sharia law which ultimate aim is making Nigeria an Islamic State. although this theory does not enjoy the popular acceptance of some liberal Muslims who believe that the view is in contravention of the Nigerian Constitution and thus does not support the Islamization of Nigeria by force or violence, Imo (1995,58-59).

There is no gainsaying that Terrorism is assuming a new disturbing dimension as terrorist are becoming more sophisticated, daring in their attacks in carrying out acts of violence, the 9/11 terrorist attack which led to the massive destruction of the twin towers of the world trade centre in America coupled with massive death and destruction of properties, the continuous rise in killings and bombings in the North-Eastern part of Nigeria especially Borno and Yobe, in addition to the attack of the Police Headquarters in Abuja and the United Nations building has clearly shown that terrorism has grown to become one of the biggest threats to global security, stability and peace.

## **2.5 Regional and Global Response in the fight against Boko Haram**

Since the evolution of the Boko Haram sect in Nigeria and their growing into a violent extremist sect, there has been an increased call for a regional and global response to return peace to Nigeria and all the affected neighbouring countries such as Cameroun, Niger and Chad. The clamour for the International community to support the fight against this insurgency is on the rise as the Boko haram terror group has pledged allegiance and affiliated with the Islamic state with its leader Abubakar Shekau pledging allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi the leader of ISIS on 7, March 2015. while scholars have argued that the Nigerian government is not sincere in its fight against the Boko Haram as most politicians in government tend to use this group for their selfish interest, others believe that the government is treating the issue with kids gloves while the matter is escalating beyond its control.

An argument offered by (Isichei 1987,197) blamed the government for mixing the governance of the State and trivializing Islamic fundamentalism which has hitherto escalated. a good example is the aftermath treatment of the arrested followers of Yusuf who were arrested based on their participation in the religious riots that saw many killed and properties destroyed, they were not charged to any court with the flimsy reason that there is no case to level against them. The last batch extremist totalling 923 that were pardoned on the 1st of October 2012, was later branded as misguided clemency and the Government blamed.

In the same vein, (Adedeji 2009,11) observed that the complaint of how to handle some of the arrested Boko Haram fighters has started again with the swelling of prisons and no alternative detention centres built where they will be kept, most of this fundamentalist are pardoned and later released back to the society to cause more harm than before, and this has greatly hampered the resolve of fighting terrorism and curbing religious-related crisis in Nigeria.

It is a widely held belief that the government lacked the political will to fight religious fundamentalist and this did not start today as epitomized in the way they handled the killing of a three-year-old girl called Fatima in the Maitatsine religious uprising in 1984, This ineptitude gave credence to the fact that government lacks what it takes to fight against Islamic fundamentalism as equally supported by (Kastfelt 1989,86) as he opined that “This lack of a political will could also be seen in some of the actions and inactions of the government such as the challenge of poor funding and inability to organize efficient intelligence services”.

In addition to the inadequate and uncoordinated response to the available reports, and an obvious reluctance to check the activities of well-known sects that are equally dangerous and still operates unhindered in the country, and who could as well provide this extremist group with a handful of armed men as potential extremists, The uncooperative attitude when it comes to unveiling the influencer, supporters of this extremist groups and government inability to do the needful in the flashpoints and hotspots of this crisis areas speaks volumes.

(Kazah-Toure 2004,41) noted that government should stop paying lip service in the fight against religious fundamentalism as there are areas that serious gaps have been noted and should be properly filled, for example, the porosity of the Nigerian borders has enabled foreigners especially those who share religious and ethnic affinities with Nigerians to illegally enter the country and join these extremist armies.

(Soyinka 2008,12) pointed out that the government should be able to take a strong position in the policing and monitoring of the border as most of the identified foreigners who have been deported have found their ways back into the country, he suggested that to solve this problem the government should ensure that the immigration officers who are manning these borders are well motivated and looked after, to ensure they frustrate all the illegal border crossing and equally equip them with the required arms to perform their duties effectively. Moreover, he opined the essence of conducting an efficient National civic data registration that will be able to capture and aid the monitoring of movement in the country. it should include the adequate registration of births and deaths in the country and ensure that all foreigners, especially in the

religious prone areas of the North, are well documented and their activities monitored accordingly.

From the global perspective, even though Boko Haram operations and the attack has been limited to Nigeria and its neighbouring countries, it is vital to note that the attack of United Nations building by the Boko Haram on August 26, 2011, via a car bomb explosion that killed 21 persons and wounded 60, in addition to the kidnap of over 200 schoolgirls from chibok in Borno State drew international attention and strong condemnation against the terrorist sect. this prompted the International community to immediately classify it as a terrorist organization, This equally prompted the subcommittee on counterterrorism of the House of Representatives Committee on Homeland security in America to quickly classify Boko Haram as a terrorist sect that has the potential of committing Transnational terrorist attacks and has since then been sharing intelligence information with the Nigerian government on how to combat insurgency of this group. (Karmon 2014,79) held that The United States in a bid to help has gone ahead to declare the Leaders of Boko Haram as “Designated global terrorist” and therefore declared them wanted, their names are Abubakar Shekau, Khalid al-Barnawi and Abubakar Adam Kamar and a total of about \$23 million was placed as a reward for anyone that will give useful information where they could be tracked down, Shekau topped the list with about 7 million dollars. Furthermore, the deployment of 300 U.S soldiers by the Obama administration to assist in the fight against Boko Haram fighters was a step in the right direction.



Figure 1.2, A cross-section of U.S and Nigerian Military strategizing in the fight against The Boko Haram terrorist adapted from the strategybridge.org (2018) **Revitalizing U.S. Strategy in Nigeria to Address Boko Haram**, Accessible(Online)<https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2018/6/6/revitalizing-us-strategy-in-nigeria-to-address-boko-haram> accessed on November 09, 2020.

## 2.6 Membership and Funding of Boko Haram

Boko Haram draws its members mostly from disaffected youth, destitute children, unemployed University and high school graduates mostly from but not limited to the Northern parts of Nigeria. Also, its memberships equally include some influential, educated and wealthy people.

The group pathway to Radicalization is mainly via the itinerant teachings of the leader Mohammed Yusuf on the excesses of government officials and the teaching that Secular or western education is a sin and therefore forbidden for Muslims, these teachings took root and spread over all the Northern parts and attracting youths from Yobe, Borno and spread over neighbouring countries such as Chad, Cameroun and Niger. A good example of the negative impact of his teachings was

shown in 2004 when students of various tertiary institutions in Yobe and Borno withdrew from School and tore their certificates and joined the Boko Haram group.

A recent study undertaken by the CLEEN Foundation in Nigeria which was commissioned by the United States Institute of peace held that the membership of the Boko Haram group consists of mostly young people who are ready to fight till they die, because of the cause they have been made to believe in this was clearly shown in the confession of 144 arrested members of the Boko Haram group, this study reported that that the median age of the youths who are mostly the majority constituting its membership is placed at thirty years, this shows the high stake the youth occupy in the Boko haram movement and terrorist activities.

The source of funding of Boko Haram is very important if the fight against the sect must succeed as it has made efforts to make its source of funding undetectable and uses unconventional means to get funds to stay afloat, the essence of knowing where it draws funds from which it uses in luring recruits, acquiring ammunition and carrying out its operational and logistics responsibilities is key and therefore examined below:

#### **2.6.1. Membership fees**

Mohammed Yusuf who was the foremost leader of the group introduced a membership fee of 100 naira which is approximately US\$0.80 and this includes for the thousands of its members (Comolli 2015,78) it is believed that the financial action task force and Inter-Governmental action group against money laundering in West Africa(GIABA) believed that even after Yusuf has died the group has continued the collection of the membership dues, Some of its members that have been arrested and interrogated by the Police concurred on paying of membership dues and said it is a sacrifice they make to propagate the cause of Allah and they were taught that Allah will pay them heavily for this cause.

#### **2.6.2. Kidnapping**

Boko haram engages in lots of kidnapping activities, which on several occasions they have come out to take responsibility through their spokesperson of kidnapping their victims and calling the required ransom that needs to be paid to effect the release of its victim. some of their victims are mostly foreign national and prominent Nigerians who they believe have money and can pay a huge sum as a ransom, for instance, a French family was abducted in Cameroon in February 2013 and the sum of \$3.14 million was paid for the family to be released in April 2013,(Comolli 2015,18). Furthermore, Boko haram equally kidnapped 10 Chinese engineers and an undisclosed ransom

was paid before their release could be effected. Besides, the wife of deputy prime minister of Cameroon and Kofolata who is a local leader and his entire family was kidnapped by Boko Haram and ransom for their release paid by the Cameroon government for \$600,000 to Boko Haram to secure their release, also they kidnapped the former Head of Organization of petroleum exporting countries and who was the then minister of petroleum in Nigeria and collected an undisclosed ransom,(Zenn 2014,8)

Boko Haram has kidnapped a lot of local business owners and local leaders who have paid a ransom to be released, theirs might not be as high as the foreign nationals but through various numerous small payments which they have gotten from them, they been able to raise millions of dollars from kidnapping their victims, Boko Haram in the last five years has kidnapped thousands of people (Pate, 2015).

The most notorious kidnapping of the Boko Haram that drew condemnation globally and made international news headlines was the abduction of the 276 schoolgirls in Chibok, the Night of April 14, 2014, will be remembered by the Chibok community and Nigeria at large as very tragic as the Boko Haram insurgents drove their trucks and some riding their motorcycles invaded the town of Chibok and kidnapped 276 girls from their Secondary School dormitory.

After they stayed over one month in their capture, the leader of the Boko Haram Abubakar Shekau released a video that he will sell the girls in the Human trafficking market as Allah has instructed him to do, though no evidence has shown how much Boko Haram realized financially from the capture of the Chibok School girls. (Cooks and Abrak 2014). A lot of peaceful protests was organized to effect their release but all to no avail.



Figure 1.3. People march on a street of Abuja, Nigeria, during a silent protest on April 13, 2015, calling on the government to rescue the Chibok schoolgirls who were kidnapped a year ago by Boko Haram Terrorist.

### 2.6.3. Bank Robberies

Bank robberies were said to be on the rise in Adamawa, Yobe and Borno from 2010 through 2013. the robberies were speculated to be perpetuated by the Boko Haram as was admitted by the Boko Haram spokesperson Abu Qaga when he was arrested, where he provided intelligence on how Boko Haram use the money it steals during bank robberies and he said that the money is usually redistributed among members of the sect and some form of compensation paid to the families of their members who have been killed during operations or in the event of an attack by the Police. it is estimated that Boko Haram robbed several banks carting away an estimated 987 million naira(\$6 million), (Wasswa 2014). The declaration of a state of emergency in the North-Eastern states of Adamawa, Yobe and Borno slowed down the pace of the bank robberies, though it is still one of the main sources of income for the Boko Haram overtime now, it has declined. they often justify their actions saying that the money stolen from the banks are “the spoils of war”.



#### **2.6.4. Extortion**

The tactics of extortion in getting funds to finance its operations have been applied by Boko Haram, they used extortion against the citizens, politicians, business owners, in their unconventional style, they persuade business owners that in exchange of “protection” they will enjoy from them that they are required to donate specified amount financially to guarantee their protection, including the members of their families and business. most politicians in Nigeria especially in the North-Eastern part have been threatened with death for them and their family members if they fail to comply in making the requested payments(Pate, 2015). Nigerian citizens over the last five years, especially in the North-Eastern parts, have received phone calls and text messages from Boko Haram members demanding for a certain amount of money to be paid or else they will be attacked. in recent times this style of extortion has been extended to Cameroon where they have a strong foothold already as their influence is strongly expanding to neighbouring states that share borders with Nigeria.

#### **2.6.5. External Funding/Sympathizers**

Boko haram has leveraged on funds from sympathizers and other Terrorist organizations outside Nigeria, This was affirmed by the U.S treasury department that has publicly declared that they have evidence that Boko Haram received funding from the terrorist group namely Al-Qaeda and Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Magreb(AQIM) (Kingsley et al, 2015). In a related development, Nigerian media reported that an intelligence report was received by the presidency in 2012 that a huge sum of 40 million dollars was received by the Boko Haram from the Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Magreb (the group happens to have active operations in West Africa).

In addition to this external funding from other terrorist organisations, Boko Haram is believed to have gotten funds from politicians and local sympathizers that believe in its cause, a typical example is the former commissioner of Religious affairs in Borno state, Alhaji Foi was a well-known sympathizer and powerful political figure in the state that has openly sympathized with the cause of the Boko Haram consequently donating large sums of money to Boko Haram to run its operations(Comolli 2015,78).

The U.S government equally confirmed that many Northern politicians have indeed given Boko Haram financial support but the actual amount they gave to Boko Haram is still unclear, this as equally been confirmed through arrest and interrogations that many Political figures, especially in the Northeastern part of Nigeria, have supported the Boko Haram in the area of financing.

### **2.6.6. Summary**

There is no gainsaying that the Boko Haram has succeeded in finding ways to circumvent the conventional ways of tracing terrorism funds as they have resorted to the unconventional ways of raising funds for the operations which ranges from payments of membership dues which they collect from thousands of their members, kidnapping which has held sway with people kidnapped for ransom including both locals and foreigners, Bank robberies which have threatened Banks in the Northeastern areas of Nigeria where they have stormed several times carting away money and valuables, also they get income through extortion from people and they, in turn, promise them protection once they pay them and because of the fear and the desire to ensure safety most of this people pay what they call “Protection Money” to the Boko Haram to ensure that they are safe with their loved ones.

Finally, They equally get fund from External donors and sympathizers, from the Police record of arrest and interrogation, it has been discovered that some top government officials in the North sympathize with the cause of the Boko Haram and therefore supports them with funds to enable them to carry on their operations and this has become a major setback in the fight against the Boko Haram insurgency and has enabled their operations unscathed as no group will be able to thrive long when new members and funding is not available to them.

### **3. Theoretical Background: Radicalization Theory**

#### **3.1 Radicalization**

The concept of radicalization has attracted significant traction since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. despite that, there is no consensus definition according to (Schmid 2011, 16). However, one common denominator stands out in the various definitions which hold that radicalization whether at the group or individual level, involves the process of rejection of the democratic ideals and established status quo whilst adopting an extremely religious, political, or social ideology and employing violence to achieve those set ideological goals. (Komolafe 2013,17). The Boko Haram is a perfect example of the case at hand as the group has made their mission clear by rejecting anything western as sin with their known slogan that “Western Education is a Sin” and has fought to forcefully overthrow the Government of Nigeria to establish a State that is governed by Islamic laws, their various attacks on anything that represents Government institutions, for instance, the attack of Police stations in the towns of Kanamma and Geiam on December 24, 2003, in Yobe, and that of Gworza and Bama Police stations on September 21, 2004, in Borno, causing the death of many Policemen and massive looting of the police armoury carting away arms and ammunition clearly shows how far they can go to achieve their objectives.

Experts believe that the process involved in radicalization starts with changes experienced in self-identification based on main grievances which can be driven by either a group or individual concerns which might range from local issues or international matters or events, this grievance which causes disenchantment which in turn provides the mental opening for radicalization. This radical ideology which is described as an extreme set of ideas which provides the group with an explanation of the world and the way it is perceived and as individuals that have this kind of views come together to integrate as a community, most times just an event can catapult and trigger those perceived grievances to action.

Hence, it is the process of transitioning an individual or group from just the perception of extremist views, ideas, militant to the actual pursuit of the fulfilment of those ideals especially in the promotion, support and actual adoption of violence in the realization of his goals or intentions.

According to McCauley and Moskalkenko(2008,18) they held that radicalization involves when there is a change in behaviour, feelings and beliefs which can be attributed to ingroup act or like-minded individuals that came together(ingroup acts)this group emphasizes on their beliefs to reinforce it and make their members believe that they are fighting for a just cause and sacrifices should be made by members towards the realization of their common objectives or cause, they argued that when radicalization affects the behaviours of the group, it is dangerous at that point because all the actions will be channelled towards fighting that common cause and he stated that not all the members of the ingroup moves to the level of behavioural radicalization, according to McCauley and Moskalkenko(2008) there is a pathway to radicalization which is discussed below:

**Table 1. Pathways towards radicalization**

Level of radicalization	Mechanism
Individual	Personal victimization
	Political grievance
	The slippery slope
	The power of love
Group	Like-minded groups
	Group isolation
	Exploiting State power
	Division of groups
Mass	Exploiting conflicts and power
	Hate
	Martyrdom

Source: McCauley and Moskalkenko 2008

McCauley and Moskalkenko(2008) opined that the radicalization process takes various mechanisms and listed about twelve stages of the process it entails, in their view radicalization involves a process starting from the first stage where the individual feels that they are victimized and this if

left unchecked will breed to a political grievance and this according to (Onuoha 2016,16) aptly reflects the Boko Haram case where most of the youths believe that the politicians are corrupt and basically self-centred and instead of using state resources to better the welfare of the masses, they loot the resources and divert to their own pockets and to correct this anomaly, it will be appropriate to destroy the secular state and enthrone an Islamic state where the sharia will be applicable and will enthrone fairness and justice for all.

Furthermore, after the personal victimization and grievance stage, the stage of the slippery slope which entails step by step radicalization of the group for instance in the case of Boko Haram, experts noted that the teachings of their leader Yusuf kept emphasizing to the group of how the government is depriving them and this fosters the growth of the radical behaviour and this leads to the development of a feeling of oneness and solidarity which he referred as the power of love and this explains why in the Boko Haram sect, accounts of various siblings and friends joining the group abound, this is as a result of this feeling of love and trying to help a loved one to fight a cause he believes in.

The next process advocated is the group's radicalization and they marshalled out five steps of group radicalization while the first stipulates the ties of like-minded people that come together with likely ideas which might bend towards radical ideas and most of this particular group drive their goals and ensure their members are well-radicalized by isolating other groups and this can be explained according to (Onuoha 2016,14 ) “that in the case of Boko Haram they isolate their members from the public or other groups and train them in the bush and other hidden places which in turn reinforce the unity of the group and the belief in their common cause”.

The next phase is the mass stage which involves the exploitation of the state power which is a strategy to exploit any weakness of the state to their favour, for instance, the killing of the leader of the Boko Haram group by the Police on the claim that he wants to escape from detention triggered a lot of violence and unrest, many new members joined the Boko Haram as they held that he was killed extrajudicially and this ultimately created sympathy for the members of the group as even the Nigerian Bar Association condemned his killing saying he was not given a fair trial and this increased the number of followers after his death, after his death, he was regarded as Martyr who died fighting for a cause he firmly believes in.

Scholars hold that one of the best approaches that government should adopt in tackling this radicalization is to ensure that teaming youths in the North get educated to enable them to be able to think for themselves and make them desist from joining this extremist groups.

(Komolafe, 2013,18) concurred with the above assertion and opined “that if the government can effectively take care of the welfare of the youths by empowering them to be self-reliant and start up their own business, it will go a long way in eradicating growth of radicalization in the Northern states of Nigeria”.

### **3.2 Factors that give rise to the radicalization of the Boko Haram Extremist Sect**

Onuoha (2012,12) opined that the radicalization of youths has been so successful in the Northern part of Nigeria because Government has neglected some factors which has given rise to the recruitment and subsequent radicalization of the youths and if these factors are not properly examined and tackled, it becomes very hard to fight terrorism as more and more youth will be joining the sect, the factors are discussed below:

**3.2.1. Wrong Religious Indoctrination:** in 2013, The U.S Institute of Peace commissioned a study from the CLEEN Foundation in Nigeria to examine the factors that give rise to youth recruitment and radicalization into armed groups, the foundation found out that wrong religious indoctrination is a major factor as most of the recruits are ignorant of the right religious teachings especially among the youths, this lack of knowledge can be attributed to three key factors namely: The growing reliance on the preachers rather than the Holy book, The spread of sects both in Christianity and Islam, The spread of independent preachers in both religions, because of the factors mentioned above, young people have become so prone to the teachings of this religious extremist who distort religious teachings that have encouraged the youths to join the Boko Haram terrorist groups. This development was decried by Kashim Shettima the former governor of Borno state that “The distorted translation of the Holy book has thrown us into a big mess, that if we had a good understanding of Islam, we would be better as there is no room for extremism in Islam. We need to go back and adhere to Islamic teachings in the time of Prophet Mohammed when Islam encouraged both the Christians, Muslims and even the Jews to live in peace with one another”. Thus, most of these roaming preachers who claim to be Islamic scholars go around deceiving impressionable youths and others who join the training camps of the terrorist groups and are consequently radicalized through the distorted teachings and interpretation of the holy book.

**3.2.2. Unemployment and Poverty:** The rising unemployment and poverty in the Northern parts of Nigeria are glaring and quite disturbing, This socio-economic challenges are interconnected and has become a source of worry as Nigeria’s National Bureau of Statistics place the unemployment

figure at a staggering 14.60 in 2006 and an all-time high in the second quarter of 2020(National Bureau of Statistics), the poverty rate is equally rising as over 82.9 million Nigerians lives in absolute poverty and this makes up 41.9 per cent of its population, the worst hit by this scourge is the young people, most especially in Northern Nigeria. This conditions as argued by (Komolafe 2010,14) predisposes the youth to be highly vulnerable to the manipulation of this extremist tendencies and enticement as he rightly observed: “The tendency to produce suicide bombers is higher in communities with joblessness and mass misery than in the one in which the basic human needs of food, shelter, health, education and sanitation are made available for the masses”.

**3.2.3. High Levels of Illiteracy:** the high level of illiteracy most especially in the North is a key factor that has created a gap that Boko Haram sect is exploiting to recruit and radicalize the youths to carry out terror attacks and this is because illiterate youths are more prone to be manipulated because as (Onuoha 2012,14 ) aptly pointed out that “Their state of social deprivation denies them the ability and knowledge to critically ask questions on the doctrines and narratives which the Extremist group is advancing and teaching”. There is no gainsaying that the illiterates do not manufacture the Bomb that the terrorist uses for the operation, but this disadvantaged group are the ones that are mainly the foot soldiers that are being used to carry out these dastardly acts and the arrest records clearly show that and this reflects how poverty, indoctrination and lack of education contribute to the growth of terrorism. Most times poverty, illiteracy and radicalization are interwoven because the poor parents are unlikely to send their wards to school and they are likely to be illiterate, jobless and will become more prone to recruitment and eventual radicalization.

**3.2.4. Children with a difficult upbringing :**In Nigeria there exist a great number of children without proper upbringing and they are commonly referred to as street children also known as “Almajiris” and this in no small measure has contributed to youth radicalization in Nigeria, across most of the Northern states especially in Borno, Yobe, were the operations of the Boko Haram is on the rise and has witnessed the worst cases of violent attacks by the Bokoharam sect, there are a lot of destitute children who roam the street without any means of survival and this has created an avenue for this extremist to recruit and radicalize them, some of the young suspects in June 2013 that was released by the military confessed how the Bokoharam paid them 5,000 naira which is equivalent to (about \$30 US dollars) to spy on the soldiers and set schools on fire, one of them confessed that they monitor the soldiers where they are, what they do and when they are off guard or having a nice time and report back to the terrorist, the children range from 9-15 years and assist

the Boko Haram group to carry stolen items, hide guns after attack and traffic weapons. The lack of parental care and the care often received from the home created a gap which this extremist exploit to recruit and radicalize the affected youths.

**3.2.5. High level of Corruption:** The corruption that is endemic in the Nigerian state is another major factor that triggered radicalization of the Boko Haram sect, the result of the corruption culminated into the neglect of the social welfare of the majority of the youths as most funds budgeted for this was either embezzled or diverted into private pockets of government officials as this has gone a long way in the feeding of the extremist narratives and the consequent recruitment and radicalization of its members. The gap created by this widespread corruption in Nigeria has deprived communities of the needed infrastructure and amenities, the quest to overthrow the existing secular system that is run by this corrupt officials is the main teaching which appeals to this deprived youths that have been alienated, jobless, impoverished and feel cheated by the current system. The promise that when the Islamic state is established, it will put an end to all these corrupt practices as strict Sharia laws will be implemented and these narratives have hitherto appealed to these Northern Muslim youths who continues to join and get radicalized.



## **4 – DISCUSSION**

This chapter involves the careful analysis of the data gathered by the researcher in line with the research objectives to ensure that the research questions are effectively addressed, data was collected using mainly the secondary sources which include journals, books, reviews from professional analyst, media records and archived materials etc. all data was properly examined and discussed as it relates to the context of the subject matter, research aims and theoretical perspectives. This chapter discusses in-depth on the strategic assets of Boko Haram, critically looking at the reasons behind their attacks, how they build up their strategies in terms of recruitment and funding of their operations and the global and regional responses needed to stand against their attacks as built up in the empirical and theoretical background of the study in the previous chapters it uses the radicalization theory to explain the trend showing how the Northern Muslim youths are being recruited and radicalized by these extremist sects and the subsequent chapter will bring up recommendations on what the government ought to do to ensure that peace is restored and a total breakdown of law and order is forestalled.

### **4.1 Organizing the Analysis**

The beginning of this study listed accordingly the research objectives and research questions, this was meant to guide the researcher to examine whether the terrorist attacks in Nigeria are caused by Religion or are their other causes that are triggering the attacks using the case study of the Boko Haram. The case study methodology was employed to assess if religion has affected the terrorist activities of the Boko Haram or if they are other causes. To be able to carry out the analysis the researcher looked at the interconnectedness of religion to most of the attacks carried out by this terrorist groups and it is of interest that most of the attacks especially the ones against Christians were targeted at the churches underpinning that particular religious faith is being attacked which showcases the interconnectedness between the religious faith of most of the victims especially the attacks on Churches and how religion has influenced the insurgency and this was done to be able to answer the research questions and meet the aims and objectives of the research

In this research, the researcher concerned itself mainly with the duty of assessing the set of gathered information or data on terrorism and identified systematically the best possible strategy to explain how it happened, and its impacts.

There were two phases of the research to ensure clarity. the first phase dealt with the broad content and the research questions were addressed accordingly. Below is the order of the arrangement to aid the understanding of the reader and ensure a systematic discuss with the applicable cases highlighted.

- Information on terrorism regarding the various attacks and the target group was properly established and this will enable the study to examine which groups are the most threatened and attacked by these insurgents, the different attacks will be highlighted to prove if there is a particular religious faith that is more prone to the Boko Haram terrorist attacks and this will be able to address the first objective of the research, furthermore, the study will explore the possible reasons behind the attacks and what they are set out to achieve by launching these attacks.
- The second step was to examine how they recruit their members and radicalize them and how they fund their operations which have enabled them to attack various individuals, churches, government institutions and their other target groups
- In the third step, the response of the government both in the region and the international community will be examined to be able to know government efforts so far and the support of the International community.

#### **4.2 Phase One – Answering the Questions**

Phase one answers the questions on religion, terrorist activities, membership and funding and finally the response of both regional and global government authorities towards the attacks

##### **4.2.1. Religion and the Terrorist attacks in Nigeria**

The data collected was analyzed and it clearly shows that Nigeria is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious territory with the inhabitants from the North and South being of different religions and languages, this strongly played a role in the way one part of the country perceives the others.

This difference according to (Burns 1972,27) is as a result of the arrival of the European missionaries via the Atlantic to the South and in the quest to convert the newly found territory they preached Christianity which majority of the people in the South accepted and became Christians,

while their counterparts were influenced by the Islamic teaching of Usman Dan Fodio a Fulani jihadist who taught so much on how to fight and conquer the unbelievers(a word they use to qualify the Christians or other people who are not of the same fate).

(Ikime,1977) pointed out that the main bone of contention was that this Jihadist who are regarded as extremist perceive that others want to dilute the Islamic faith and they have to be converted to Islamic faith by any means and this underpins the employment of violence by the Boko Haram sects to convert their victims to Islam, for instance, amongst the 276 dapchi school girls who were captured by the insurgents, all were converted to Muslims except for Leah Sharibu who is a Christian girl and refused to get converted to Islam, the captors refused to release her till now because of her refusal.

Falola and Heaton,(2008) observed that the religious differences between the Christians and Muslims further separated them emotionally and mentally and make them not to see their selves as one with a common goal and destination and this development has engendered crisis fueled by religious differences.

The Southerners who embraced Christianity had the opportunity especially the affluent ones to send their children to Great Britain to study and acquire education and this, in turn, widened the gap and created tangible regional differences in terms of access to education and consequently bringing about the existing class differences and uneven social mobility, while the Southerners were mostly enlightened since they had great educational access, the North greatly lacked in this area.

This kind of inequality and uneven cultural environment triggered the rise of the extremist Boko Haram sects with a mission to fight against the Nigerian government and set up a new government that will be governed by Islamic law, this nefarious mission consequently has given rise to the attack of over 20 churches in Nigeria and the killing of over 300 Christain worshippers (Onuoha, 2012:18) and this has become worrisome and indicates that religion or religious belief is a key factor when it comes to carrying out their attacks, (Osumah 2013,7) supported this assertion that Boko Haram attacks mainly has religious connotations as they employ violence and terror activities which they regard according to their faith as a necessary obligation to fulfil the tenets of their religion.

Taylor (2014,13) concurred with this assertion by stating that “the Boko Haram sect is committed to the mission of achieving supremacy over its Christian counterparts in the country and this is why they attack them, they perceive and believe that they don’t conform to the teachings of Allah and that is why the majority of the attacks is focused on Churches, Governments and Educational

institutions who advocate westernization in their teachings and practices which their religious beliefs forbid and this forms the basis for the attacks.

#### **4.2.2. Other Reasons behind the Boko Haram Terrorist Attacks**

##### **Fight against Westernization**

With the mission of Boko Haram made so clear which involves enthroning the Islamic state, no matter by any means even if it involves violence. The change of leadership where Mohammed Yusuf took over the leadership of the Boko Haram Sect, the use of arms and violence became the order of the day to ensure that the stated ideology above was realized, Boko Haram was taking responsibilities of the attacks on Churches , Media houses and government institutions especially Police stations, consecutively two police stations were attacked where a lot of Police properties were set on fire and arms and ammunitions catered away including officers who were killed in this attacks, several churches have been attacked and many members including the church and surrounding buildings were destroyed during this attacks, one thing stands out in the attack is that they are after organizations and institutions they believe teaches or adopts the western ways instead of following Islamic laws, hence the retaliation and attacks on this institutions thus shows the link between the undesirable Christian theology and the Western education which they believe is sinful and an attempt to destroy this institutions (Zenn, 2013).

The Nigerian government declared a state of emergency because of the rising killings in some hotspots areas in the north as the killings were not abetting and the soldiers that were sent to fight Boko Haram were dying in their droves, a lot of them were resigning and leaving the force as they admitted that the terrorist had superior firearms than the military who were combating the insurgency, (Onuoha 2010,14) observed: “that the killings may not be unconnected to the government persistence that all other minorities in addition to Christians possess the same right to the freedom of worship as contained in the Nigerian constitution”. The Christians in the North were mostly affected as they were massacred in large numbers, the Christmas bombing of St Theresa’s church in madalla and that of the mountain of fire church in Jos with causality figures of 38 deaths and 57 wounded in both of the attacks lends credence to this point.

One thing has become very clear in the various attacks by Boko Haram and it clearly shows that it is set out to destroy institutions that it perceives as western and teaches any other religion apart from the Islamic faith, one of its main reasons for the attack is that this institution seeks to corrupt the teachings of Islam for instance, some of the attackers that were arrested and interrogated by the police were asked why they don't attack the mosques but churches and all the shows that they were only taught to attack Government institutions, Churches and kill Christians as Allah will only reward those that kills infidels "Unbelievers" the killings of over 200 Christians and burning down of the churches is what the Bokoharam sect based on religion and uses the Islamic faith as justification, Onuoha (2012,17).

### **Corruption**

Another reason which they claimed prompted the attacks is the widespread corruption which has deprived the common man including the youths social welfare services, most parts of the North where the attacks are more pronounced are not developed and without basic amenities such as water, food, electricity, good roads and even in some places no schools, and this acts of social deprivation is the major discontent that the extremist hide under to exploit their recruits and promise a better future when the secular state is overthrown. so the corruption of the public officials that lives a good life, drives around with good cars, send their children abroad to study and care less for the masses who cannot afford the necessities of life is one of the key reasons behind the attacks to overthrow the secular state which they believe is not keen about the welfare of the common man and only pays lip service to the betterment of their welfare, this situation was aptly captured by Onuoha (2012,18) "That the eradication of Boko haram will not be successful without first eradicating the corruption which has been a bane and has led to the misappropriation of funds meant for the betterment of the life of people". A report by the (Kings College of London 2015) supported this assertion above that indeed "That Insurgency and Mass killings have risen in Nigeria in recent times and this can be attributed to Corruption evidenced in the misappropriation of the funds meant for the state by the privileged few in Government positions.

### **Poverty**

Moreover, another important reason for the attacks is the poverty which has caused most of the youths not to be able to meet their needs and consequently has succumbed to the luring by this extremist groups that gives them money when they join the Sect. most of the young

members who were interviewed by the Police after their arrest said that they were paid to monitor the Nigerian soldiers who are fighting to quell the insurgency and report to the Boko haram camp because they dropped out of school when their parents could not afford their school fees anymore, they saw joining Boko haram as an opportunity to make money and help their families. This factor has increased the spate of attacks as more youths are joining because of poverty and the Boko haram sects through their various attacks has gained the infamous reputation of one of the biggest threats to security and global instability.

#### **4.2.3.Membership and Funding of the Boko Haram**

From the pieces of evidence available from works of literature and accounts of police arrest and rehabilitation of Boko Haram members captured, it is established that 90% of the Boko haram memberships are the youths (Onuoha 2014,25).

This has become a concern of how these young ones are recruited and radicalized to fight this course. Boko Haram draws its members mostly from disaffected youth, destitute children, unemployed University and high school graduates mostly from but not limited to the Northern parts of Nigeria. The former Governor of Borno state decried this trend and describe it as being dangerous as most of the able-bodied youths have joined this movement, for instance in 2004 some students in Borno state higher institutions tore their certificates withdrew from school and joined the Boko Haram, (Onuoha, 2012,3). a study by the CLEEN foundation supports the assertion that the membership of the Boko Haram group consists of mostly young people who are ready to fight till they die because of the cause they have been made to believe in, this was clearly shown in the confession of 144 arrested members of the Boko Haram group, this study reported that that the median age of the membership of the group is thirty years.

The Boko haram sect has been able to maintain this huge membership because of the radicalized teachings by its leaders, they misinterpret the Islamic teachings to tell their members that most of the problems they have are caused by Westernization, which they believe makes political officeholders very corrupt when they assume public offices and embezzle funds made to provide better social welfare schemes for the masses to make life better. They preach that the enthronement of the Islamic law will be characterized by the strict implementations of the Sharia that will ensure equity for all concerned, these teachings took root and spread over all the Northern parts, attracting youths from Yobe, Borno, and spread over neighbouring countries such as Chad, Cameroun and Niger. Funding for the group to sustain its financial operations is through various means ranging

from membership fees, the kidnapping of its victims, bank raids and this has ensured that they keep their funding undetectable by Transnational money laundering authorities out to checkmate funds for terrorism financing.

(Comolli 2015,63:78) stated that “Yusuf levied the contribution of membership dues to all members” and this fact was corroborated by the confession gotten from the Police interrogation from most of the arrested members, who confessed they pay membership dues to support the course they believe in, as they were taught that Allah will reward richly anyone who put their resources in the fighting of the Jihad, they contributed as membership dues of One hundred naira daily, approximately US\$0.80. Also, the group gets financial assistance from Politicians, for instance, the arrest, interrogation and trial of Alhaji Buji Foyi prove that he is one of the financial backers of the Boko Haram sect being one of the powerful politicians who openly showcased his plight for the Boko Haram course, he was one time the Commissioner of religious affairs of the state and was alleged to have provided substantial amount to Boko Haram with many other Northern Politicians being accused of providing funding for the Boko Haram sects though the actual amount is unclear. The actual amount of money that politicians gave to Boko Haram is unclear, (Wasswa 2014, 4).

Also, the group has a reputation in engaging in bank robberies and kidnapping to raise money for its operations, it is on record that Boko Haram has taken responsibilities for most of the bank robberies carried out from 2010 through 2013, most especially in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe regions of Northern Nigeria, the arrest by the Police and confession of the spokesperson of Boko Haram, Abu Qaga provided intelligent and useful information of how Boko Haram relied heavily on Funds realized from Bank robberies and these funds were redistributed among members and the family members of those who have been killed (Comolli 2015,77).

Wasswa,(2014,3) observed that Boko Haram has robbed several banks for three years for an estimated 987 million naira (\$6 million) their justification for this robbery is that that the money stolen are the “spoils of war.”. the fight of these insurgents that has resulted into the loss of significant territories in Northern Nigeria in the last two years has resulted to a decline in bank robberies lately.

Besides, the Bank robberies and the Kidnapping has over time served as a source of Boko Haram means of funding, accounts of several local and foreign experts who have been kidnapped and paid huge ransom abounds, this is aside from extortions and other numerous means earlier mentioned that it has used to continue to get funds to sustain its operations and stay afloat and it is believed

that if the Government can be able to eliminate this sources of funding then the Boko Haram sects and its operations will be short-lived.

#### **4.2.4. Regional and Global Response to Threats by Boko Haram**

There have been several attempts by the government of Nigeria to tackle the issue of the insurgency of the Boko Haram but most Scholars have argued that the Government has not done enough and that is why the fight against the insurgent group has not succeeded and they urge the Government to sincerely take up the fight to ensure the protection of lives and properties of its citizens.

First, The Nigerian Government has set up a joint military task force of the Army, Airforce and the Navy to combat this insurgency to bring it to a halt, but unfortunately, this has not been done as reports from the military quarters shows that the Boko Haram sects are well informed of the military movements and often leave their hideouts before the army strikes and lots of military men drafted to fight this terrorist have lost their lives, some complained that the terrorist has superior firearms than the military and seems to operate like people who are well informed of their next activities.

Recently there were massive resignations from the military forces fighting the Boko Haram, citing insincerity of the Government in the fight against insurgency. the neglect of the welfare of the military who are fighting the terrorist is one of the reasons adduced for this mass resignations, some whistleblowers have earlier submitted that some highly placed government officials are in support of this terrorist groups, if not how do they get these superior firearms they use? How do they tend to know the next move of the military and how do some of the captured Boko Haram sects who were captured gets released back into the society in the name of granting them amnesty?

All these have dampened the morale of many military officers that have been fighting this war. More especially when the Government does not pay any reasonable benefits to the families of those who lost their lives in the fight. The government has feigned ignorance that it does not know the perpetrators while whistleblowers have said that some high-level Government officials are involved. with terrorist acts on the increase such as kidnappings, killings, abduction of school children in Chibok and Dapchi which attracted international outcry and attention, the audacity of the Boko Haram sects has become a source of concern as they always carry out their acts, claim responsibilities and declare that it is a retaliation of a particular act of the enemy. The imposition of a state of emergency in the worst-hit states of the North has not solved the problem either, the



Government is expected to take the bull by the horn to find a lasting solution to restore permanent peace in the affected areas.

Furthermore, The government has released a memorandum on how to checkmate the Boko Haram terrorist attacks in Nigeria and that includes but not limited to, Negotiation with the Boko Haram sects (which most of the citizenry have opposed) ensuring that peace and security are restored, the establishment of Internally displaced person camps (IDPs), an empowerment youth program for the Almajeris(Street children), overhaul and change of border immigration policies, application of severe penalties on Boko Haram terrorist attackers, increased surveillance. (Donohue, 2011).

From the global perspective, even though Boko Haram operations and the attack has been limited to Nigeria and its neighbouring countries, it is vital to note that the attack of United Nations building by the Boko Haram on August 26, 2011, via a car bomb explosion that killed 21 persons and wounded 60, in addition to the kidnap of over 200 schoolgirls from chibok in Borno State drew international attention and strong condemnation for the terrorist sect. this prompted the International community to immediately classify it as a terrorist organization, This equally prompted the subcommittee on counterterrorism of the House of Representatives Committee on Homeland security in America to quickly classify Boko Haram as a terrorist sect that has the potential of committing Transnational terrorist attacks and has since then been sharing intelligence information with the Nigerian government on how to combat insurgency of this group. The United States has equally taken a decisive step to declare the Boko Haram a terrorist group and therefore declared its leaders wanted with a reward for anyone that will give useful information for their arrest, they have further deployed about 300 soldiers during President Obama administration to partner with Nigerian Military to counter the Boko Haram insurgency.

## **5 - RESEARCH FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is evident from our discussions in the previous chapters that the Boko haram attacks cannot be exonerated from religion and that religion indeed is one of the reasons behind the terrorist attacks especially as shown by the clear mission of the Boko Haram sects, meanwhile, there are other factors that trigger the recruitment and radicalization of this sects and this can be considered as the root causes, Therefore the government should be more concerned in dealing with the root causes of this issue to find a lasting solution, it can be deduced that when there is widespread corruption, poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, and wrong religious indoctrination, there is bound to be a feeling of deprivation which fosters ingroup feelings that triggers radicalization and the quest to change the status quo which has been least desirable as in the case of Boko Haram. their drive to overthrow the secular Nigerian Government which they perceive as corrupt and therefore does not champion the course for the betterment of its populace. Consequently, they strive to enthrone the Islamic law which they believe will eradicate corruption which has been a bane to the meaningful development of the country. The government should desist from paying lip service and embark on the effective implementation of the policies recommended below when the policies are fully implemented, I believe it will be able to put a stop to the terrorist activities as more youths will be gainfully engaged and peace and security will be fully restored in the troubled places.

**A, Regulate and monitor religious preaching:** up until now, there has not been any commission charged with the responsibility to regulate and monitor religious preaching in Nigeria, hence, I believe that it is vital for the Government to set up a Religious monitoring commission who is to ensure that religious preaching is monitored and regulated to avoid some of the preachers who distort these teachings and deceive their subjects into acts of violence. This commission will be created in consultation with relevant stakeholders that will agree on its mandate, functions, powers, composition and representatives will be drawn from members of the major religions comprising of Muslims, Christians and Traditionalists, civil society with a good track record in the promotion of public safety, the State security service and the Media. This commission will be saddled with the responsibility of standardizing the content and mode of preaching to ensure that young ones are not misled by any distorted religious preaching.

#### **B, Intensify Anticorruption campaign**

There have been several Anti-corruption agencies in existence such as the Independent Crime Commission and Economic and Financial Crime Commission but the fight against corruption seems to be dying down and needs are intensified to send the right warning signal for anyone seeking to indulge in corruption.

This is because the growing discontent of the youth about the government and their negative reaction towards rich corrupt government officials that squanders public resources meant for their welfare is something that deserves urgent attention by the government, the government should intensify its effort in the fight against corruption by strengthening the anti-corruption fights through its institutions such as the Economic and financial crimes commission and the Independent corrupt practices and other related offences commission. Any official of the Government convicted should be severely punished to act as a deterrent to others, this when done will help discourage the rallying ideology of the Boko Haram extremist, the money recovered from corrupt officials should be channelled towards the betterment of the welfare of the youths and the citizens in general.

### **C, Promotion of peace education**

The promotion of peace education will enable youths to appreciate the essence of peace and making it difficult for extremist to use them to foment trouble or cause violence, The government should inculcate peace education as part of the educational curriculum starting from the primary to the tertiary levels, the peace promotion should be a collective effort starting from the Government, Civil society, Private sectors, the religious institutions and the media(which possess a lot of influences on the young ones). The government in partnership with the National orientation commission and National youth service corps should promote peaceful coexistence amongst people from different parts of the country, this, if implemented effectively, will counter the narratives and messages that promote youth radicalization and disunity.

### **D, Resolving social problems that caused Boko Haram.**

The study is filled with an array of social problems that has given rise to the Boko Haram terrorist attacks ranging from home less street children also known “Almajiris” which constitute the majority of the young people that Join Boko Haram and this is because the Government does not care for them or border for their welfare, also they are not educated too and they are often too poor to afford their basic needs, this has made them ready and willing tools in the hand of the Boko Haram extremist, who picks them up from the streets and provide for their basic needs and subsequently radicalize them and bring them back to society as terrorists, hence the Nigerian government should be able to have a long term for this children by drawing action plan to take them off the street and enroll them in school to be trained while taking care of their welfare, This if done properly will stop youths from massively joining the Boko Haram to survive and engage in acts of violence and will turn them into meaningful members of the society, furthermore for those not willing to study the Government should create employment opportunities for its teeming unemployed youths by building effective human development centers in all the local governments where the youths can receive training in building capacities and should grant them start-up loans after their training so they can be able to establish their enterprises and be self-employed, this will make them less vulnerable to recruitment and radicalization by this terrorist groups. This will equally act as poverty alleviation and an empowerment scheme for the youths. The management of this enterprise should be accountable and transparent and be able to give the youth's access and information they need to thrive and succeed as entrepreneurs.

## CONCLUSION

Boko Haram terrorist activities have led to the killings and wanton destruction of lives and properties in Nigeria and other neighbouring countries like Chad, Niger and Cameroun.

The First research question posed whether religion plays a part in the Boko Haram attacks or are there other factors? was concretely examined as the research work found out that Religion is one of the key factors as the ideological philosophy of the Boko Haram is to ensure they enthrone an Islamic State where Sharia law will be in full operation, hence in a bid to do that they employ violence to convert the unbelievers to the Islamic faith and anyone that opposes that should be killed as purported by its religious teachings. Also, the study unveils other factors such as corruption, poverty, fight against westernization, illiteracy and this factors are the social problems which have given rise to Boko Haram insurgency, the essence of resolving these social problems is very key in the fight against the Boko Haram as most of the educated youths who are deprived of good social welfare and therefore cannot meet up with responsibilities of meeting their basic needs are proven to more prone to join the Boko Haram sect, The study revealed that the majority of the members of the Boko Haram are youths and are mostly the street children also known as the “Almajiris”. The government should make all efforts to take them off the streets and engage them meaningfully either by putting them in schools or assisting them in becoming entrepreneurs as this will go a long way in resolving the social ills that have hitherto assisted the Boko Haram in recruiting young willing youths into its fold thereby helping the fight against the Boko Haram.

Secondly, The study also answered the second research question of how the Boko Haram sect employ strategies to recruit and fund its operations, the study discovered recruitment of young people into the Boko Haram cannot be disconnected with the social problems which has been prevalent in the society which ranges from poverty,unemployment,illiteracy, corruption ,the inability of the Nigerian Government in resolving this social ills has caused disaffection among the youths as most of the members of the Boko Haram are youths who are disaffected and uneducated and the Boko Haram extremist are exploiting this unresolved social problems to effectively recruit this youngsters, They are recruited and radicalized through wrong teachings of the Islamic doctrine which thrives on violence and are made to see the secular society and governance as something they need to fight against and overthrow, this explains the increased number of suicide bombers which are mainly youths who have been

brainwashed by this extremist.

Furthermore, The study unveiled the various unconventional means where the Boko haram get funding for their operations as they have hitherto succeeded in circumventing the conventional way which the Government and International Terrorism monitoring agencies have put in place to track and stop terrorist funding, rather they reverted to the unconventional and illegal ways of getting funds for their operations which ranges from kidnapping, demanding for ransom, extortion, bank robberies, membership dues, payment from members of the public for fear of attacks etc. there is no gainsaying that unless the Government with its institutions on Anti-terrorism and in cooperation with its partners both local and international stop this sources of income of the Boko Haram, the organization will be waxing more strong.

Finally, The third research question of the International response(Regional and Global) in the fight against Boko Haram was addressed and the Nigerian Government efforts were put in proper perspective, in addition to the regional efforts epitomized by the formation of the Multi-national joint task force (MNTJF) in 2015 to combat Boko Haram from the affected countries Chad, Niger, Cameroun, Nigeria and in addition to Benin has been perceived as a strong regional effort with 8,700 soldiers delegated for the Task with Nigeria leading with the provision of 3,750 troops whilst Chad, Cameroun and Niger providing 3,000,2,650,1000 troops respectively, also Benin provided 750 troops despite that it has not been affected by Boko Haram attack so far. Buhari the President of Nigeria has shown his immense support by situating the MNJTF's headquarters in N'Djamena, Chad and followed up by his appointment of the Operation Commander Major General Iliya Abbah from Nigeria to lead the regional force. While the force has been successful in fighting and making the Boko Haram give up over half of its acquired territories in the past but this victory has come with a price as the Boko Haram has fought back with reprisal attacks, for instance, the group has successfully carried out three consecutive suicide bombings in Chad's capital, N'Djamena where the Headquarters of MNTJF is located.

The African Union adding its effort has applauded the launching of the special task force of MNTJF and described it as a viable force to defeat the Boko Haram terrorist attack and it has gone ahead to put in place viable legal framework and acted as a middle man between the affected member states and the Global world, However, has not done so much in the

implementation of its fashionable framework to eradicate the activities of Boko Haram within the affected member states and this is mainly because it lacks foot soldiers who would have been sent as troops to fight the insurgents.

In the same vein, The U.N security council in a press statement issued on May 9, 2014, expressed its displeasure and outrage on the abduction of the Chibok Nigerian schoolgirls by the Boko Haram and demanded their release, They also condemned their attack on Gamboru Village, a small village in the Nigeria- Cameroun border where about 150-300 people were reportedly killed, it emphasized that these attacks threatened the stability of peace and security in West and Central Africa, and pledged to come up with sanctions against the group to hold them accountable for its abuses, The U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, during its 2014 visit to Nigeria condemned unequivocally the actions of Boko Haram and referred it as “increasingly monstrous”.

Furthermore, he reacted to the group's threat to sell the girls as Sex slaves and issued a stern warning in that respect pointing out that the act amounts to gross violation of international law and consequently is tantamount to crimes against humanity.

Finally, the declaration of the Boko Haram sect as a terrorist group by the U.S homeland security is a right step in the right direction to boost the international partnership towards the fight against Boko Haram, the Government should always seek support and partnership if they will be able to succeed in this fight and they should lead the fight with utmost sincerity. For the government to be able to fight insurgency, all these factors should be addressed holistically to ensure that our youths are not left vulnerable to be lured by the extremist.

The government should fashion a holistic attempt to tackle insurgency and ensure that peace and security are restored in Nigeria.

Finally, it should continue to explore the support of the international community in ensuring that the fight against Boko Haram and its terrorist activities is eliminated.

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