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The Poverty-Conflict Nexus and the Activities of Boko Haram in Northeast Nigeria

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Abstract

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by

Emmanuel T. Agbormbai

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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July 2021

Abstract

In recent years Northeast Nigeria has experienced violence carried out by Boko Haram.
Previous research studies on the conflict in Northeast Nigeria have not focused on the
experiences and perceptions of those affected by the conflict. This study was an
exploration of the poverty-conflict nexus and the activities of Boko Haram in Northeast
Nigeria as seen through the experiences and perceptions of those impacted by the
violence. Benet's polarities of democracy was used as the theoretical framework to
examine those experiences and perceptions. The research questions addressed how the
people of Northeast Nigeria attacked by Boko Haram perceive the conflict, and how has
the situation affected their lives. The research design for the study was qualitative and a
phenomenological method was used. Data were collected through semi structured
interviews with 20 participants who had been victims of Boko Haram violence. The
interview data were inductively coded and thematic analysis was used to identify themes.
The findings identified nine themes related to the impact of the violence on the victims
including five themes that identified governmental barriers to addressing the impacts of
the violence. Recommendations for changes in public policies that may contribute to a
reduction in the conflict include increased efforts for collaborative peace building;
stronger anti-corruption legislation and enforcement; and increased governmental
investments in infrastructure, education, and job creation. These recommendations may
contribute to positive social change through improved governmental services, a reduction
in violence, and enhanced living conditions for the people of Northeast Nigeria.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my noble late Father Mr. Zacharia A. Agbormbai, my late humble mother Mrs. Rose E. Agbormbai, my late senior sister Ms. Agatha Agbaw, and my late senior brother Dr. A. A. Agbormbai from whom I derived the aspiration to pursue a PhD. Unfortunately, they died before my ambition was realized. Also, the study is dedicated to my lovely wife Lakem Wanobi Agbormbai for her steady financial and moral support, and to my family for their supportive words that instilled courage and strength in me to succeed on the study.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

I explored the poverty-conflict nexus and the activities of Boko Haram in Northeast Nigeria by examining the experiences and perceptions of those affected by the conflict. Boko Haram is a threat to Nigeria's security and the backbone of the country's development (Mehari, 2016). The group has engaged in bombing, abduction, and kidnapping. In 2014 and 2016, 500 Cameroonians died due to cross-border attacks by the terror organization, and 5,700 Nigerians lost their lives because of the bombing activities by Boko Haram (Agbiboa, 2013; Akanji, 2015; Omede, 2015; Sani, 2015). In 2017, Boko Haram kidnapped 300 schoolgirls and put them under forced labor, rape, and forced marriage. They also extended their attacks on civilian population, schools, police offices, churches, military barracks, and mosques (Akanji, 2015). In 2012, the group attacked the military checkpoints in Mara Rabar area in Bauchi State and the Police headquarter in Kano (Akanji & Omede, 2015). These attacks conducted by Boko Haram have surged in the Northeast recently (Kingimi & Carsten, 2018). For example, in November 2018, the group attacked military bases in the Northeast and killed 100 Nigerian soldiers (Kingimi et al., 2018).

Akinola (2013) explained that several scholars have attributed these attacks to structural violence, economic disparities, and poverty. The fact was supported by Khan and Cheri (2016) who noted that the Northeast is the poorest region in Nigeria with a poverty rate of 77,7% higher than other parts of the country. The condition has led to other social issues such as high unemployment, poor health, and a high mortality rate (Khan et al., 2016).

Researchers have focused on the causes of the group's behavior, rather than the perceptions and experiences of the people in the region who were victims of the violence (Agbiboa, 2013; Akanji, 2015; Omede, 2015). Furthermore, no one has looked at the study through the theoretical lens of the polarities of democracy developed by Benet (2006, 2012, 2013). I intended to fill the gap by using the theory to explore the perceptions and experiences about the conflict and the poverty situation of those affected by the crisis. I sought to identify possible solutions in promoting community engagement that may be beneficial to the citizens. I developed conflict management strategies that would bring about social change within the affected communities.

The social implication of the group's action is horrific. The attacks by Boko Haram within Nigeria, Chad, Niger, and Cameroon have created a humanitarian crisis in the region as more than 20,000 people have been killed since the conflict began (Awosusi, 2017). The inhabitants that live in the Lake Chad Basin and those in Northeast Nigeria lacked access to social services and healthcare facilities. Two million people have been displaced from their homes in the areas where the crisis has intensified. Eighty percent of the displaced persons live in poor communities with no social amenities (Awosusi, 2017). Chapter 1 includes the background of Boko Haram and the crisis, the problem statement, the purpose of the study, the research questions, the theoretical and conceptual framework for the study, the nature of study, definitions, the assumptions, the scope and delimitations, the limitations, the significance, and the summary.

Background of Boko Haram and the Crisis in Northeast Nigeria

Analyzing the theoretical and conceptual perspectives have strengthened my resolve to explore the poverty-conflict nexus and the activities of Boko Haram in Northeast Nigeria. Exploring the topic under investigation would not be fully understood without examining the historical aspect or background of Boko Haram. The historical background provides a mastery of the origin and the current behavior of the group. Examining the historical perspectives enhanced the understanding of the transformation of the crisis in the Northeast. This section is an examination of the works of authors who had written extensively on the region.

Boko Haram was formed in 2002 (Omede & Omede, 2015). However, Ibrahim et al. (2016) suggested that the group had existed since 1995 as they first settled in a village known as Kanamma that was under Geidam local government of the state of Yobe. The group practiced Darul Islam and was headed by the late Mohammed Ali. They were driven out by security forces in the region because of their extremist view. They then settled in the hills of Gwoza and were again driven out by government forces. Mohammed Yusuf subsequently assumed the helm of leadership in 2000 as the group settled in Indimi. Yusuf established his own Mosque in Maiduguri with members mostly from Boko Haram group. Members were composed of illiterate youths who are poor, unemployed, and dropped out from school. By 2009, the terror group had extended its influence on other states such as Bauchi, Yobe, and Borno (Ibrahim et al., 2016). In 2009, Mohammed Yusuf was killed by Nigerian forces and was replaced by Abubakar Shakau. The killings of Yusuf, the cry for justice, the destruction of their operational

headquarters, triggered the uprising that began in the same year. Boko Haram regrouped and began engaging in sporadic attacks on government officials, government buildings, civilians, international organization's buildings, and individuals that they perceived to be helping government forces (Adetoro, 2012; Dunn, 2018; Ibrahim et al., 2016; Yusuf, 2015). The goal of Boko Haram is to create an Islamic state in Nigeria to replace the federal system of government which explained the group's violent behavior to achieve their objectives (Ibaba, 2013).

In mapping the background of Boko Haram and the current crisis in the Northeast, Agbiboa (2014) traced the militancy group roots as far back as the 19th century when Sheik Usman Dan Fodio of Sokoto (1754-1817) carried out a holy war against the Hausa elites. He then formed the Sokoto caliphate with strict sharia laws that spread to the entire area of Northern Nigeria. In 1903, the British forces defeated the caliphate and imposed colonial rule in the North. Islam became the legitimate faith of the Northerners. Mohammad Marwan continued with Fodio's principles by implementing strict religious practices in Northeast known as Maitatsine. The religious figure originated from Kano denounced the elites as infidels and opposed anything that has to do with the Western countries. Maitatsine rejected material wealth because it is associated with European values (Agbiboa, 2014)

This analogy fits with the current beliefs of Boko Haram who hold anti-Western values as their name expresses, Western education and culture is

forbidden (Aliyu & Bambale, 2014). This ideology underscores the current behavior of the group and the intensification of the crisis. It also intensified the movement for the implementation of the sharia laws in all the Northern states in Nigeria. Proponents of the laws argued that it is their legal right to practice Sharia Law in their region. In October 1999, the governor of Zamfara State, Sani Ahmed, implemented the law to reimpose the Boko Haram values and morals in society. The law immediately went into effect in the year 2000 as alcohol and prostitution was strictly prohibited. The law divides Nigeria along religious lines between the North and the south (Agbiboa, 2014; Musa, 2012; Prichette, 2015).

Recruitment of Boko Haram members came from the youths who are unemployed or dropped out from school. They also select members from the Amangiri's religious school and sometimes used forceful methods such as kidnapping of young men to become part of the group. Former and current government officials from the Northeast are thought to be supporters of the group. For example, former Senator Mohammed Ali Ndume of Borno South and Alhaji Banu Wakil, a contractor, were arrested for having ties with Boko Haram and sponsoring terrorism. The ex-governor of Kano State Ibrahim Shekaru and Isa Yuguda, the governor of Bauchi State was accused of financing the group. These government officials provided the group with money and information about the government intentions against the organization (Adetoro, 2012; Alahira, 2015; Omede & Omede, 2015). Boko Haram's tactics involved car bombings, abduction, kidnappings, suicide bombings, disguising, and hijacking (Adetoro, 2012). The Internet has been a powerful tool used by Boko Haram in communicating as the group used cell

phones with the help of the internet to coordinate their activities, spreading propaganda, and as a denotating device (Musa, 2012). Several factors such as poverty, grievance, unemployment, religion, marginalization, and injustice have been suggested for the emergence of Boko Haram and the conflict that has engulfed the Northeast of the country. But research conducted by Collier and Hoeffler in Sub-Saharan Africa including Nigeria showed insignificant relationship between poverty/grievance and conflict.

Problem Statement

Poverty and conflict are a worldwide phenomenon. Further, poverty has been associated with the conflict in Northeastern Nigeria by many scholars. For example, Khan and Cheri (2016) argued that Northeastern Nigeria is the poorest and most disturbed region in the country. The Northeast is 77.7% poorer compared to other parts, and the high rate of poverty gave rise to further deprivation in employment, mortality rate, education, marriage, health, and other social issues (Khan & Cheri, 2016). The conflict situation in Northeastern Nigeria has brought hardship to the people in the form of poverty.

Aiyedobon (2012) suggested unemployment and agricultural services may have played a role in the ongoing violence in Northeast Nigeria. Aiyedobon suggested that the Nigerian government should invest in infrastructure and agricultural services to curb poverty. Ayegba (2015) explained that although poverty and unemployment do not show a significant relationship to the violence in Northeast region, the two factors provided an understanding of the conflict.

Ayegba suggested that the Nigerian government should create jobs and tackle corruption. Alternatively, Mohammed and Mohammed (2015) posited that bad governance and corruption were responsible for the conflict in Northeast Nigeria. They advocated for the building of roads, industries, and schools, to create employment. Others (Kostov, 2017; Nwankwo, 2015; Rustad, 2016) also explained that poverty, corruption, and inequality are factors that may have triggered the conflict in Northeast Nigeria.

While many researchers have focused on the nexus between poverty and the violence conducted by Boko Haram in Northeast Nigeria, few researchers focused on the experiences and perceptions of the victims of the conflict. Further, no one has explored the nexus of poverty and conflict through the lens of polarities of democracy theory. I sought to fill these gaps by exploring the experiences and perceptions of those affected by the conflict through the lens of polarities of democracy to identify potential solutions in promoting community engagement that may be beneficial to the citizens.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to explore the poverty-conflict nexus through the lens of experiences and perceptions of the citizens in the region who have been victims of the violence. The problem was examined using polarities of democracy theory (Benet, 2006, 2012, 2013). No scholar has attempted to pursue research on the conflict in Northeast Nigeria using the theory. Poverty, corruption, unemployment, religion, and inequality have been attributed to the conflict; but systematic studies have failed to find a significant relationship of the above factors and conflict (Oyeniyi, 2010). Apprehending

the experiences and the perceptions of those affected by the crisis may help in addressing the central research question.

The collection of data occurred in the capital city of Abuja from people who had fled the conflict in the Northeast and settled there for safety. Understanding the poverty-conflict nexus may help the Nigerian, Cameroonian, Chadian, and Niger governments to find peaceful solutions to the crisis. The perceptions and experiences of 20 participants selected from those who fled the crisis in the Northeast and settled for safety in Abuja was examined through a phenomenological approach that is suitable for the study (Danzin & Lincoln, 2011).

Research Question

How do the people of Northeast Nigeria attacked by Boko Haram perceive the conflict, and how has the situation affected their lives?

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

Johnson's Polarity Management Conceptual Framework

Polarity management (Johnson, 1992) was the conceptual framework used for the study. Johnson explained that polarities are interdependent pairs that can achieve greater outcomes only through gaining the positive aspects of both poles. But the question was how to determine an existing problem is a polarity to manage. Two determinant questions were raised by Johnson. Firstly, was there an ongoing difficult problem? Secondly, were there two interdependent poles? Johnson used these questions to develop what he called three generic polarities.

They included doing and being, part and whole, and self and other. Also, Johnson suggested that when a polarity exists there are upper and lower quadrants on the constructed visual model. The upper quadrants are the positive aspects of both poles of the polarity. On the other hand, Johnson suggested that the lower quadrants are the negative aspects of the polarities. Furthermore, he explained that a positive aspect is achieved when the negative aspects of the polarities are minimized. Johnson reiterated that the existing forces push a polarity pole against the other and this increases pressure from the downsides or lower quadrants. This was identified by Johnson as a vicious cycle. Meanwhile, the upper quadrants or upsides receives the pressure which he suggested as the polarity management solution. It is worthwhile noting that polarity management has been implemented in business organizations in coaching business leaders on how to achieve the objectives of their organization (Beach & Joyce,2009).

Benet's Polarities of Democracy Theoretical Framework

Polarities of democracy was used as the theoretical framework for the study (Benet, 2006, 2012, 2013). Benet drew inspiration from Johnson's (1992) polarity management to develop the polarities of democracy theory. He suggested that positive social change can be achieved by addressing institutional violence and oppression that threatens the survival of the human species. Benet (2006) identified 10 values that exist as five polarity pairs. They include Freedom and Authority, Justice and Due Process, Diversity and Equality, Human Rights and Communal Obligations, and Participations and Representations.

The Origin of Polarities of Democracy Theory

Benet (2006) explained that President John F. Kennedy and Dr. Martin Luther King inspired him as a young student in high school. This prompted him to join the civil rights movement in advocating for the end of segregation and racism in America. It was at this stage that Benet began looking for ways on how workplace democracy can be applied in a nonprofit sector. He extended this idea to the Monroe Community College in 1970 where he served as a committee member. While at the college, Benet created a leadership development course based on Blake and Mouton's (1964) managerial grid theory that described teamwork behavior. It should be noted that Benet was also influenced by Butt's (1980) ideas of presenting 10 values of public education as five values to improve individual worth and five values to improve the cohesiveness of society. Benet later used these ideas to develop the polarities of democracy theory.

Theoretical Proposition/Assumptions

The relationship between workplace democracy and occupational stress, the relationship between democratic concepts and human evolution, and the impact of psychological and physical violence triggering occupational stress and injury formed the theoretical proposition/assumptions for Benet's (2006) theory.

Benet (2006) suggested the elements that formed workplace democracy can be applied to societal democracy. This implies democratic participation practices in the workplace could be applied to the democratic process in society.

But Benet pointed out that the meaning of workplace democracy does not have consensus because of no clear definition.

The meaning of workplace democracy lacks consensus due to the debate of its definition (Benet, 2006). Also, Benet explained that leaders at workplaces in possession of authority do not like the practice of workplace democracy because it threatens their power. However, the paragraph below examines polarities of democracy in context of the study.

Polarities of democracy theory is made up of 10 values arranges as 5 polarity pairs (Benet, 2006, 2012, 2013). The theory was chosen because it fits well with the ongoing conflict in Northeast Nigeria.

Nature of the Study

Phenomenology strives to understand the experiences and perceptions of a particular group of participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). This approach was important because it enhances the understanding of the study under investigation (Denzin et al., 2011). The approach was suitable for the study because while other methods give a researcher a partial view, this approach focuses on the people's experience and perceptions of a phenomenon. The approach provides an understanding of why people react a specific way to an event as people react to a situation based on their perceptions. By understanding the human factors involved in an experience, the question of how people perceive a phenomenon to place it within a context can be answered. Phenomenology is aligned with qualitative research because it is based on the idea that

the perceptions of an individual are guided by his or her actions and responses. People understand action in terms of the manner they perceive them (Dawidowicz, 2016).

Purposive sampling was suitable for the research because the target populations are those who had lived and experienced the atrocities of Boko Haram (Creswell, 2012). Primary data were the sole data collected. Data analysis takes the form of transcription, coding, themes, and categories (McNulty, 2012). The recorded interviews were transcribed, and the themes were coded and categorized by means of NVivo software (as suggested by McNulty, 2012). The issue of trustworthiness was resolved by credibility, applicability, transferability, and dependability (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The collection of data and analysis are explained in detail in Chapter 3.

Definitions of Key Terms

Authority: As articulated by Locke in the "Glorious Revolution" of 1688 is the ability for the state to make laws that the society as whole follows as evidenced in the United States of America (Delue & Dale, 2015).

Boko Haram: The term Boko Haram means Western education is evil. The name is associated to a terror group in the north of Nigeria that has engaged in bombings, kidnappings, and assassination in the Nigeria (Aliyu & Bambale, 2014).

Conflict Management: The process to bring the conflict under control (Lederach, 2006)

Conflict Prevention: When efforts are made to avoid differences to develop into crisis (Lederach, 2006)

Conflict: Defined as the "perceived divergence of interest, a belief that the party's current aspiration is incompatible. Conflict is the belief that if one party gets what it wants, the other will not be able to do so" (Pruitt & Kim, 2004, pp. 7-8).

Kidnappings: The act of sizing a person illegally for ransom before the said person can be released (Tobor, 2014).

Marginalization: The oppression of certain members of the communities by the oppressors (Freire, 1997).

Multitrack diplomacy: A conceptual way to view the process of international peace as a living system (Davies et. Al., 2003).

Participation: The ability for citizens of a country to get involved in the electoral process to bring change within the community by influencing policy (Falade, 2014; Ibedo, 2015; Odo, 2015).

Peace: A process of continuous and constructive management of differences towards mutually satisfying relation (Oruwari, 2006)

Polarities: The ongoing, chronic problems that society cannot avoid and cannot solve. Attempt to solve them using the traditional problem-solving skills worsen the situation (Johnson, 1992).

Positional Negotiation: A form of consensus building that requires informal face-to-face interaction among stakeholders involved as an effort to reach an all win rather than a win-lose (Lewicki et al., 2006).

Poverty: The United Nations defined poverty to imply the lacked in basic capacity to participate in society effectively, the denial of opportunities and choices, not having enough food and clothing, the violation of human dignity, not having enough food and clothing, schools, and clinics to attend, land to grow food to earn a living, and access to credit (Achunike, 2014).

Power: The ability to coerce someone to do something he would not otherwise do (Lewicki, et al., 2006).

Principle Negotiation: emphasizes on mutual gains which could be useful in managing the conflict. It is a form of consensus building that requires informal face-to-face interaction among the stakeholders involved as an effort to reach an all win rather than a win-lose {Lewicki et al., 2006).

Reconciliation: The power whereby the past is being addressed without locking into a vicious cycle of mutual exclusiveness inherent in the past (Lederach, 2006).

Representation: A system of government where the citizens of a country elect a person to represent them in government (Cordenillo & Gardes, 2014). Representation as a polarity function according to Benet (2006) enabled individual to participate in a democratic process on political election and in workplace.

Second track diplomacy: The bringing together of professionals, opinion leaders or political influential people from the communities in conflict to work together to understand better the dynamics underlying the conflict and how its

transformation from violence to a collaborative process of peace building and sustainable development might be promoted (Davies & Kaufman, 2003).

Assumptions

A critical research under study seeks a change and to achieve this change, the study must be supported by philosophical assumptions. The philosophical assumptions underpin four research paradigms or questions such as ontology, epistemology, axiology, and methodology, all of which are interrelated (Hughes, 2018). The word *paradigm* is derived from a Greek word Paradeigma, meaning pattern, and was first used by Kuhn (1962) to explain a conceptual framework that is useful for scientists in examining problems and finding solutions to the problems. According to Kuhn, paradigm is a pattern of structure and framework based on values and assumptions.

Ontology

The philosophical view of ontology is concerned with the question of what is and what formed reality in conducting a qualitative research. In other words, at the core of all qualitative research lies multiple realities. Ontology drives or guides epistemology, axiology, and methodology (Hughes, 2018; Ravitch & Carl, 2016). By connecting the ontological viewpoint to my research study, it is imperative for me to take a critical position on the participants' perceptions of how the crisis in Northeast Nigeria has affected them. It also provides the balance between the participants and I as we seek the truth or answers to the complex societal challenges that they faced (Hughes, 2018; Ravitch et al., 2016). However, many ontology postures have been taken as evidenced by constructivism, positivism, and post positivity. Constructivism (in contrast to positivism

and post-positivism) supported the view of ontology as reality based on perception. The constructivism view is that there is no existence of reality independent from our perception (Hughes, 2018; Ravitch et al., 2016). Reality is constructed and interpreted based on the experiences and interactions of historical, cultural, and experimental environment. While they acknowledge the existence of a phenomena, they argue about the extent researchers can know reality outside their personal perspectives (Hughes, 2018; Ravitch et al., 2016). On the other hand, positivism believes in the existence of discoverable reality governed by natural laws. Scientific theories are considered valid if they can make independent-minded claims leading to the truth (Hughes, 2018; Ravitch et al., 2016). Post positivism concurred that there is an independent reality perceptions and theories about it and this reality cannot be known with certainty by humans (Hughes, 2018; Ravitch et al., 2016).

Epistemology

The epistemology view relates to the nature and forms of knowledge and seeks to know how knowledge is created and communicated (Scotland, 2012). It should be noted that all research paradigms are focused on their own ontology and epistemology assumptions that can never be disproved or proven. This is because different paradigms consist of different ontological and epistemological reality views depending on the research approach. This can be reflected in the axiology and methodology (Scotland, 2012). The epistemological perspectives relating to my study is about how I am going to collect or gather facts based on the

participants view during the interview process in the field (as recommended by Creswell, 2012). According to Creswell it is important for me as a researcher to get closer to the participants who are under study because this will enable me to gain an insight into the participant's experience of the conflict. Nevertheless, positivism (which adopted a dualistic and objectivist position) suggested that a researcher that utilizes proper methodology can view and record events objectively. Positivism argues that the process does not influence the phenomenon of interest nor the researcher. On the other hand, post-positivism pointed out that given an imperfect world, observation as a process of collecting data is prone to error and critique. This may lead to the replacement of the theory by different set of categories and relationships. Meanwhile, constructionists argue that the findings of the study are reached by the interaction of the researcher and the participants. This makes me as a researcher to be an active participant rather than a passive observer in acquiring and justifying the knowledge. The research concept and theory for the study are applicable if they sufficiently prove the context for which they were created (Hughes, 2018).

Axiology

The axiological view holds that the values of the research study and information gathered must be made known (Creswell, 2012). Axiology raised questions such as how do values relates to facts? What is the role-value of the researcher in the research process? However, positivism argued that values and bias have no place in the research process. Implementing appropriate research methodology would ensure a value free in the research process. Similarly, post-positivist concurred that all observations during the

interview process is believed to be theory laden. Constructivist on the other hand argues that the researcher cannot be separated from the theory nor subject matter because he is considered an integral part of interactions (Hughes, 2018). In critical theory it is suggested that there are objective realities and that the values under study must be known (Bohman, 2012). By using Benet's (2013) polarities of democracy theory, I am assuming the validity of the polarity nature of the values of freedom and authority, justice and due process, diversity and equality, human rights and communal obligations, and participation and representation.

Methodology

Creswell (2012) suggested that methodology is shaped by the researcher's experience in the process of collecting and analyzing the data. This point is supported by Hughes (2018) that knowledge is generated when the researcher through the methodological process has determined or identified a previously unknown. Positivists argue that methodology should be experimental and manipulative. Post positivists are concurred with the positivist's view that multiple observations and measurement are necessary to identify errors that can be controlled for better result. Conversely, constructivism challenges the idea of free knowledge in the world and that the researcher is responsible in interpreting the information that are at his or her disposal. The relationship between the researcher and the subject matter is the focus of methodology (Hughes, 2018; Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

The research design for this study is a phenomenological approach based on qualitative analysis. Phenomenology is the study of a group of people to understand their experiences and perceptions of a specific phenomenon (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). I explored the perceptions and experiences of those affected by the conflict in Northeast Nigeria. This makes me as the researcher to become involved and immersed in the study. The approach is important because it enhances the understanding of the study under investigation (Denzin et al., 2011). The phenomenological approach is suitable for the study since it answers the question of how people perceive a phenomenon to place it within a context (Burkholder, Cox, & Crawford, 2016). Phenomenology is aligned with qualitative research because it is based on the idea that the perceptions of individuals are guided by their actions and responses. People understand action in terms of the manner they perceive them (Burkholder, et al., 2016).

Practical Assumptions

In relation to the study, I assumed that I could travel to Nigeria to conduct the study despite the pandemic crisis. Also, I assumed that I could find people at the Internal Displaced People's Camp (IDP) in Abuja, Nigeria to interview. Finally, I assumed that the selected participants would be honest to answer my questions to the best of their recollection.

Scope and Delimitations

The scope of the study was delimited to one month. It is understood that most researchers have used longer periods in conducting qualitative research. But the time frame set for a month in conducting the field study was enough to answer the research

question. Also, the study is delimited to those affected by the conflict. A phenomenological approach was chosen for the study. The approach enabled me understand the experiences and perceptions of those impacted by the conflict in Northeast Nigeria (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Thus, this approach is useful because it enhances the understanding of the investigation by gauging the perceptions and experiences of the participants as recommended by Denzin and Lincoln. In applying the approach to the study, I explored, narrated, and elucidated the perceptions and experiences of volunteer participants willing to tell their story about the conflict in Northeast Nigeria. The participants were drawn from people who fled the violence and settled in Abuja for safety. I informed the participants the purpose of the interview. Also, l informed them that their participation is voluntary and that they can withdraw from the interview. I informed the participants that their privacy (confidentiality) would be protected as many were afraid to participate in the interview for fear of reprisal.

Regarding the data collection method, a semistructured interview was preferable for the study because of its in-depth nature that produces more information from participants. In other words, I conducted a face-to-face interview in the form of a one-and-one using open ended questions. Tape recorders were used to record the interview. Purposive sampling was suitable for the research because the target populations are those who had lived and experienced the atrocities of Boko Haram (Creswell, 2012). Furthermore, only primary data were collected and utilized for the study. Data analysis took the form

of transcription, coding, themes, and categories as recommended by McNulty (2012). The recorded interview was transcribed, and the themes were hand coded and categorized by means of NVivo software. The issue of trustworthiness was resolved by examining credibility, applicability, transferability, and dependability as developed by Guba and Lincoln (1994).

Limitations

The study has some limitations. The study was focused only on those participants who experienced the ongoing crisis between the Nigerian troops and Boko Haram and have fled the conflict zones and settled in Abuja for safety. I found difficulty in managing the interviews and controlling the process of the interviews. Recording data can present a problem because it is a daunting task to make notes when a participant was talking at the same time. The tape recorder could not record everything that the participants were saying because of the noise in the compound. Transferability and dependability of the outcome may be difficult to ascertain (Maxwell, 2013).

Situational factors can influence the response of participants. Environmental factors such as noise, light, and temperature may have an impact on the reaction of participants. However, situational contaminants were excluded by using a lighted room. Two chairs were arranged in a face-to-face setting close to the tape recorder. The room was well ventilated to the satisfaction of participants (Maxwell, 2013).

The personal characteristics of participants may also hinder their response to questions, a situation known as the phenomenon of social desirability of response, acquiescence, and extreme of response. This situation was handled by assurance of

confidentiality, explanation of the purpose of the interview to the participants, as well as the signing of the informed consent form. Anxiety and fatigue can hinder the participants response. To deal with this situation, the interviews were scheduled between 10:00 am and 12:00 pm consistent with recommendations by Maxwell (2013). Administrative variations may happen during the data collection process and to resolve this situation, I practiced using the tape recorder and back up batteries were ready in case of power failure.

Researcher bias can be a problem because I was the main conductor of the study in the environment that is made up of participants. The situation can cause distortion of the findings relating to the study (Maxwell, 2013). Bracketing and reflexivity were used to solve the problem. I also revisited the participants to clarify their responses.

Significance of the Study/Implications for Positive Social Change

Conflicts are unpredictable in human societies. The causes and effects are numerous and various, their resolution is more challenging than one could ever imagine. The conflict in Northeast Nigeria has manifested itself into religion, social, economic, political, and territorial conflict. Conflict is propelled by unfulfilled human needs of the people such as security, identity, culture, freedom, and fear in the society. Although the conflict in the Northeast developed in a local framework, it has engulfed neighboring countries such as Cameroon, Chad, and Niger which share borders with Nigeria (Davis & Kaufman, 2003). On the other hand, peace is a situation characterized by the absence of war and violence in

which human interactions are conducted in an orderly manner and disputes arising from

such interactions are settled peacefully (Oruwari, 2006). Peace is a process of continuous

and constructive management of differences towards mutually satisfying relations, the

prevention of escalation of violence, and the achievement of those conditions that

exemplify the universal well-being of human beings and their groups from the family to

culture and the state (Oruwari, 2006).

Conflict prevention occurs when efforts are made to avoid differences to develop

into crisis (Lederach, 2006). Lederach further explained that conflict resolution is a

process to end and not to eliminate conflict. It is an intervention by a third party to reform

existing relationships by effecting institutional and attitudinal change. Conflict

management is a process to bring the conflict under control (Lederach 2006). The

Nigerian government has recently engaged in some strategies to manage the conflict for

social change to prevail in the affected communities in the Northeast (Ayegba, 2015). To

address poverty and underdevelopment in the region, the Nigerian government provided

irrigation, portable water, checked erosion, widened, and dredged a canal. However,

these efforts were crippled because of corruption (Ayegba, 2015).

Recommendations for Possible Social Change

Conflicts are inevitable in societies and their effects are devastating. The conflict

that erupted in Northeast Nigeria between Boko Haram and the Nigeria government has

led to religious, social, economic, political, and territorial conflict implications. The spilt

over effects of the conflict is felt by neighboring countries such as Cameroon, Chad, and

Niger which share borders with Nigeria.

However, from the study that I conducted, I was able to develop and recommended public/administrative policies that might have social change implications in the Northeast region of Nigeria if implemented by the Nigerian government. The Nigerian government must encourage citizen's participation in the Northeast and Nigeria in general. The action will make the people to believe in the government and supports the government in fighting Boko Haram. Also, illiteracy in the Northeast region of Nigeria is higher than other regions in Nigeria. I recommended that the government should build more schools and training centers that will improve the educational level of the people of Northeast Nigeria. The Nigerian government must promote reconciliation by working with Boko Hara. This served as the foundation of peace.

I recommended the training of women in areas like law to advocate for problems faced by women in the society. This is because the women in Northeast Nigeria have received unequal treatment for so long. This situation may cause distrust in the society. Equal treatment under the law reflects fairness, a lawful society, and legitimacy. Also, for positive social change to be realized, I recommended that Nigerian government to provide essential services such as security, encourage the citizens to participate in civil society organizations such as political parties, and to hold government officials accountable through the rule of law process. Inclusive political process and nonviolence may reduce the violent fighting in Northeast Nigeria. The government of Nigeria should therefore

champion inclusive political processes and provide the citizens with basic human needs such as healthcare, food, security, and food.

In realizing positive social change, the government must empowerment the people of Northeast Nigeria. The citizens of the Northeast must be empowered to engage in community development and to develop capabilities that are essential for decision making within the community. The government must encourage freedom of expression, and equal access to information. The Nigerian government must help the citizens in Northeast Nigeria to acquire skills and tools to build the capacity of transforming the society. Furthermore, I recommended good economic governance which is the cornerstone for positive social change in Northeast Nigeria. I recommended the Nigerian government to create the administrative foundation and infrastructures. This will help to transform the economic situation in Northeast Nigeria. Also, I recommended the Nigerian government to implement a transitional governing structure in the Northeast region through consultation of the civil society, local leaders, and administrative mechanism to ensure legitimacy.

The Nigerian government should create an advisory council to advise on political decisions, and a joint military committee consisting of Boko Haram and the Nigerian troops. In addition, the government should restore managerial capacity for governance. This could involve recruitment, training, and appointment of public policy/administration personnel. Selection must be on merit-based criteria. Capacity building must be encouraged through advanced training and mentoring. Furthermore, I recommend the Nigerian government to reform the public administration sector and ensure that the use of

public resources and regulatory power is not abused by government officials. This means corruption, favoritism, the use of government policies and regulation to benefit the powerful or the rich, cronyism, must be discouraged. In other words, I recommended the Nigerian government to encourage administrative oversight to root out malpractices in government. I recommended the Nigerian government to create monitoring mechanisms for civil service personnel in the Northeast region to mitigate corruption, discrimination, and inefficiency, that is unhealthy for peace.

Finally, I recommend the Nigerian government to protect state resources that belong to the nation. The resources must be protected to ensure that they are managed and distributed in a manner that meets the social and economic needs of the citizens in Northeast region and Nigeria in general. This can be achieved by putting in place sound financial management based on transparency in the collection of revenue, taxation, and budgetary process.

Summary

Boko Haram now threatens Nigerian national security as the activities of the organization have increased in the Northeastern part of the country significantly (Mehari, 2016). The purpose of this study was to explore the poverty-conflict nexus through the lens of experiences and perceptions of the citizens in the region who were harmed by the Boko Haram violence. I examined the experiences and perceptions of those affected by the conflict. Chapter 1 included the background of Boko Haram and the crisis, the problem statement, the

purpose of the study, the research questions, the theoretical and conceptual framework for the study, the nature of study, definitions, the assumptions, the scope and delimitations, the limitations, the significance, and the implications of the study in relation to social change, and the summary.

Chapter 2 is a review of the literature related to the issue under investigation. It embodies the basis for conducting the research. Chapter 2 includes a critical analysis of previous research studies conducted by other scholars. Chapter 3 is an explanation of the methodological approach I will use to collect and analyze the data.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Boko Haram has become a constant menace to Nigerian national security as the activities of the organization have increased in the Northeastern part of the country (Mehari, 2016). Security was regarded as a pillar of development in Nigeria; but the country has witnessed unprecedented agitations from Boko Haram in the form of bombings, kidnapping, and abduction. For example, in 2014 and 2016, about 5,700 Nigerians lost their lives, and 500 Cameroonians perished because of cross border attacks by Islamic group (Agbiboa, 2013), (Akanji, 2015), and (Omede, 2015).

The group kidnapped 300 schoolgirls in 2017 and subjected them to all forms of abuses such as forced marriage, rape, and forced labor. Boko Haram expanded their scope of operation to include sporadic attacks on military barracks, civilian population, police offices and check points, churches, schools, markets, mosque, and social gatherings such as marriages. For example, the headquarter of the Nigerian police force in Kano and the military checkpoint in Marar Rabar area in Bauchi State was attacked by the terror group in 2012 (Akanji & Omede, 2015). The Islamic group had killed traditional rulers and Muslim clerics alleged to be working with the Nigerian government (Agbiboa, 2013). The local government area of Abadam, Kala Balge, Marte, Guzamala, Gobio, Yukawa, Gamboru Ngala, and Mobbar under Borno was attacked and occupied by the

organization. The Nigerian government recaptured the area recently (Agbiboa, 2013).

Awosusi (2017) posited that the attacks in the Northeast by Boko Haram and the Lake Chad basin made up of Cameroon, Niger, and Chad have created a humanitarian crisis as 20,000 people have been killed since the crisis emerged. Healthcare facilities, schools, and agricultural farmland have been damaged. The 20 million inhabitants of the Lake Chad basin and those in Northeast Nigeria are affected severely and they lack access to social services and healthcare facilities. Two million people have been displaced from their homes in Northeastern Nigeria, 80% of the displaced persons live in poor communities with no social amenities. In Borno, 50% of the healthcare facilities are non-functional and inaccessible. This condition is not different from those of the States of Gombe, Adamawa, and Yobe (Awosusi, 2017).

Poor health information management system has made it difficult for healthcare workers to track potential epidemics effectively. Inadequate medical facilities, water supply, and food shortage because of climate change has increased the risk of waterborne diseases. There were three reported cases of polio in Gwoza, Jere, and Monguno local areas of Borno State (Awosusi, 2017). Conversely, the violent conflict in Northeastern Nigeria was attributed by scholars to poverty, religion, ethnicity, corruption, unequal distribution of wealth, greed and grievance, unemployment, and bad governance (Adetoro, 2012; Aidedogbon & Ohwofasa, 2012; Aliyu, 2012; Annan, 2014; Hansen et al., 2018; Ibaba, 2013; Mohammed & Mohammed, 2015; Oluwatayo, 2014). Systematic studies conducted on greed-grievance as the cause of conflict in the Sub-Saharan Africa by Collier and Hoeffler (2002) failed to find a significant relationship. The victory of the

conflict claimed by the Nigerian Government over Boko Haram is unconvincing as in November 2018, Boko Haram stormed military bases in the Northeast of the country and killed 100 soldiers (Carsten, 2018). This attack revealed that Nigerian national security is at stake and strong policy measures must be taken to curtail the killings.

The purpose of this study was to examine the poverty-conflict nexus by exploring the Boko Haram activities in Northeast Nigeria through the lens of experiences and perceptions of the citizens who experienced the violence between the Nigerian troops and Boko Haram. The subsequent sections of chapter 2 explain the literature search strategy, the conceptual framework, the theoretical framework, the origin of Benet's (2006, 2012, 2013) polarities of democracy theory, theoretical propositions/assumptions, the lack of consensus on the meaning of workplace democracy, the polarities of democracy theory in context of the study, the defining of the poverty-conflict nexus, the poverty-conflict nexus/activities of Boko Haram, additional key concepts, and the summary.

Literature Search Strategy

To understand thoroughly the poverty-conflict nexus and the activities of Boko Haram, an extensive literature search strategy was involved. Peer reviewed articles, journals, and government documents were obtained. I also consulted the Nigerian government website on poverty in Northeast Nigeria and Nigeria as a whole. I used the following key words when searching the Walden University library: *poverty* and *conflict* and *Africa, poverty,* and *conflict* and *Nigeria,* and

Nigeria and *poverty*. While conducting the search, I focused on peer reviewed articles and journals that were published within 5 years. I expanded my search beyond 5 years to have enough materials or resources to cover my research. I utilized previous Dissertations, ProQuest Central, Google Scholar, Academic Search Journals, Business Search Journals (EBSCO), and Science Direct to identify relevant literatures on my research topic. The articles helped to enhance the argument for the current research and spotted the gap in previous studies on the nexus between poverty and conflict and the activities of Boko Haram in Northeastern Nigeria. Examining the theoretical foundation and the conceptual framework provides a mastery of the topic under investigation.

<div align="center">**Theoretical/Conceptual Frameworks**</div>

Johnson's Polarity Management Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework used for the study was Johnson's (1992) polarity management. Polarities are interdependent pairs that cannot function alone without the support of the other to achieve greater outcomes (Johnson, 1992). The question is how to know if a person has problems to solve or a polarity to manage. Johnson provided two determinants for the existence of a polarity. First, is the difficulty experienced ongoing? Second, are there two interdependent poles? From these questions, the author posited three generic polarities such as self-other, doing-being, and part-whole. Other polarities included team, individual, participatory, and autocratic considered to be outside or within the polarities. To distinguish between the poles' advantages and disadvantages is the most arduous part in framing a polarity. Johnson suggested that when an individual is

faced with an unsolvable problem rather than a solvable problem, polarity management is needed. These unsolvable problems exist because of a dilemma.

The visual polarity management model consists of four quadrants: left and right, up and down (Johnson, 1992). The left side of the model has a polarity known as the individual and the right side is a polarity known as community (Johnson, 1992). The upper quadrants consist of positive aspects of each pole while the lower quadrants consist of the negative aspects of each pole. To achieve a positive outcome is to maintain the positive aspect of both poles while minimizing the negative aspects of both poles. This is because there are forces that push to shift from one polarity pole to the (Johnson, 1992). A polarity that is managed effectively fulfills its objectives by maximizing the positive aspects of the polarity while minimizing the negative aspects of the polarities (Johnson, 1992). On the other hand, a poorly managed polarity is concentrated on one pole to the disadvantage of the other. (Johnson, 1992).

Polarity management has been used to coach organizational leaders to attain the objectives of their companies and minimize negativity from challenges or obstacles. This is achieved by identifying key polarities that need management. Beach and Joyce (2009) argued that stability and change are considered a vital or key polarity by organizational leaders because if they are managed effectively the organization can obtain the benefits of both poles.

Benet's Polarities of Democracy Theoretical Framework

The concept of polarity management was used by Benet (2006, 2012, 2013) to develop the polarities of democracy theory. The theory is based on the critical theory

perspectives aimed at bringing about social change by overcoming oppression and violence which are threats to the survival of the human species (Benet, 2013). Benet summed up four tests to assess the polarities of democracy theory. First, to what extent is polarities of democracy theory consistent with Johnson's (1992) polarity management theory? Second, to what extent is polarities of democracy theory consistent with the assumptions of polarity of management concepts? This was supported by seven questions to assess the face and content validity of the theory. Third, a comparison was made using exemplary models. Finally, each of the values contained in the theory were supported as essential by broad and deep sections of the literature (Benet, 2012). The polarities of democracy theory was used for my research because it provides an extensive understanding of the current situation in Northeastern Nigeria.

A theoretical framework identifies the underlying theory and explains the existence of a problem, the basis of data collection, analysis, and conclusions (Benet, 2018). Polarities of democracy theory was developed within the critical theory perspective of bringing about positive social change by addressing institutional violence and oppression threatening the survival of human being. Researchers and activists have used the theory to build healthy, sustainable, and just communities by overcoming oppression (Benet, 2013). However, the subsequent paragraph explains the origin of the polarities of democracy theory.

The Origin of Polarities of Democracy Theory

The origin of the theory could be traced as far back as 50 years ago. Inspired by John F. Kennedy and Dr. Martin Luther King Junior while still a junior high

school student, following his experience in the United States army and as a Monroe County-Legislator, Benet began searching for ways democracy could be used as a solution to the problems of oppression (Benet, 2013). The inspiration drawn from King prompted him to join the civil rights movement to fight against racism and segregation that plagued American schools and society. In 1962, Benet joined the union movement to fight against economic equality. For example, he received the AFL-CIO National Solidarity Medal for organizing opposition to President Reagan's budget and was an opponent of the Vietnam war. These are a summary of the many achievements and works of the author (Benet, 2006).

Benet's breakthrough began in 1970 when he started working on how the concept of workplace democracy could be applied in a nonprofit setting. While at Monroe Community College as Chair of the Student Senate in 1970, Benet established a leadership development course that was built around Blake and Mouton's (1964) managerial grid theory. This was an organizational tool that described the required behaviors for teamwork and was based on integrating maximum concern for results and productivity with maximum concern for people. Then as a Director or Executive Director for Genesee Ecumenical Ministries, the New York State Citizens Alliance to Prevent Drug Abuse, and the Rochester Council on Occupational Safety and Health, Benet (2018) applied the best practices (such as freedom, equality, and human rights) attained from research studies on social work and adult education. In 1980 Benet's ideas adopted the 10 values on the purpose of public education, defined by Butts (1980) as five values that enhance individual worth and five values that enhance the cohesiveness of society.

Finally, through his doctoral and post-doctoral research, Benet (2013) adopted Johnson's (1992) polarity management as his conceptual framework to construct the polarities of democracy. Benet used Johnson's polarity management to bring together Blake and Mouton's (1985) managerial grid theory and Butts's (1980) decalog of civic values.

Theoretical Proposition/Assumptions

The theoretical proposition or assumption emanates from three areas: The relationship between workplace democracy and occupational stress relates to the suggestion that the negative aspects of occupational stress can be addressed by workplace democracy. The negative aspects include the inhumane conditions such as psychological and physical violence that trigger occupational stress and injury at the workplace (Benet, 2006). Most of the approaches to occupational stress are centered on individual's learning to live with the condition instead of addressing the causes of occupational stress at the workplace (Benet, 2006).

The relationship between democratic concepts and human evolution suggested that the concept of democracy was represented by universal truth and not just western culture proclamation (Benet, 2006). Democratic concepts were established through the evolution of self-consciousness and human agency of behavioral elements vital for the development of the human species in overcoming oppression. Benet rejected both Hobbes's (1651/1994) idea that the human species was in a state of perpetual war and Rousseau's (1762/1983) idea of the concept of human nature as fundamentally good. Instead, Benet argued that human development required both selfish and altruistic motivations.

Prior to Benet's (2006) work, there has been no consensus on the meaning of workplace democracy. Benet found a relationship between workplace democracy and societal democracy by showing how the conditions of work either prepared the individual for the promotion of societal democracy or for the promotion of autocratic systems. Societal democracy promotes workplace democracy by creating societal policies needed to address the oppression of workers by employers. Thus, Benet found that the elements required for workplace democracy are the same as those required for societal democracy.

Lack of Consensus on the Meaning of Workplace Democracy

Workplace democracy has not gained widespread acceptance due to the lack of clarity on its definition (Benet, 2006). There has been no concrete consensus on how to accommodate industrial democracy in terms of principles and organizational arrangements. Benet pointed to the fact that the field of study is contemporary with no accepted lexicon. Based on these arguments, Benet (2013) identified 10 values essential for democracy and then paired into five polarities. They included freedom and authority, justice and due process, diversity and equality, human rights and communal obligations, and participation and representation. To understand broadly the importance of the polarities of democracy theory in relation to the current study, it is imperative to examine the 10 paired values of polarities on democracy theory. This is because the 10 paired elements paired into five are interrelated and rely on one another to function effectively (Benet, 2006, 2012, 2013).

The Polarities of Democracy Theory in Context of the Study

The theoretical framework for the study is polarities of democracy (Benet, 2006, 2012, 2013). The theory is suited for the study because it provides an understanding of the current situation in Northeast Nigeria. As noted, Benet's theoretical model consists of 10 values paired into five polarities. Benet (2013) elucidated that each of the values possesses positive and negative aspects that if effectively managed to maximize the positive aspects while minimizing the negative aspects may lead to a true democracy in society such as Nigeria.

The concept of democracy is regarded as a principle where power is bestowed or conferred on the people. This implies government of the people, by the people, and for the people although modern states no longer adhere to the concept in terms of participation (Mohammed & James, 2017). It means a set of ideas and institutions in place that foster the process of good governance. Democracy embodies the basic human right ideals such as freedom of speech, right to human dignity, right to life, right of freedom of thoughts, faire hearing, and personal liberty (Mohammed & James 2017). Further, Benet (2006, 2013) alluded to the fact that democracy as a concept is applicable around the world. Benet articulated that democracy was accepted by countries around the globe as a tool that would enhance the realization of social change within the communities in areas such as economic, political, and social. The survival of human species depends on addressing the militaristic, social, political, economic, and environmental challenges that we face (Benet, 2013). Democracy should be a counter force against violence and oppression not just at workplace but in forgotten societies

(Benet, 2006). In relation to this study, Northeast Nigeria is not only left behind in terms of development but lacks basic healthcare facilities coupled with high rates of unemployment, poverty, and illiteracy. These conditions are a threat to Nigerian democracy (Mohammed & James, 2017).

Freire (1997) explained the tenets of oppression. Freire developed a theory of education to explain how certain members of the communities can be marginalized or oppressed by their oppressors. Freire argues that marginalization could lead to sectarian violence. Citizens that have been under oppression for long are likely to engage in some form of struggle to liberate themselves from their oppressors. The oppressed viewed this liberation struggle as a great leap forward in overcoming oppression and to bring about positive social change within the society (Freire, 1997). The analogy of Freire's theory fits well with the current situation in Northeastern Nigeria. Mohammed and James (2017) explained that the oppressors in Nigeria are the elites who control the wealth in the country. People lack their desired needs such as food, clothing, housing, and security in the Northeast. Poverty is acute and unemployment rate has doubled. These conditions have led to the emergence of Boko Haram whose threat to the society is visible.

Benet's (2013) polarities of democracy theory was developed by means of critical theory philosophical perspective with a focus on promoting positive social change in society. Benet's polarities of democracy theory is elaborated on the literature review below to provide a clear understanding of the theory and its relevance to the study.

Literature Review Related to Key Concepts

Freedom and Authority

Locke (1632) argued against Hobbes's (1651/1994) theory that calls for absolute monarchy based on the consent of citizens. Locke was in support of the "Glorious Revolution" of 1688 which favors the king of England to share powers with the parliament. Locke's political view that parliament is the main source of authority in government is drawn from the revolution. However, he articulated the role for the executive branch and the legislative branch both limited by precise function (Uzgalis, 2002). Locke pointed that political authority is not the same as authority that a husband has over his family, or a master holds over his or her servant. Political authority is the ability for a state to make laws that the society must respect. The use of power to promote public goods is the most important feature of political authority. It is bad for a government to have absolute power over the citizens because it is the foundation of dictatorship. Leaders must provide good reasons to justify their authority as explained in the state of nature (Delue & Dale, 2009).

The State of Nature: Justification of Political Authority

In the state of nature, Locke (1632) pointed out that people are rational individuals with rational thinking to determine the constraints that govern each person's conduct. The state of nature for Locke is a state of perfect freedom where people treat each other as equals and power and jurisdiction are reciprocal. Unlike Hobbes (1651/1994) view of the state of nature (State of Wars) that alluded to the fact that people dominate and control the lives of others, Locke argued that the state of nature is a place

where everyone knows no one is permitted to destroy herself or himself or others. People

treat each other in a civil way in line with the norms in society. People have the natural

rights provided by virtue of being human beings and no person should take that away

from them. God created everybody equally and blessed them with ability to reason,

understand, and to have freedom. The only government that citizen will consent to is one

with laws that are made by the legislative branch that protects the rights and freedom of

the people or one that protects the liberty of the people (Delue & Dale, 2009).

The State of Nature II: Constraints for Freedom

Regarding the constraint of freedom, Locke (1632) showed that individuals must

accept various constraints to get basic rights that secure the freedom of each person.

Citizens must have certain moral constraints known as civic virtues. The constraints on

freedom arise from property ownership. Two justifications for owning a property were

suggested by Locke. The first is fairness which explained the right of people to produce

what they want through their own labor. The second justification is freedom. Locke

suggested that people who do not work and benefit from the hard work of others are

violating the freedom of others. Locke's theory may lead to conflict in society, but not as

severe as the conflict suggested by Hobbes (Delue & Dale, 2009).

Locke's Limited Government

To protect people's liberty, Locke (1632) advocated for a separation of powers to

limit the authority of the government. Power should be shared between the three branches

of government: the executive, legislative, and the judicial. The federative powers are

ensconced in the executive branch to enforce the law in domestic matters and the power

to make foreign policy. The legislative branch makes laws and cannot act in arbitrary fashion over the lives of the citizens. People have the right to remove or alter legislative members through elections if they misuse their powers. The executive branch was to check the legislative and vice versa. The judicial branch was created to check the executive. These checks and balances can avoid the abuse of power by one branch of government. The foundation of American Political System is drawn from Locke's political acumen (Delue & Dale, 2009).

Rousseau's Notion of Freedom and Authority

Rousseau (1762/1983) argued that freedom and authority can be reconciled through obedience to the general will as expressed in the social contact. Although all people are born equally, they are in chains. However, they can be released from the chain by obeying to the general will. The general will in this case is government (Stanford Encyclopedia, 2012). He or she has regards for choice, the ability for people to act against instinct and inclination which he or she considered as the features that distinguishes human being from animal species. In the social contract, Rousseau attempted to connect freedom of choice and morality as the central argument against despotic government. Rousseau articulated that renunciation of freedom is against human nature and that to renounce freedom in favor of someone's authority is to deprive a person's actions of all morality. Rousseau claimed that the formation of a legitimate state does not involve a loss of freedom (Stanford Encyclopedia, 2012).

Rousseau (1762/1983) distinguished three types of freedom such as natural freedom, moral, and civil freedom. Natural involved an unlimited right to all things,

reminiscent of Hobbes's (1651/1994) *right of nature* in Leviathan. This liberty has

constraints because the world is occupied by interdependent humans and for any

individual to get what he or she wants depends on their physical power. Because of

scarce resources conflict is inevitable in the society and only a state that has laws in place

would guarantee equal freedom under the law (Stanford Encyclopedia, 2012). According

to Rousseau, moral freedom relates to the consciousness of individuals in the social

contract. It is the application of reason to the conduct of human affairs. Civil freedom is

reinforced by the notion that people agreed to bind themselves into a community by

sacrificing their physical freedom to do whatever they want to do to gain the civil

freedom of being able to think rationally and act morally. The problem of freedom is the

motivational force behind the social contract (Sanford Encyclopedia, 2012).

Mohammed and James (2017) viewed freedom as the ability to speak freely,

participate freely in all forms of activities within the society, the right of freedom of

thoughts, consciences, life, and human dignity. Freedom and authority, as explained by

Benet (2006), was the most complex paired element in developing the polarities of

democracy theory due to significant influence of capitalism and power on workplace

democracy. Freedom was described by Benet as the ability to conduct daily activities

without restriction from the government or forces that represent the government. Benet

suggest that the promotion of justice, security, self-fulfillment, and human dignity are the

upsides of freedom and should be extended to the workplace and in school. Benet

asserted that scholars such as Blake and Mouton, McClelland, McGregor, Ellerman,

Mehlman, and Swickard agreed that the extension of freedom to the workplace can

enhance productivity. Benet articulated that the loss of sense of belonging and security by the individual was what Fromm viewed as the downsides of freedom. What matters is how to overcome fear to develop individual self-worth to accept the upsides of freedom. It should be noted that the structures of capitalism were acting as a counterforce against individual's ability to develop their sense of self-worth.

Authority, as a paired polarity element, is imperative for workplace democracy because if used in good faith it can empower individual in the workplace rather than oppress them (Benet, 2006). The important upsides of authority are that workers health and wealth being can improve, productivity would improve, freedom would increase value of work, and would contribute to the transformation of those holding power, and a sustainable society that benefits everyone. The downsides of authority can be assessed on the reality of workplace (Benet, 2006). Benet explained that the ill use of authority in the workplace affects the worker's ability to make decisions, critique, inquire, solve conflicts, and advocate for change. This situation will harm the organization in terms of productivity. Benet states that semantic problems such as what constitutes worker autonomy, human empowerment, and organizational hierarchy have undermined the achievement of workplace democracy or have acted as a barrier to attain the upsides of authority. Benet further elucidated that the use of authority designed on contemporary capitalist structures, have been a barrier to attain upsides of authority when shareholders have absolute authority. In this version of capitalism, workers perform the tedious aspect of the job for the organization and earn little, while the profits of the organization are shared by upper management and the shareholders (Benet, 2006).

In context of this study, freedom and authority are examined through the lens of press organization and the Nigerian government (Authority). Freedom of the press is important for any vibrant democratic society; but, in Nigeria the press is under attack from the authorities (Akinwale, 2010; Ali, 2015). Freedom of speech and of the press is the cornerstone of democracy. The first amendment of the constitution of the United States of America clearly stipulates freedom of the press. Comparably, freedom of the press is enshrined in Section 24(1) of the Nigerian constitution of 1960. It stipulated that every Nigerian is entitled to freedom of expression without hindrance from the authority (Akinwale, 2010). But this notion has shifted because press organizations in Nigeria are censored. Nigerian authorities control all basic aspect of the press whose responsibility is to promote democracy through accountability. The absence of a free press hinders the sustainability of democracy in the country as several journalists have been arrested and put in prison or jail for speaking against the government (Akinwale, 2010).

Ali (2015) reiterated that the restriction of press in Nigeria has repercussions in terms of the media assessing the socioeconomic development of the country. As most of the population are marginalized so too the threat to democracy from disgruntled minority groups such as Boko Haram is increased. The press is a vital tool for the smooth functioning of public policy and administration and when the press is suppressed, the implementation and administering of policies are bound to fail. The contribution of the media in the conflict in Northeastern Nigeria cannot be ignored. Freedom of the press influences the understanding of the fighting in the sense that they provide information about the current conflict propelled by Boko Haram.

Justice and Due Process

Justice is the idea that each member of the society is given his or her due process to live honestly, with no harm to one another (Osimiri, 2015). Delue and Dale (2009) described justice and due process as the principle upon which a democratic or liberal civil society rests. An information hearing of the United States Senate Committee on Judiciary in 2017 spelled out the meaning of due process of the law to mean the bedrock upon which the United States legal system belongs. The rule of law, legitimacy, and sustainability are derived from due process, which protects the rights of individuals against injustice and totalitarianism. Benet (2006) explored justice and due process by looking at the upsides and downsides. Benet pointed to the fact that justice and due process are polarities of function in the sense that they correspond with Johnson's (1992) doing and being generic polarity. Justice serves as the being pole and due process serves as the doing pole. In assessing the relationship between justice and due process, Benet utilized questions raised by Johnson to assume that justice and due process benefits individuals and organizations. The implication of the upsides of justice and due process was examined through the meeting of evolutionary needs, overcoming oppression and constraining power, meeting both individual and societal goods, and workplace impact. Regarding meeting evolutionary needs, the upside of due process is seen as the developmental evolution needs of human beings. This is to say justice and due process emerged because of the conditions of human evolution.

Behavior is considered the upside function of due process in society in the sense that power is used to punish unjust and deviant behavior within the community. Due

process as an upside of the polarities is to protect the civil liberty of an accused person as stipulated in the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eight amendments of the United States Constitution. These rights included free speech, right to petition, free press, free religion practices, the rights to bear arms, the right to jury trial, and the protection of unreasonable searches and seizures. Finally, workplace impact relates to misappropriation of authority in the workplace, and the imbalance of power between the shareholders and workers. The downsides of justice and due process are the violation of the rights of people in society especially when justice is implemented without due process (Benet, 2006).

Benet's (2006) notion of justice and due process was relevant to the current study because it is the hub for the discussion on the philosophy of injustice in Northeastern Nigeria. According to Delue and Dale (2009), justice and due process are the principles that guide the liberal civil society. The concept of justice and due process is of importance because it serves as the measuring rod to determine how basic goods, rights, and opportunities are distributed among the federal states in Nigeria. Justice is the principle upon which the federal government of Nigeria could establish industries, potable water, good roads, good education, and healthcare systems. Justice and due process forms the basis upon which oil revenue accrued from the sale of oil should be equitably distributed. A civil society is composed of individuals, each of whom has his or her interest to pursue, and that often involves conflict on how the goods should be distributed. Every civil society that guarantees equal access to basic rights is faced with differences in wealth, social and political influences. To reconcile equal rights with

differences in wealth, social, and social power becomes an important issue in a civil

society such as those in Northeast Nigeria (Okonmah et al., 2009).

Aliyu and Bambale (2014) reiterated that justice and due process in Nigeria is

nonexistent as the government is cracking down on political opponents while the elites

are getting away with corruption. The failure of the government to tackle corruption and

create jobs in the Northeast region of Nigeria has contributed to the emergence of the

conflict in the Northeast, which has the highest poverty rate in the country.

Diversity and Equality

Diversity implies inclusiveness, nondiscrimination, respect for all individuals in

the workplace irrespective of race and gender to enhance teamwork, participation, and

cohesiveness. Equality means equal pay between gender performing the same duty in the

workplace, fair treatment, and equal access to opportunities (Sharma, 2016). Diversity

also means recognizing, understanding, and accepting individual differences irrespective

of age, race, ethnicity, gender, and class. Many organizations have adopted the practice of

diversity in the workplace. Globalization has made it possible for interactions of people

of different backgrounds. This situation has made the management of diversity in the

workplace challenging. To solve the problem of diversity, managers are encouraged to

learn managerial skills that are essential in a multicultural workplace (Dike, 2013).

Benet (2006) argued that diversity and equality relationship emanates from human

evolution as evidence suggested from earliest civilization. It shows that the diversity-

equality polarity was managed by early humans effectively. For example, the Neolithic

era humans showed signs of managing the diversity-equality polarity. But the society was

later replaced by a society that was characterized by hierarchy and brought about oppression and dominance, the rights of men against the rights of women with little or no consideration for diversity and equality. Totalitarianism eventually emerged within those society resulting to subjugation of women. They were viewed as properties of the men and were also not allowed to vote or even to work in the office. These conditions explained the reason of the failure to manage diversity-equality in society effectively (Benet, 2006).

Benet (2006) pointed out that the first nations of North America, before the arrival of Europeans, revealed effective management of diversity and equality in the sense that women had their role in the selection and removal of chiefs and the distribution of wealth within the Iroquois and the Cherokees communities. The concept of separation of powers, the upside of diversity was realized within these societies. The upsides of diversity include hard work, creativity, commitment to excellence, competitiveness, and protection of individual's personal beliefs and rights that is beneficial to the society. The downsides incorporate stratification of society that permits dominance and oppression in the workplace and society (Benet, 2006). It also involves occupational stress in workplace, stifling creativity, motivation, hard work, and the loss of respect for individual rights. The failure to effectively manage the polarity of diversity and equality in the workplace has encouraged discrimination based on race and gender. The Corporate Personhood concept that views corporations as persons has led to the downsides of diversity and a loss of equality upsides which makes democracy in the workplace unsustainable. Finally, the

role of the World Trade Organization in the destruction of equality in the workplace cannot be ignored (Benet, 2006).

Diversity and equality in the context of Nigeria are engulfed with gender stereotyping in the workplace. The Northeast region which is under investigation is not exceptional. Discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, and religion is common in the workplace especially in the multinational oil corporations such as Exxon, Chevron, Texaco, Shell, and Mobile. The inequality gap in the workplace and in society have expanded so much so that agitated groups such as Boko Haram with roots in the Northeast have engaged in insurgency against the government of Nigeria. The failure of Nigerian women to earn equal income as men has limited their ability to improve financially and productivity wise. The north-south segregation has worsened the situation. The south (mostly Christians) is heavily industrialized while the north (predominantly Muslims) has few industries, as noted by Adeleye, Nwachukwu, and Fawehinmi (2012).

This explains the disparity of income between the north and the south and explains the reason poverty and unemployment is higher in the north than in the south (Tinuke, 2016). Nigeria is rich in natural resources such as oil; but the unequal distribution of oil profits has increased the poverty rate in the country, especially in the Northeast. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Africa reported in 2013 that about 70% of Nigerians live in poverty with women as the majority (Tinuke, 2016).

Dike (2013) alluded to the fact that workplace diversity varies depending on the rules of the company, organizational culture, and the location of the company.

Organizational culture are the values that a company practiced based on the norms and beliefs that reflect the company. The location of the company determines the kind of diversified workforce it employed. Most companies are introducing workplace diversity because it leads to increased productivity. Diversity management has become a major strategy in correcting discrimination in the workplace and in the society. In managing diversity and equality, managers must take into consideration the differences and similarities of the workers. In the Northeast and Nigeria as a whole, the institutional arrangements to manage workplace diversity are not in existence (Adeleye et al., 2012). They suggested three strategies for managing diversity.

Three Strategies to Manage Diversity and Equality

Three strategies to manage diversity and equality were put forward by Adeleye, Nwachukwu, and Fawehinmi (2012). They include *assimilation* which focuses on fairness and nondiscrimination. It emphasizes the moral and legal aspect of diversity. Skeptics, however, argue that assimilation does not prima-facie lead to integration of diverse groups of workers and innovation within the organization. The second strategy is *differentiation* that emphasized on gaining access and legitimacy. This strategy is conducted by companies to gain market expansion. Finally, *integration* as the third strategy seeks to promote organizational resources to function effectively. Assimilation was the dominant approach used in managing diversity in Nigeria given the existing conflict among the ethnic groups.

Nigeria has a population of about 160 million with over 250 mother tongues and several religions. Christianity and Islam are the two-dominant faiths in the country.

Seeking to ensure gender and political diversity and equality, the federal government of Nigeria incorporated the antidiscrimination clause in the constitution of 1999. The law stipulated that discrimination in the workplace and society based on ethnicity, sex, political affiliation, origin, and disabilities is prohibited. But tribalism, nepotism, and discrimination have spread, and the social exclusion gap has also expanded. The legal system in Nigeria is weak and corrupt.

Adeleye et al. (2012) pointed that although diversity and equality gap persist in Nigerian society, companies like Chevron perceived diversity and equality as a way of blending experience, talents, decision making styles, and culture. The company realizes that it is important to diversify to improve on the marketplace and gain competitive advantage. Chevron's dedication to diversify is stated on the company's policy that stresses for equal opportunities to qualify employees irrespective of age, sex, religion, or disability. The commitments to diversity and the promotion of equality embodies the laws of the company. Akobo (2017) concurred that diversity management does not only concentrate on discrimination in the workplace but also focused on developing the work force potentials.

Human Rights and Communal Obligations

The belief that human rights and communal obligation should be apply to workplace democracy was drawn from the altruistic and selfish behavior of human beings (Benet, 2006). While other scholars saw human rights and communal obligation as public goods necessary for economic democracy, Benet saw human rights and communal obligation through the lens of the development of workers and the commitment of

common goods. Rights and obligation regarding workplace democracy can be achieved if the developmental needs of individual are met. Benet identified these rights and obligation as freedom of assembly and freedom of speech incorporated in the United States of America Bill of Rights. Benet argued that the Bill of Rights is impacted in the workplace by the powerful who controlled the workplace and therefore must be protected. The rights in the workplace were categorized into two rights, the *rights of self-actualization* which is a powerful tool for workplace democracy because it may create negative consequences in the workplace if workers are denied the ability to achieve their self-actualization. If workers are given the opportunity to achieve self-actualization, it may create a positive effect on workers, the organizations, and the community as whole. The of self-actualization is realized through occupational, safety and health, rights to work itself, rights of self-respects, human dignity, and the rights of enough income. In 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human was made, and it protects all individuals under just and favorable work condition (Benet, 2006).

The second category is the rights of self-governance in the workplace relates to the idea of self-determination. It implies the rights of workers to discuss, learn civic skills, engage in collective decision making, and compromise. Workplace should be a place where self-governance and democratic deliberation such as participatory decision making, debate, and voting should occur (Benet, 2006). The rights of self-governance in the workplace explained self-determination of the workers while communal or organizational obligations was attributed to the organization's obligation to workers, worker's obligation to the organization, worker's obligation to community, community's

obligation to workers, and the obligation of the organization and those of the community. These obligations are assumed to exist in the human rights polarity relationship and sub polarities of other elements of the polarity management model of workplace democracy (Benet, 2006).

Regarding the human rights and communal obligation in context of the research study, Nigeria's human rights abused is unchecked although a viable tool for democracy. In 1999, President Obasanjo created the Human Rights Violation Investigation Commission to restore confidence on the people of Nigeria (Akinwale, 2013). However, successive governments of Nigeria have failed to implement the objectives of the human rights commission that was created by President Obasanjo. The situation has led to increase demand of social justice from various ethnic groups and militant groups such as Boko Haram in Northeast. The clamors for democracy and human rights have attained an unprecedented level in the country and the failure of the government to meet the expectation revealed the human rights and communal obligation is under threat (Akinwale, 2013).

Isokpan and Durojaye (2016) suggested that the failure to implement human rights principles and communal obligation in Nigerian have had impact on children education in the Northeast of the country as Boko Haram is depriving children from attending school. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 declared that education was a basic right for all individuals. Education enhanced individual ability to acquire knowledge, skills, and values that are essential in the development of the society. The International Humanitarian Law under the Geneva Convention of 1949 protects

children education that is under hostilities. It also calls for access to children education

during conflict. In the Northeast where the threat of Boko Haram is visible, children

cannot go to school for fear of reprisal or kidnapping from Boko Haram. For example, in

April 2014, about 276 schoolgirls were abducted form government secondary school

Chibok in Borno State. The violence has affected student's performance because of the

locked down of schools due to insecurity. The constant attacks by Boko Haram have

hindered the Nigerian government's ability to improve on communal obligation

(Isopkpan & Durojaye, 2016).

Participation and Representation

Participation and representation are two fundamental elements of polarities of

democracy theory (Benet, 2006). Democracy depends on the citizens and is expressed

through meaningful participation and representation of all citizens. This implies that all

citizens irrespective of ability, age, sex, religion, and culture must be able to fully

participate and represents in all forms of democratic institutions and the process

(Cordenillo & Gardes, 2014). However, participation and representation do not relate

only to voting, but embody freedom of speech and mobilization to influence policy.

Participation and representation ensure that democratic institution and democracy reflects

the will of the people. Nonetheless, promoting these values is challenging contemporary

because the citizens have lost the thrust of the government. Citizens see the process as

being dominated by the elites. Minority groups cannot part-take in the process to enable

them vote for their own interest (Cordenillo et al., 2014). It should be noted that the idea

of representative government was greatly influenced by Locke who believed that

democracy is to permit citizens to judge their government. Representative government is a system of government where the citizens of a country elect someone to represent them in government. A good example is Great Britain and the United States of America. In America, the president is elected through the process of the electoral college. Members of congress are elected through proportionate representation as enshrined in Article 1, Section 2, Clause 3 of the United States constitution (Christiano, 2006).

However, Benet (2006) related participation to human rights as an element of polarities of democracy theory. This implies worker participation is considered a human rights issue in terms of decision making, education, and human development. Participatory theorists see participation as a means through which humans control their own destiny in the workplace. Workers are entitled to join trade unions for the purpose of protecting their own interest. Representation as a polarity function enabled individual to participate in a democratic process not just on political election bust also in workplace. Representation in the workplace provides the arena for interaction amongst workers to make decisions. This contributed to the development of self-esteem of workers. The voice of the workers in the workplace is heard. Underpinning this notion, representation may lead to the emergence of marginalized groups and the enforcement of elite's belief in the workplace.

Conversely, the concept of participation and representation in Nigeria have been marred with violence due to irregularities. Political participation whether in the workplace or through electoral process is the ability for citizens to get involved in the electoral process either directly or indirectly to bring change within the community by

influencing the policy. Political participation in Nigeria is controlled by money, religion, and ethnicity. This situation has created the north-south division in participation. The North is predominantly Muslims, whereas the south is dominated by Christianity. Muslims and Christians have clashed from time to time due to the participation and representation process. The actions of Boko Haram in the Northeast are partly attributed to the process of participation and representation process. Representative democracy implies that the citizens demonstrate civic virtue, self-control, intelligence, and conscience. In addition to that, the interest of the community must be understood as they have the responsibility to serve the community by voting. But intimidation, apathy, intolerance, ethnic politics, and money have hindered representative democracy in Nigeria (Falade, 2014), (Ibedo, 2015), and (Odo, 2015).

Defining the Poverty-Conflict Nexus

Conflict can be defined as the "perceived divergence of interest, a belief that the party's current aspirations are incompatible. Conflict is the belief that if one party gets what it wants, the other will not be able to do so" (Pruitt & Kim, 2004, pp. 7-8). Conflict is categorized into communal, which is the conflict between groups not involving the government, civil war that involved the state and ethnic groups, and separatist conflict which is a conflict between a region seeking to secede from the state. The impact of conflict could drive a worse-off household in terms of poverty into extreme poverty. This is because conflict is accompanied with the destruction of assets, food shortages, and illness. Poverty is thought to lead to conflict because persistent poverty is the precursor for social discontent. The relationship between conflict and the progress of a country's

economy is inversed. The better the economy of a country, the lower the probability of conflict to occur. The World Bank reports (as cited in Oluwatayo, 2014) indicated that 40% of the people of Sub-Saharan Africa lives in absolute poverty of less than US $1 per day. Nigeria is not exempted from the study (Oluwatayo, 2014).

According to Nigeria National Bureau of Statistics, the population of Nigeria collected in 2012 was 166.2 million people. The United Nations estimated the population in 2016 to be 178.5 million inhabitants (Ngbea & Achunike, 2014). Poverty in Nigeria remains a significant issue. In the past, Nigeria has a buoyant economy and was considered the second largest economy after South Africa. The population of Nigeria is growing faster in urban areas. The population has increased by 5.8% in the last 3 decades. Urban population has increased to 48.2%. It is expected that by 2025, 60% of Nigerian will be living in urban cities. This situation would exacerbate housing problems and poverty (Ngbea et al., 2014), and (Oluwataya, 2014). These conditions are not different from those of Northeast Nigeria where there is acute poverty, high level of illiteracy rate, and child destitution (Ngbea et al., 2014).

Poverty as a Concept

Poverty as a concept is difficult to define because of the existence of several definitions. It has been defined in monetary terms by using the level of consumption or income to measure the headcounts of those whose income falls below the poverty line (Aiyedogbon, 2012). Although poverty is a major social problem in Nigeria, the situation in Northeast in pathetic. The United Nations defined poverty as the denial of opportunities and choices, the lacked in basic capacity to participate in society

effectively, violation of human dignity, not having enough food and clothing, not having a clinic or school to attend, not having land to grow food to earn a living, and not having access to credit. It implies powerless, insecure, and exclusion from social amenities. It means susceptible to conflict and living in marginal with no access to sanitation or clean water (Ngbea et al., 2014).

Poverty is relative and absolute (Ngbea et al., 2014). Relative poverty is when people lacked acceptable level of income or resources compared with others in society. Absolute poverty is the lacked in basic human needs such as healthcare, food, education, shelter, clean water, and clothing. Immensity of poverty in Nigeria was determined using developmental indicators such as income per household and mortality rate. Household income was measured by combining the incomes of all individuals living in the household. Meanwhile, mortality rate was measured by the number of deaths in a household or population (Ngbea et al., 2014). The poverty-conflict nexus bestowed the back-ground information for the absorption or mastery of the issue plaguing Northeast Nigeria. The comprehension of the issues enhanced a clear picture of the topic under research and would define the part of the study. The focus of the literature review was to dispense a thorough or extensive information that would address the main research question including sub questions, spot the gaps in current literature, and expand the knowledge of the study based on the poverty-conflict nexus and the activities of Boko Haram in Northeastern Nigeria, and to avoid repetition of knowledge.

The Poverty-Conflict Nexus/Activities of Boko Haram

Several studies have been conducted on the poverty-conflict nexus and the activities of Boko haram in Northeast Nigeria. Relevant to this study is a phenomenological qualitative research study conducted on socioeconomic incentives, new media, and the Boko Haram campaign of violence in Northern Nigeria, by Musa (2012). Musa explained the current violent attacks by Boko Haram in the name of religion was drawn from Muhammadu Marwan Maitasine. The attacks on Kano, Bauchi, Kaduna, and Borno have contributed to the loss of about 5000 lives. The media has played a leading role in the conflict regarding how Boko Haram have used the visual such as YouTube, Internet, and cell phones to promote their propaganda and spread their message. In achieving the findings of the study, Musa used a semi-structural approach in collecting data. Two themes such as the causes of Boko Haram violence and new media effectiveness in the campaign of Boko Haram terror was formed. Participants was selected from Abuja, Kano, New Castle, and Liverpool in England. They include Islamic clerics, university lecturers, human rights activists, and those who live and those who experienced the violence. Questions for the participants was related to the causes of the conflict, the role of the media, and their experiences of the conflict. The frustration-aggression theory was used to explain the Boko Haram behavior. According to the theory, violent emerged when people cannot achieve certain goal in life. They become frustrated, angry, and subsequently violence. However, the selection of the participants does not seem to be inclusive because the author failed to provide the demographic nature of the participants. The age range, education, of some of the participants is unknown. He

failed to mention whether vulnerable participants were excluded from the selection. However, economic conditions above all have affected the citizens in the Northeast more than any other part of Nigeria and have a substantial role to play in the emergence of Boko Haram atrocities. For example, in Northeast Nigeria more than 72% of the population lives below poverty line. In other words, Musa revealed that the conflict in the north is caused by poverty, frustration, and anger. The frustration-anger connection is insignificant. Nevertheless, the study is relevance to the body of research by recommending solutions to curb the conflict. Musa suggested that a collaborative problem-solving approach should be utilized by the government rather than adversarial approach to bring peace and social change in the Northeast. The approach calls for dialogue and reconciliation. Justice must be guaranteed for peace to flourish. The economic condition in the Northeast must be improved because poverty is likely to push people to join Boko Haram. Security must be guaranteed by improving the budget to facilitate intelligence gatherings (Musa, 2012).

Conversely, Ayegba (2015) performed a research on unemployment and poverty as the sources and consequences of insecurity in Nigeria. Ayegba utilized an evaluative approach to explain the prevailing insecurity in the Northeast of the country. High unemployment has contributed to acute poverty in these regions. The author adopted three theories to describe the existing nexus. One of those theories is the Marxist theory which explain that conflict is the result of the suppression of the Bourgeoisie by the proletariat. The relevance of this theory explained the current conflict in Northern Nigeria where the gap between the rich and the poor is expanding.

The second theory known as relative deprivation coined by Gurr explained that people become discontent and engaged in violence when they are deprived of their basic needs such as food, shelter, and security. Finally, the frustration-aggression theory by Dillards spelled out the discontent from relative deprivation pushed people to engage in violence out of frustration and anger. Other studies have surmised that the relationship between these theories and conflict is insufficient. Similar theories such as human needs, structural violence and greed and grievance have led to insignificant link to conflict.

In exploring the connection between poverty and the roots of terrorism in Nigeria using a phenomenological approach, Ibaba (2013) argued that poverty, inequality in the distribution of oil wealth, ethnicity, unemployment, religion, and corruption in Nigeria fueled the insurgency of militant in the Niger Delta Region. Ibaba used the frustration-aggression theory and horizontal inequality theories to explain the violence in Northeast Nigeria. The study was purely evaluative. The following themes were developed: Poverty and conflict nexus, paradox of poverty, what is terrorism, contending issues, interrogating the poverty connection, and the conceptual issues and the Nigerian realities. The question that remains to be answered is that horizontal inequality is difficult to measure. Nonetheless, the research examined the role poverty played in the current conflict between the Nigerian government and Boko Haram. Ibaba pointed that the militants arrested by the Nigerian government and charged with terrorism against the state came from neighborhoods with poor socioeconomic status. Aiyedogbon (2012) conducted a quantitative study on poverty and youth employment in Nigeria. In the study, he explained the youth employment in the country was a major problem because they are

target for recruitment by Boko Haram. Aiyedogbon used descriptive quantitative method

to elaborate the unemployment-poverty nexus in rural western Nigeria in 2012. The

Probit Model was utilized to select 500 smallholders' farmer to generate elements that

can influences the probability of a household in acute poverty. Poverty was assumed to

be caused by unemployment due to the absent of industries in the area.

Adetore performed a phenomenological study on the emergence of Boko Haram

in 2012. Data collected were both primary and secondary. The theoretical framework

used in the study was the Islamic fundamentalist theory which strived for the

implantation of sharia law in Nigeria, the poverty, corruption, and the political alienation

theories to explain the relevance of the theories to the conflict in Northeast Nigeria. The

corruption theory explained that conflict is caused by corruption. The political alienation

theory is used to show that the conflict in the North is caused because the northerners felt

alienated politically. But these arguments are weak because corruption have never been

proven to be causally related to conflict. Northerners have ruled Nigeria since the country

achieved independent from Britain in the 1960. Unemployment has exacerbated the

poverty condition as more than 60% of Nigerians lives under poverty level. A majority of

those employed earned a salary of $1 per day's job. Unemployment, poverty, and social

exclusion are behind the rise of Boko Haram and the current conflict in the Northeast of

the country. Unemployment is defined as the proportion of workforce available for work

but failed to find the job. Poverty was defined as the measure of educational attainment,

life expectancy, and standard of living in terms of income and purchasing power. The

unemployment-poverty condition in Nigeria has posed a threat to Nigeria's national security.

Similarly, Mohammed and Mohammed (2015) performed a phenomenological study about the cycle of bad governance and corruption and the rise of Boko Haram in Nigeria. They utilized a semistructured interview consisting of 50 stakeholders that included governors, ministers, ex-presidents, journalists, religious leaders, and lawyers. Face-to-face in interview in Abuja, Kano, Port Harcourt, Kaduna, Yobe, Maiduguri, and Gombe from December 2011 and March 2012. Audiotape was used to record the interview with each interview lasting 45 minutes. Secondary data were drawn from journals and articles. The interview to have bias flaws because the author interviewed some of the participants who are responsible for the current situation of the country. Their answers to the research questions would never be objective. However, they concluded that bad governance is responsible for the conflict in Northeast Nigeria. The lacked in development coupled with elevated economic and social disparities between the poor and the rich have aggravated the conflict situation. Poverty because of bad governance served as a breeding ground for Boko Haram rebellion against the Nigerian government. Government was described as an institution with authority to exercise for the good of all. Nigeria is rich in oil resources but mismanagement, corruption, and embezzlement, have left many Nigerians disgruntled with the way the country is run by previous and current presidents. It should be noted that about 73% of the population in the north lives in acute poverty.

Akanji (2015) carried out a phenomenological study on the security crisis in Nigeria, Boko Haram insurgency, and the prospect of peace. Akanji used descriptive method to analyze the data of his study. Human Rights Watch (2014, 2015) was consulted to determine that 5000 people lost their lives between 2009 and 2014. In 2015, it was estimated that about a million people were displaced from their homes and 300 girls abducted. The challenge was that majority of the organization members are Muslims from the north which makes peace difficult to achieve. Arms proliferation from Boko Haram was also difficult to stop. However, the author failed to provide measures on how the arms proliferation can be curbed. He attributed the existing conflict to poverty, underdevelopment, corruption, unemployment, and the unequal distribution of the oil profits are behind the attacks conducted by Boko Haram. Likewise, in the research of the ongoing campaign of terror in Nigeria, Boko Haram versus the state, Agbiboa (2013) explained that Boko Haram is a menace to Nigeria's national security. Primary data collected was used in reaching the conclusion. The groups rejected western values such as science and education and sought the implementation of the sharia law. Also, poverty and inequality are behind the organization violent behavior. Kostov (2017) performed an ethnographic study on how ethnic structures affects civil conflict; a model of endogenous grievance and noted that ethnic structure is a pivot for conflict or civil war. The researcher used agent-based theory of endogenous grievance built on constructivist conceptualization of ethnicity to determine whether ethnic structure affects civil conflict occurrence in the Rwanda civil war. The greed and grievance model developed by Collier and Hoeffler (2002) was used as a second theory to explain the causes of the Rwanda

conflict. The Rwanda genocide was studied to determine whether the civil war or conflict between the Hutus and Tutsis were the result of ethnic structures. The war consumed about 500.000 to 1,000,000 people within the first 100 days of the war in 1994. Most Rwandans have a common culture such as religion, language, and traditions but evidence suggested that persistent inequality between the Hutus and Tutsis contributed to the outbreak of the war. Nevertheless, in an evaluative study on war and terrorism and the challenges for regional integration and cooperation organizations in Eastern and Western Africa performed by Fulgence in 2015, the author claimed that poverty in these countries is a breeding ground for militancy. Regional cooperation between the countries in reducing poverty, boost productivity, improved education, health, and housing may help defeat terrorists' group such as Boko Haram in Nigeria and Al Shabaab in Somalia.

Nwanko (2015) evaluated the nature of corporate social responsibility relating to oil conflict in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria that is underdeveloped despite the region rich in oil resources. Nwanko utilized quantitative approach in analyzing the data. Primary and secondary data were collected. Resource curse and stakeholder theories were used to explain the connection between corporate social responsibility and conflict. Nwanko concluded that the activities of oil companies such as Chevron, Texaco, Shell, and Exxon, including bad roads, hospital, jobs, and high rate of poverty are the causes of the conflict in Niger Delta Region. Similar studies conducted by Awojobi in 2014 on the socioeconomic implication of Boko Haram Insurgency in Northeast Nigeria revealed that poverty, unemployment, poor social amenities contributed the emergence of Boko Haram atrocities.

In an evaluative study, Walsh (2016) applied the human needs theory in his study to enhance the understanding of consociationalism as a conflict resolution mechanism argued that human needs such as water, food, shelter, security, self-esteem, identity, distributive justice, freedom, and participation, triggered conflict in society. Applying the human needs theory when employing consociationalism can be effective as a conflict resolution mechanism. Consociationalism can be used to develop institutional framework through which identities can no longer be a source of conflict and agitation in the society. Rustad (2016) conducted a survey study on socioeconomic inequalities and attitudes towards violence in the Niger Delta Region and suggested that although socioeconomic inequalities are assumed to increase the likelihood of conflict, the mechanism on how inequalities affect the attitude of individuals to push them to engage in conflict cannot be proven. However, the more a group is deprived, the more likely the support for violence increases. It is worthwhile noting that the study is not completed without examining the concepts under study. Hence, the next paragraph reviews the concepts.

Concepts

Poverty

Ogoebunem (2014) alluded to the fact that the poverty in the Niger Delta Region is the result of neglect and cruelty on the part of the Nigerian government. The Niger Delta Region is rich in oil resources, but the high rate of poverty has led to frustration and resentment amongst the indigenes. This condition triggered that uprising between the militant groups, the oil companies such as Shell, Chevron, Exxon, and the Nigerian government. The same condition applies to the ongoing conflict in Northeast Nigeria.

Akinola (2013) supported the view of Ogoebunem by arguing that abject poverty in Nigeria have contributed to the violence in Northeast of the country. Boko Haram have exploited the situation of poverty to gain support for its violence activities. For example, in May 2013, the Nigerian government released some of the youth militants who accepted that they collected 5000 Naira in Nigeria money from Boko Haram to provided them with fuel used burning down schools in the Northeast region. The relative poverty measured by Nigeria's Bureau of National of Statistics in 2013 revealed the poverty rate in the Southeast and Southwest is lower 6.7% and 5.9%, compared to the Northeast and Northwest region with higher poverty rate of 76.3% and 77.7% respectively. Rice (2007) argued that basic intuition suggests that pervasive poverty and grotesque disparities such as in Northeast Nigeria breed resentment, hostility, and insecurity.

Poverty fundamentally erodes state's capacity by fueling conflict, sapping human capital by hollowing out or impeding the development of effective state institutions, and markets. Weakness is a consequence of other capacity deficits such as lack of political legitimacy, lack of competence in economic governance, and in the adequate provision of essential services to the population, and a lack of security. Poverty in the Northeast is a structural multidimensional problem that goes beyond economics to include political, social, and cultural issues. Burton agreed that poverty because of lack of human needs may trigger violence. This situation may occur when people are denied not only their biological needs, but also psychological needs that relates to growth, and development. The importance of the theory is that it gauged the understanding that basic needs, such as food, health, water, and shelter unlike interest cannot be traded, bargained, or suppressed.

When any attempt is made to do so, it may lead to conflict. The level of poverty in Northeast Nigeria has gone beyond the level of absolute poverty. Majority of the community members in the region are unable to satisfy their basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, and education beyond primary school level. The tendency is for people to react negatively, and violently to show their grievances and discontent. Poverty is one of the indicators of Nigeria's decade of economic crisis which have had devastated effects on the communities of Northeast Nigeria (Ifedi, 2011).

Inequality

Inequality is defined as "the distribution of income between different percentile groupings of the total population; the distribution of productive assets such as land between different percentile groupings of the total population; and access to educational facilities and formal employment for different groups of the population, specifically gender groups" (Nel, 2003, p.615). Inequality is attributed to the conflict in Northeast Nigeria. For example, the literary rate in the Northeast is lower than that in the South. Girls have lower enrollment rate in the Northeast of the country that most parts in Nigeria. The inequality is also experienced in areas such as income, infrastructures (Akinola, 2013). The natural resources in Nigeria are unequally distributed which encouraged expansion of income gap between the rich and the poor (Ibaba, 2013). Women in Northeast Nigeria suffered great hardship because of inequality. In socioeconomic structures, women are subordinate to men. Women do not own or inherit land, but they bear the burden of raising and nurturing their families (household). They provided the basic needs of their families such as food, farming, and gathering of forest

products. However, the poor management of oil and gas resources in Nigeria coupled

with pressure arising from environmental changes has undermined the development, the

livelihood of women, and the income they generate to sustain their various families

(Odoemene, 2011).

Conflict

Mayer (2000) pointed out that conflict arises from basic human instincts, from the

competition for resources and power, from the structure of the societies and institutions

people create, and from the inevitable struggle between classes. According to Burton,

human needs are the center for all conflicts. People may engage in conflict if their needs

are not met. Other embedded forces such as imperfect communication, emotions, values,

and interest can generate and define conflict. Conflict can be defined as the "Perceived

divergence of interest, a belief that the parties' current aspirations are incompatible"

(Pruitt & Kim, 2004, p. 8). Conflict is considered part of a change; hence, it is inevitable

(Oluwatayo, 2014). Oluwatayo (2014) explained the impact of conflict is felt by the poor

people because they are unable to protect themselves. However, it is widely

acknowledged that conflict is partly cause by acute poverty that provoked discontent

among the citizens (Oluwatayo, 2014).

Governance

Nigeria is riddle with poor governance and corruption which constitutes a

structural problem for the country. Government officials, both state and local officials,

are corrupt. Money derives from the percentage share of oil revenue are swindle by local

politicians into their private account abroad. The poor governance is the result of weak

institutional structures that are in place to provide checks and balance. The rudimentary

political institutions were further destroyed and delegitimized by the successive military

regimes which reinforced identity politics and paternalistic political rule. The military

dictators such as Babangida, and Sani Abacha used oil revenue to co-opt the traditional

rulers to bolster their political legitimacy (Suberu, et al., 2010). Poor governance in

Nigeria has led to the emergence of Boko Haram. The abuse of the office, corruption, and

the disregard of justice is responsible for the ongoing crisis in the Northeast (Mohammed

& Mohammed, 2015). Mohammed and Mohammed suggested that governance is the

vehicle through which high quality goods, security, rule of law, human rights, economic

opportunity and human development, and participation are sustained for the citizens.

Providing the citizens with the basic goods for their satisfaction is the cardinal purpose of

any government. Failure to deliver these basic goods such as healthcare, education,

employment, by the government will lead to internal unrest. The absence of good

governance is a precursor for conflict as we have in Nigeria.

Unemployment

The high rate of unemployment in the Northeastern Nigeria have created poverty

and a venue for the emergence of Boko Haram. Unemployment has also exacerbated

Boko Haram activities in the North (Mohammed et al., 2015). Ayegba (2015) posited that

Nigeria is a country rich in oil and natural gas, iron, coal, zinc, and limestone. Despites

these wealth majority of Nigerians are living under poverty line with no jobs to care for

their families. The condition is worst in the Northeast where the unemployment rate is

higher than any other region in Nigeria. The repercussions for this high rate of

unemployment are armed robbery, murder, kidnapping for ransom, and the youths joining

Boko Haram. Youths in the Northeast have suddenly become agents of destabilization

because of idleness. In society where there is high unemployment rate, the tendency is for

people to engage in criminal behavior.

Marginalization

Marginalization is a situation where minority ethnic groups are excluded from all

sociopolitical activities (Ogoegbunem, 2014). The same marginalization consciousness

felt by the people of Northeast Nigeria triggered the uprising of Boko Haram who had

engaged in terror activities in the region. Marginalization in the context of the study

relates to the extreme form of inequality and inequity where certain minority groups in

the society are left behind in terms of the distribution of wealth. Marginalization in

Nigeria is in the form of political, economic, social, and psychological in the sense that

profits from oil sale is not equitable distributed. The communities in the Northeast region

of Nigeria lacks basic healthcare facilities, roads, hospitals, schools, and industries that is

pivotal for employment. These conditions have contributed to acute poverty, misery,

frustration, anger, and subsequently conflict. It should be noted that heterogeneous

community such as in Nigeria is a driving force for conflict. The marginalization of these

groups has led to agitations and violence that has taken the lives of innocent people

(Ogoegbunem, 2014).

Religion

Religion is a contributing factor in the ongoing crisis in the Northeast (Akinola,

2013). Akinola suggested that Christianity and Islam are the two dominant religions in

Nigeria and has been responsible for sectarian violence, radicalization, and tension in the

country. The religious conflict between Christian and Muslim in Nigeria can be traced as

far back to the period of independence, the 1960. However, Boko Haram have hijacked

the religion narratives for their own evil goal. The group have misrepresented the Islamic

faith by manipulating vulnerable youths in the Northeast. Their goal is to implement the

sharia law in Nigeria which resonates with many Muslim youths in the region. In

achieving their objectives, the group have engaged in widespread attacks against

civilians, police stations, churches, marketplaces, government buildings, and

kidnappings. For example, the group attacked a catholic church on Christmas day in 2011

in a small town called Madalla located in the outskirt of Abuja. This attack led to the

dead of 35 Christians (Akinola, 2013).

Adogame (2010) argued that Nigeria has complex and rich religious diversities.

Religion has been a source of violent conflict in the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The

religious landscape of the geopolitical entity is fluid, complex, and dynamic. Nigeria is

characterized by a multiplicity of religious traditions, inclusive of local ethnic based

religions, and various strands of Christianity such as Redeemed Christian Church of God.

Socioeconomics and political imperatives had catered the politicization of religion in

Nigeria. The scramble for political power has occurred within the framework of religion

in ways that manifest ethnic and regional antagonism and exacerbates misunderstandings

between Islam and Christianity. For example, the political crisis of the first Republic in

Nigeria (1960-1978) under Prime Minister Tafawa Balewa is explained by religious

factors. Ethno-religious grievances over the distribution of power and privileges remain

one of Nigeria's basic themes in the agenda of religious politics. The implementation of the Sharia laws in 1999 by some northern states triggered sentiments all over the country. The proposals led to demonstration and violent conflict in Kaduna between Muslims and Christians. Many people died during the violent conflict, and about 125,000 were displaced. Kaduna was restructured along religious lines. The conflict spread to other cities in Nigeria such as Jos, Port Harcourt, and Wari. The federal government had to send troops to the chaotic cities to quell the violence.

Corruption

Ogoegbunem (2014) argued that corruption and mismanagement cause conflict in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria. This situation is like that of the Northeastern region of Nigeria. The profits from oil and gas sale are mismanaged as the elites in Nigeria swindled the money into their private account. There is no accountability system in Nigeria which allows for unrestricted stealing and embezzlement of public funds unchecked. Corruption is the cause of Boko Haram Militancy in the Northeast because the rich continue to enrich themselves from oil money. Despites the wealth of Nigeria, many in the Northeast leaves in poverty. The implication of corruption in the Northeast is that the income inequality between the rich and the poor has widened. The corruption situation in Nigeria have led to resentment and grievances among the poor and have contributed to the emergence of Boko Haram in the North. Handley et al. (2009) noted that corruption in the abuse of public office for private gain. This is manifested in the form of kickbacks, bribery, escaping taxes, and embezzlement of government money.

The impact of corruption practices is that the development public services is slow. It is worthwhile noting that the study cannot be completed without examining the themes.

Boko Haram

Boko Haram started in 2002. According to Ibrahim, Kale, and Mohammad (2016), the group had existed since 1995. They first settled in a village known as Kanamma that was under Geidam local government of the state of Yobe. The group practiced of Darul Islam and was headed by the late Mohammed Ali. However, they were driven out by security forces in the region. The group then settled on the hills of Gwoza and were again driven out by government forces. Mohammed Yusuf subsequently assumed the helm of leadership in 2000 as the group settled in Indimi. Yusuf established his own Mosque in Maiduguri with members mostly from Boko Haram group. Members were composed of illiterate youths who are poor, unemployed, and dropped out from school. By 2002, the terror group have extended its influence on other states such as Bauchi, Yobe, and Borno (Ibrahim et al., 2016). In 2009, Mohammed Yusuf was killed by Nigerian forces and was replaced by Abubakar Shakau. The killings of Yusuf, the cry for justice, the destruction of their operational headquarters, triggered the uprising that began in the same year. Boko Haram regrouped and began engaging in sporadic attacks on government officials, government buildings, civilians, international organization's building, and individuals that they perceived to be helping government forces (Adetoro, 2012), (Dunn, 2018), (Ibrahim et al., 2016), and (Yusuf, 2015). The goal of Boko Haram is to create an Islamic Sates in Nigeria to replace the federal system of government in

Nigeria This could explain the group's violent behavior to achieve their objectives
(Ibaba, 2013).

In mapping the background of Boko Haram and the current crisis in the Northeast,
Agbiboa (2014) traced the militancy group roots as far back as the 19th century when
Sheik Usman Dan Fodio of Sokoto (1754-1817) carried out a holy war against the Hausa
elites. He then formed the Sokoto caliphate with strict sharia laws that spread to the entire
Northern Nigeria. In 1903, the British forces defeated the caliphate and imposed colonial
rule in the North. Islam became the legitimate faith of the Northerners. Mohammad
Marwan continued with Fodio's principles by implementing strict religious practices in
Northeast known as Maitatsine. The religious figure originated from Kano denounced the
elites as infidels and opposes anything that has to do with the Western countries.
Maitatsine rejected material wealth because it is associated with European values. This
analogy fits with the current beliefs of Boko Haram whose values are anti-Western and as
their name translates as Western education and culture is forbidden. The ideology
underscored the current behavior of the group and the intensification of the crisis. It also
intensified the movement of the implementation of the Sharia Laws in all the northern
states in Nigeria. Proponent of the laws argued that it is their legal rights to practiced
Sharia Law in their region. In October 1999, the Governor of Zamfara State, Sani
Ahmed, implemented the law to reimpose the values and morals of the state that has
become immoral. The law immediately went into effect in the year 2000 as alcohol and
prostitution was strictly prohibited. The law, however, divides Nigeria along religious

lines between the north and the south (Agbiboa, 2014), (Musa, 2012), and (Prichette, 2015).

Recruitment of Boko Haram members come from the youths who are unemployed or dropped out from school. They also select members from the almagiri's religious school and sometimes used forceful method such as kidnapping of young men to become part of the group. Former and current government officials from the Northeast are thought to be supporters of the group. For example, former Senator Mohammed Ali Ndume of Borno South and Alhaji Banu Wakil, a contractor was arrested for having ties with Boko Haram and sponsoring terrorism. The ex-governor of Kano State Ibrahim Shekaru and Isa Yuguda, the governor of Bauchi State was accused of financing the group. These government officials provided the group with money and information about the government intentions against the organization. Boko Haram tactic involved car bombings, abduction, and kidnappings, suicide bombings, disguising, and hijacking (Adetoro, 2012), (Alahira, 2015), and (Omede &Omede, 2015). Musa (2012) explained that the Internet has been a powerful tool used by Boko Haram in communicating. The group used cell phones with the help of the Internet to coordinate their activities and to spread their propaganda. The cell phones are also used as denotating device. Several factors such as poverty, unemployment, religion, marginalization, and injustice have been attributed to the emergence of Boko Haram. The paragraph below examines the poverty-conflict nexus/activities of Boko Haram in Northeast Nigeria.

Summary

The purpose of the study was to explore the poverty-conflict nexus, the activities of Boko Haram in Northeastern Nigerian. The articles reviewed served as a road map for conducting the investigation of the study. Most of the researchers conducted a phenomenological study on the conflict. Some of the writers focused their research study on Northern Nigeria rather than the specific region of the Northeast which broadened their scope of study. Most importantly is the fact that none of the researchers have utilized polarities of democracy theory in assessing the poverty-conflict nexus and the activities of Boko Haram in Northeast Nigeria. The gaps were filled in the current study by applying the polarities of democracy theory as the theoretical framework (Benet, 2006). Filling the gap using Benet's (2006) theoretical theory is relevant for the transformation of the society by encouraging community engagement for positive social change. The outcomes of the study might assist stakeholders such as the Chadian, Nigerian, Niger, and Cameroonian governments to devise strategies that will bring peace and social change. The results of my research might help in the understanding of the factors that are hindering enactment of a peace deal between the Nigerian government and the militant group.

However, the outcome of the study was achieved by interviewing those affected by Boko Haram atrocities to understand their perceptions and experiences about the conflict. Furthermore, a review of the literature revealed that most of authors focused more on the causes of the conflict rather than the experiences and perceptions of those affected by the conflict. Also, none of the scholars applied the polarities of Democracy in

their studies. I filled these gaps by focusing on the experiences and perceptions of the affected citizens using polarities of democracy theory. Chapter 3 describes the research design and rational, qualitative approach, research tradition, the role of the researcher, methodology, trustworthiness, and ethical procedures used to incorporate the perceptions of those impacted by the violence.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to explore the poverty-conflict nexus through the lens of experiences and perceptions of the citizens affected by Boko Haram violence in Northeast Nigeria. The research question was how do the people of Northeast Nigeria attacked by Boko Haram perceive the conflict, and how has the situation affected their lives? Based on the research question, the research design for the study was qualitative approach, a non-numerical method. The approach was chosen because it permits me to be part of the study which enhanced my understanding of the perceptions and experiences of the participants in Northeast Nigeria who were impacted by the conflict.

The research traditions were examined to provide an understanding of interpretive phenomenology and descriptive phenomenology. Denzin and Lincoln (2011) described phenomenology as the study of a particular group of people to understand their perceptions and experiences of a phenomenon. Dawidowicz (2016) explained that descriptive phenomenology explores individual experiences which can be developed into themes while interpretive phenomenology does not develop themes drawn from the experiences of the participants. Descriptive phenomenology was chosen because themes were developed from the experiences of the participants during the interviews, which helped me to understand the explanation of the phenomenon under investigation.

In relation to the methodology, the data were collected through face-to-face interviews using semistructured interview questions. Purposive sampling was used to select the participants because the target population were those who are affected by the

conflict between Nigerian soldiers and Boko Haram. In all, 20 participants were selected

for the study with the age range of 18 years to 70 years old. The interviews conducted

were tape recorded and later transcribed verbatim and analyzed by means of coding using

Nvivo software. The audio recorder and the data stored on my flash drives are kept in a

safe with no access except by me. The issue of trustworthiness of the study was addressed

by means of establishing credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

The ethical considerations of the study were analyzed and addressed. I ensured the

participants that their privacy is secured. Also, the risk of vulnerable population such as

children and disabled people were considered. The goal was to achieve valid answers that

relate to the research question.

In Chapter 3 I detail the research design and rationale, the role of the researcher,

methodology, data analysis, issues of trustworthiness, and ethical procedures.

Research Design and Rationale

The research question was how do the people of Northeast Nigeria attacked by

Boko Haram perceive the conflict, and how has the situation affected their lives? The

research question was explored through a semistructured interview protocol as listed in

Appendix A. The research design for the study was based on a qualitative non-numerical

approach and phenomenological method that enabled me to achieve the goal and

objectives of the study.

Qualitative Approach

According to Burns and Grove (2003), qualitative research is a holistic, inductive,

subjective, and process-oriented method that can be used to describe, understand,

interpret, and develop a theory on a setting based on the phenomena. It is a subjective and systematic approach utilized to describe life experiences to give meaning. Qualitative research is a nonnumerical approach compared to quantitative approach that is numerical. The approach was chosen because it enabled me to be part of the study and to understand the human experiences in the conflict without focusing on specific pre-determined concepts. Holloway (2005) concurred with Burns and Grove (2003) that qualitative research explores the idea and perceptions of the participants under study to interpret their words. In using the approach, I gained insights and discovered new ideas that increased the knowledge of the study. Inductive reasoning was used to develop insights and understanding of the pattern of data.

Phenomenology as a method of qualitative research is the study of a group of people to understand their experiences and perceptions of a specific phenomenon. This proceeding is important because it enhances the understanding of the study under investigation (Denzin et al., 2011). Also, it was suitable for the study because while other methods give a researcher a partial view, phenomenology focuses on the people's experience with perceptions of a phenomenon (Burkholder, et al., 2016). The approach provides an understanding why people reacted a specific way to an event as people react to situations based on their perceptions. By understanding the human factors involved in an experience, the question of how people perceive a phenomenon to place it within a context can be answered. Phenomenology is aligned with qualitative research because it is based on the idea that the perception of the individual is guided by his or her action and responses. People understand action in terms of the manner they perceived them

(Burkholder et al., 2016). The next paragraph identifies the research traditions and provides a rationale for the chosen tradition for the study.

Research Traditions

Husserl's (as cited by Dawidowicz, 2016) philosophy has evolved over time to include two approaches or traditions, interpretive phenomenology, and descriptive phenomenology. Interpretative phenomenology according to Dawidowicz took note of the same kinds of experiences and collects the data like descriptive phenomenology. However, interpretative phenomenology does not develop the experiences from people into themes and patterns but looks for the sociological and psychological factors that influences the people's response. On the other hand, descriptive phenomenology explores individual experience and develops these experiences into themes and patterns (Dawidowicz, 2016). However, the two schools of thoughts share the same philosophy of constructivism and humanism, and they are aligned with qualitative analysis (Dawidowicz, 2016). Descriptive phenomenology in this case was chosen for the study because themes were developed from the experiences of the participants which helped me to understand the commonalities the participants shared about the phenomenon under study. Hence, my role as a researcher was important in conducting the study.

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The Role of the Researcher

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My role as a researcher of the study was to gather, organize, and analyze the perceptions from the victims who had experienced the phenomenon under study through face-to-face and one-and-one interviews, as suggested by Dawidowicz (2016). According to Creswell (2012), this can be achieved by getting closer to the participants who are

under study. Doing this enabled me to gain an insight of the participant's experience of the conflict. The interview process made me a participant in the study. My position as a researcher allowed me to see and record the narratives of the experiences and perceptions of the participants during the interview. This helped to validate the information I collected from the group during the interview process (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

The researcher, as the main conductor of the interview in the participant's natural environment, may influence the study by distortion of facts. I had limited knowledge of the displaced participants. I requested their permission to conduct the interview. I have no professional or personal relationship with the participants that might have influenced the study. I knew my religious background might be a problem. I am a Christian who met the participants that are predominantly Muslim. However, I did not allow my religious faith to influence the study.

I disclosed myself to the participants as a student conducting research on the conflict in Northeast Nigeria. But I did not disclose my religious faith and profession as a criminal justice employee in the United States because it could have influenced participation in the study. Disclosing my religion would have acted as a hindrance for me to have vital information especially from Muslim dominated participants. I had other plans in mind if the participants discovered my faith and profession. I planned to tell the participants that my faith and profession should not restrict them from sharing their perceptions and experiences of the conflict because my goal for the study is to look for solutions that is useful for them. However, this became unnecessary. The study was conducted in English.

I thought of the challenges in conducting the study in the Northeast. This was because Boko Haram has the capability to launch attacks in any part in the Northeast. This fear was resolved because the interview was conducted in the refugee's camp in Abuja where there was safety. This provided safety of my person in conducting the study instead of putting myself in harms-way by going to Northeast Nigeria, which is considered the stronghold of Boko Haram. In the process of collecting and interpreting the data, potential bias was addressed by bracketing as explained above. I listened to the participants rather than dictating to them and I allowed them to express themselves freely. Interpretation of the study was based on the data I collected. The transcripts of the interview were instrumental in guiding me during the reflection, analysis, and interpretation process. Next, I explored the methodology for this study, which involved participant selection, instrumentation, data analysis plan, issues of trustworthiness, and ethical procedures.

Methodology

Methodology is the obtaining, organizing, and analyzing of the data (Hunger & Polit, 2004). Burns and Grove (2003) viewed methodology as a design, setting, sample, methodological limitations, data collection, and the analysis techniques. Henning (2004) explained that methodology involves a coherent group of methods with ability to fit well with the data and findings that reflects the research question and the purpose of the research. Holloway (2005) described methodology to mean a framework of theories and principles upon which the research methods and procedures are based. In relation to the study, methodology refers to how the research was conducted, and the logical sequence

applied. The focus of the study was to explore the poverty-conflict nexus and the activities of Boko Haram in Northeast Nigeria by examining the experiences and perceptions of those affected by the conflict. A qualitative research approach was suitable for the study.

According to De Vos (2002), qualitative methodology is dialectic and interpretive whereby the participant's world is discovered and interpreted during the interaction between the researcher and the participants. In relation to this study, the participant's selection logic was focused on identifying the population, justifying the sampling strategy, and establishing criteria for selecting participants, sample size, procedure, and saturation.

Participants Selection Logic

According to Burns and Grove (2003), the participant population implies all the elements that meet certain criteria for inclusion in the research study. In relation to the study, the population included participants (both Muslims and Christians) who had fled the conflict in the Northeast and settled for safety in Abuja and who self-selected for the study. The population was those who had lived and experienced the impact of the conflict in the Northeast of the country and had lived in the camp in Abuja for the past 5-10 years. Sampling is the process of selecting participants who can provide rich data of the phenomenon of interest (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). Purposive sampling strategy was used to select participants because the target population was those who had lived and experienced the atrocities of the terror group Boko Haram. Purposive sampling is a method of sampling where the researcher chooses the participant to include in the study

based on their ability to provide in-depth information about the study (Holloway, 2005).

The chosen criterion in the selection of participants was based on their experiences with

the phenomenon under study, the impacts of Boko Haram violence.

 Participants were selected from those with experience of the conflict between 5

and 10 years. These participants provided rich information that was essential for the

study. In terms of the number of participants selected for the study, 20 participants from

the camp in Abuja were selected who experienced the Boko Haram violence in the

Northeast Region of Nigeria. The small sample was suitable for the study because it

produced more insight into the experience of the phenomenon and data analyzation is

facilitated (consistent with the recommendations of Burkholder, et al., 2016).

The concept of saturation was considered as the sample size was chosen. A small

sample size has also been utilized in other qualitative studies (Dawidowicz, 2016). For

example, in the phenomenological study on how older women perceive their body/ "self"

from the perspective of food and eating, McCormick (2011) utilized a sample of 15, ages

62 to 91, all members of a large senior center in the rent-subsidized apartment

community. In the study on how cooperative education could grow talent among South

Africans, Groenewald (2004) used a sample size of 10 managers, five at educational

programs, and five at collaborating enterprises. And in the study on the experiences of

people with HIV/AIDS in China, Zhou (2010) used a sample size of 21 HIV-infected

adults, 15 men, and six women, ranging in age from 21 to 46.

I was introduced to the authorities supervising the camp by an assistant. However,

the assistant and the authorities had no role in the recruitment of participants and the

collection of data. Recruitment and collection of data for the study were conducted by me through face-to-face contact with the participants in the camp. The age range for the selected participants ranged from 18 years old to 70 years old consisting of predominantly Muslims and Christians. The participants were selected from the population who had been living in the camp for the past 5 to 10 years. This addressed the issue of vulnerability because these participants were sufficiently removed from the actual violence to have mentally processed the trauma of the conflict they experienced in Northeast Nigeria.

I requested an approval letter to conduct the study from the agency in charge of the IDP camps in Abuja Nigeria. This approval letter helped me to gain access with the participants. I was familiarized with the camp by Samuel Bitrus, which gave me access to the participants. The selected participants consisted of both males and females. Participants under 18 years old were excluded because they need consent from their parents to participate in the study. Also, they fell under the category of vulnerable population. Disabled individuals were excluded from the study because they were considered as a vulnerable population.

Participants were selected after I met with the persons who are supervising the camp. The authorities had no role in the recruitment and data collection process. I recruited participants in the camp through face-to-face contact. I introduced myself to each of the participants. I recruited as a researcher conducting a study on Boko Haram and its activities in Northeast Nigeria. Also, I told each of them the purpose of my visit to

the camp. I informed the participants that participation is voluntary and assured them of their confidentiality. The informed consent form was read to the participants.

I ensured that the selected participants are those who can provide in-depth information about the study. The least educational level of the participants was a high school diploma, and the maximum level of education was a master's degree. There were other participants that hold a bachelor's degree. I explained to them that the interview process might take about 2 hours. I provided each of the participants with the informed consent form in the private office where I conducted the interview. I told the participants that if they had any question, they should not hesitate to ask me. I then scheduled a day to meet with the participants individually in the camp. The size of the sample was controlled by saturation of information, a point where repetition of data collected previously occurs. Data saturation was reached when no new information arose unlike in quantitative research where saturation is determined by calculation. The small sample size in this study was based on rich information of the data collection method, sampling strategy, and the participants involved. The determination of saturation in the study was when the analysis, findings, and participant's quotes were reviewed to find patterns, categories, and variety of the phenomenon under investigation (Moser & Korstjens, 2018).

Instrumentation

Instrumentation describes the data collection process in the study (Holloway, 2005). I, as the researcher, was the main research instrument in this study. Regarding the data collection method, a semistructured interview protocol was used for the study because it permitted me to engage in in-depth discussions with the participants to get

more information from participants about their experiences of the conflict, consistent

with the expectations identified by research theorists (Creswell, 2012; Hughes, 2018;

Ravitch & Carl, 2016; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). I crafted the interview questions to suit the

purpose of the study. These questions are listed in Appendix A.

I conducted face-to-face interviews in the form of a one-and-one using open

ended questions to allow the participants to express themselves freely. The rationale for

using this approach in the study was that the discussions were focused on the past and

present conditions of the participants. Discussions also led to a broader picture of the

phenomenon under study. I obtained the participant's own perceptions and experiences

regarding the conflict during the interview (consistent with what was suggested by Moser

et al., 2018). A tape recorder was used in conducting the interview.

Data Collection Instrument

The data collection instrument for this study was the semistructured interview

questionnaire used for individual interviews. This was supported by a tape recorder.

Initial contact with participants was at the IDP camp through face-to-face interaction in

an office that was offered to me by the persons supervising the camp. The location was

vital due to accessibility, convenience, freedom from distraction, and audio recording

capability (as suggested by Crawford & Lynn, 2017). Face-to-face interviews were

suitable for data collection because other researchers have utilized the instrument to

conduct their studies. For example, face-to-face interview approach was used by

McCormick (2011), Groenewald (2004), and Sallmann (2010) in conducting their studies

that involved male and female participants. Their studies are relevant to the current study in that they served as a guideline for me to select the sample size of my study.

An informed consent form contained a brief description and purpose of the study, background information, the researcher's name, email address, phone number, Walden University phone number, purpose of the study and the consent form was given to the participants. I read and explained the consent form to the participants and advised each of the participants that they are not obliged to sign consent forms. I then acknowledged the researcher-participants agreement by signing the form.

The tape recorder assisted in recording while I took notes during the interview. I maintained open-minded to elicit more information. I thanked each participant for accepting to participate in the interview and I informed them that the interview might take approximately 2 hours. I reminded the participants of the informed consent form that they needed to sign and that they could decline to answer any question they did not wish to answer. They had the right to withdraw from the interview at any time. The cultural aspect or sensitivity was taken into consideration since majority of the participants are Muslims. I avoided using language that could be sensitive to the participants.

I set the ground rules or protocols for modification for each of the participants to follow. The use of cell phones during the interview was forbidden. I conducted the interview on a one-and-one basis. I explained to the participants the topic of the discussion and questions were asked to include general to specific using a semistructured interview outline that I prepared before the interview started. Ethical issues such as

confidentiality were addressed. Participants were requested to keep the conversation of the interview confidential (Mack et al., 2005).

I took into consideration the importance of establishing content validity. This was because collecting data through the process of interview carries some risks. I was the primary tool of the study, and I am human. This means that my recollections, memories, and impressions during the interview can muddy the waters. My mental, emotional background, world view, and experiences may influence how I received the words of the interviewees. This situation may lead to bias on the part of the researcher. Bracketing was the tool I used to resolve the problem of bias. One of the bracketing methods that I used in solving the bias problem is Memos. This was the notes or important points I wrote in a notebook during the interview process as suggested by Crawford and Lynn (2017).

Culturally, the majority population of the study was Muslims. Understanding the culture of the participants was important for the study to mitigate any nuances. Ethnic/religious sensitivities were taken into consideration. I avoided any form of stereotype during the interview process especially with female participants because some questions may be alright with the American culture but offensive with Muslim culture (Crawford & Lynn, 2016).

Researcher-Developed Instruments

The basis of developing a questionnaire for the study was that it helped to generate the collection of data from the participants which is words in context of the research problem that was analyzed (Holloway & Wheeler, 2002). The questionnaire was used to gain individual's opinion on the topic under study. The questionnaire consisted of

semistructured questions. I ensured that the questions were easily understood by the participants, not ambiguous, it was not long, and the questionnaire covered the topic under investigation with no bias. The interviews helped me solicit information from the participants through verbal interactions and their answers were recorded. Observation was another instrument that I employed during the interview process. In other words, I observed each of the participant's body language to identify any abnormal behavior during the interview process as suggested by Moser et al. (2018).

Procedure for Pilot Studies

As a novice researcher, a pilot study was important for conducting the studies. I informed the participants the purpose of the study and asked their consent for participation. I conducted a pre-exercise interview as a form of orientation to gain insight on data collection type. The pilot study helped to ensure that errors on the study was rectified in advance. I performed the study by selecting six participant males and females who met the criteria and who represent the six states that made up the Northeast Region of Nigeria. The states included Taraba, Borno, Bauchi, Adamawa, Gombe, and Yobe. The participants have lived and experienced the atrocities of Boko Haram in the Northeast. It was done at the camp in Abuja where the participants were residing in an office offered to me to conduct the interview. The interview was repeated later with the 20 participants selected. The interview was taped recorded to ensure that the interviews were conducted correctly. The pilot study gave me the opportunity to listen to the discussion, probing, and the verbal reactions before conducting the interviews for the

study. I paid attention during the exercise of participant's body language, the way they asked questions, and any non-verbal responses.

This helped to boost my confidence for the study and increased my interview experience in conducting the study under investigation. The exercise was relevant to the study in that I was be able to identify my shortcomings in terms of setting the interview environment and utilizing the tape recorder. Extra precaution was taken to avoid errors in the interview, and I learned to control my preconceived ideas to ensure credibility. Probing the participants during the exercise provided me with the opportunity to learn how to transcribe and analyze data in the study (Holloway et al., 2002). In relation to IRB approval number, 518:31:25-05 00, 2020. 06.0 was assigned to the researcher in approval to conduct the study.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

In terms of recruitment and participation, I identified, make contacts, and recruit participants for this study through face-to-face interaction with the target population. Participation in the study was based strictly on the criterion. This implies participants must not be below 18 years of age and must not be disabled. I selected 20 participants to participate in the interview. The interview will take about 2 hours individually. The interview was repeated for some of the participants to ensure consistency (Moser et al., 2018). The size of the sample was controlled by saturation of information, a point where repetition of data collected previously occurs. Data saturation was achieved at 20 participants when no new information was obtained. The small sample size in this study

was sufficient to obtain rich information through the data collection method, sampling strategy, and the participants involved as suggested by Moser et al. (2018).

Data Collection

A tape recorder was used, and I provided each participant with a bottle of water, consistent with recommendations of Moser and Korstjens (2018). As the interviews began, I maintained eye contact with participants and observed their body language to obtain a close and intimate familiarity with the participants to examine the experiences and perceptions of the participant and to elicit participant's experiences, perceptions, thoughts, and feelings as recommended by Moser et al. (2018). I used broad questions to elicit more information. For example, I asked questions such as "What do you think are the reasons of Boko Haram's behavior?" Probing, listening, and summarizing also were techniques I used during a discussion. Probing question such as "Could you elaborate on the poverty condition in your state?" Probing questions were used to encourage participants to continue to talk and for me to gain more information. The interviews were tape recorded. The tape recorder was placed close to the participants to record the conversation clearly. I tested the tape recorder before the interview to ensure that it was in good condition. New batteries were inserted in the tape recorder prior to the interview to avoid power failure, consistent with the recommendation of Moser et al. (2018).

I asked participants if they had any comments to make or questions to ask after the interviews. The interviews lasted one hour per session. I summarized the interview proceedings with my own opinions and ideas about the participants to ensure that there is understanding. Participants were debriefed about the interview and were informed that a

follow up interview might take place if necessary. I greeted the participants and thanked them for coming to the interview and then dispersed them to return to their camp when the interviews were completed.

Data Analysis Plan

In relation to analyzing the data, I listened to the audio tapes repeatedly to get the recorded interview information accurately. The audio tape was then transcribed verbatim. Transcribing is the process of converting spoken words into written transcript (Holloway et al., 2002). Participants received informant feedback to help improve the accuracy of the study. I read the transcript several times to obtain detail of the interview. This provided me with the opportunity to gain the rich information collected from the participants. As I explored the transcript, the concerns of the participants, perceptions, experiences, and their feelings were understood. The next step was for me to develop themes. Themes were developed by consulting the written notes taken during the interview. This was done by breaking the participant's narratives of the interview while extracting the themes. In other words, themes provide a full description of participant's experience in relation to the research question as recommended by Holloway et al. (2002).

During the process of analyzing the data, I read through the data to get a sense of what was transcribed verbatim. The extracted themes were categorized using the first cycle coding method. Coding helped me to have firm control of the memo, entry, transcription, and storage. Coding is the process in which the data is categorized to facilitate analysis. They are phrases, words, sentence, or the entire paragraph as described

by Saldana (2016). NVivo software was used for the data analysis. NVivo is a software program used for qualitative and quantitative research to analyze unstructured text, audio, and video. It helped in organizing the data for data analysis. Through the analysis of multiple codes, the software makes it easier to identify themes across my data sets and interpret them (Bazeley, 2010). It should be noted that I did not obtain any discrepant data.

Treatment of Data

In treating the data, the typed transcribed interview notes and contemporaneous interview notes for the study were stored on my private computer as a Word document protected by a password. I alone have access to this computer. The interview notes, transcripts, and transcribed notes are kept in a safe. I intend to destroy the notes after 5 years. I stored data on a flash drive with the intention to discard the data after 5 years. The flash drive is also kept in the small safe for the purpose of protecting the flash drive. I am the only person that has access to the safe.

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Issues of Trustworthiness

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Trustworthiness, according to Speziale et al. (2011), implies validity and reliability of qualitative research. This study is trustworthy when it represents the experiences of the study participants accurately. The research study expresses trustworthiness of data in triangulation by paying attention to conformity of the outcome which is the goal for the study. Four criteria are chosen to measure the trustworthiness for this study; credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability (Speziale et al., 2011).

I used Guba and Lincoln's (1985) model for establishing trustworthiness. This is because it has been used extensively by other qualitative researchers especially Walden University Students. Guba and Lincoln put forward four criteria for establishing trustworthiness; Truth value – Strategy is equals to Credibility measure; Applicability-Strategy is equals to Transferability measure; Consistency-Strategy is equals to Dependability measure and Neutrality-Strategy is equals to Confirmability measure.

Credibility

In the study, credibility was ensured by identifying and describing participant's experiences and perceptions accurately. The credibility of the study was enhanced by prolonged contact is the investment of enough time to learn the culture, test for distorted information introduced by the participants or myself. Spending enough time with the participants provided me with the opportunity to orientates myself with the situation and avoids or detect distortion that might creep into the data. The fact that I am a stranger in a strange land is something that needs prolonged engagement (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Enough time will be spent with the participants to develop a trustworthy relationship with the participants. Triangulation is the use of multiple references to draw conclusion of the study (Lincoln et al., 1985). This method is applied to the study to enhance credibility.

Triangulation enables me to distinguish true information as I familiarize myself with the content of the phenomenon. Member checks such as testing the data, analytical categories, interpretations, and conclusions are tested with the participants to ensure credibility. In other words, I discussed with the participants the themes and categories that are developed to have their feedback and to make sure that their words is represented

accurately. In terms of saturation, it reached a point where I could not employ additional information on the data.

As part of the study, I was aware of my own bias and preconceived ideas (reflexivity). By engaging in reflexivity, the researcher is self-monitoring to detect where I am going wrong and to make correction. Bracketing and intuiting are applied in the study to avoid any form of bias. Bracketing was used to improve the rigor of the study by writing out everything that I experienced about the topic such as beliefs and preconceptions. Bracketing implies putting aside what I know about the experiences under investigation. I refrained from making judgement about what I observed or heard. All through the data collection process, I maintained an open-minded attitude by putting aside my preconceived ideas (Intuiting) while observing the participant's experiences and perceptions of the event. I became immersed in the study to know about the phenomenon from the participant's perspective. This makes me to become an instrument during the interview process and a tool for data collection (Streubert et al., 2011). I studied the data as they were transcribed and reviewed the discussion of the participants as per their opinion about the topic under study.

In context of peer review, the analysis and conclusion were exposed to colleagues with PhD degrees in Public Policy and Administration, specialty in Terrorism, Mediation, and Peace for critical review. The analysis and conclusion are submitted to my Committee Chairs for further critical review. This was to ensure credibility in the study.

Transferability

Transferability implies that the findings of this study can be applicable to a similar situation (Halloway et al., 2002) and (Speziale et al., 2011). The reader determines whether the findings of the study is transferable. The study provided a dense or thick description of the data that the reader can evaluate the transferability to another context. Thick description is the thorough description of the research setting, transaction, and process observed. This means that the meaning and intentions of the participants and my own narratives, account, and ideas was thoroughly described (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). I described the data collected from the participants in detail to allow for transferability. I approached the participants who have an in-depth knowledge and experience of the conflict in Northeast Nigeria. In this way, transferability was ensured by member checks (Lincoln et al., 1985).

Dependability

Dependability was used to measure trust worthiness in the study. It was achieved through the credibility of the findings (Lincoln et al., 1985). Dependability implies the stability of the data over a duration of time, and it relates to the reliability of the research study. Dependability relates to the consistency of my findings. This means if my study were repeated with the same participants in a similar context, the outcome would be consistent. In this perspective dependability of the study was achieved through checks and audited by an external party. Overlap was one method used to carry out the checks. Another method was the stepwise and inquiry method. By applying the stepwise method, the data were replicated to establish reliability. The inquiry audit is a process whereby the

auditor examines the data, findings, interpretation, and recommendations and confirm that they are supported by the data. The data of this study was scrutinized by my chair committee members and the Walden University URR to ensure dependability and confirmability (Lincoln et al., 1985).

Confirmability

Confirmability implies to the objectivity for measuring trustworthiness of the study. The research was determined to be credible and have confirmability (Lincoln et al., 1985). Confirmability of the study relates to the quality of the data collected and the neutrality of the data by an agreement between two dependent persons that the data are similar. This means the study is free from bias. The goal of confirmability is to demonstrate that the evidence and thought process of this study provides another researcher with similar conclusion. Confirmability cannot occur without the presence of credibility, transferability, and dependability (Holloway & Wheeler, 1996). To enhanced confirmability, I used the following auditing strategies. The raw data were collected from the tape recorder and analyzed. The findings were analyzed through de-contextualization and the synthesized data were analyzed through re-contextualization. The research study process, design, sampling, and data collection process was carefully planned. Finally, the conclusions or findings of the study were supported by the analyzed data to prove rigor or integrity and competence (Holloway et al., 1996). Confirmability cannot be achieved without considering the moral rights of the participants in the study. The ethical considerations of the participants were important for this the study under investigation.

Ethical Considerations

This relates to the moral standards that I considered in conducting the study. This is supported by agreement to gain access to participants or data.

Agreements to Gain Access to Participants or Data

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) ensures that all Walden University students conducting research complies with the institution's ethical standards as well as those of the U.S federal regulations. Collection of data including pilot data for the study must be approved by the IRB. Walden University does not approve or grant credit to research conducted without the approval of the IRB. The application must be completed by all students including faculty members who are pursuing research on a topic involving the collection of data. The exceptions are faculty projects, hypothetical research designs, literature reviews, that are not tied to the University resources, funding, and participants (Dawidowicz, 2016). In compliance with the ethical standards of the University, I obtained the IRB permission (# 06-05-20-0672282) to gain access to the participants for data collection and analysis. I obtained permission to have access to the participants in the camp in Abuja from the authorities that are controlling the refugee's camp. Details of the letter is appended in Appendix B.

Ethical Procedures

The participants are displaced people from Northeast Nigeria who had fled the conflict and settled in Abuja the capital city for safety. It should be noted that the treatment of participants in the study was important. This relates to the ethical measures of the study. The ethical measures for the study included confidentiality, privacy,

consent, the right to withdraw from the study, freedom from harm, freedom from exploitation, right to full disclosure, rights of self-determination, and right of fair treatment (Burns & Grove, 2003).

In terms of consent, I sought the permission of participants to conduct the interview. I introduced myself to the participants to establish rapport. I explained to the participants the purpose of the study verbally. I informed participants that participation was voluntarily, and they can withdraw from the interview at any time. The rights to withdraw from the interview was explained to participants prior the interview. Informed consent was provided to participants as way to make them understand what it means to participate in the study so that they can decide whether they want to participate in the research study.

Privacy is an agreement between the researcher and the participants not to expose their private information. In relation to the study, I ensured participants that their information is kept confidential. I maintained this agreement by not putting the name of participants to the information. In this manner the confidentiality of the participants under investigation was protected. The anonymity of a person was protected by making it difficult to link the data to a specific person (Burns & Grove, 2003).

The aspect of physical harm was also considered. I was sensitive about the emotion of the participants and the psychological harm it may have on them. I told the participants that they are not forced to answer questions they deemed sensitive. Participant's exploitation was guaranteed ensuring that their information was not used against them. I stored the tapes and written materials in a safe place after the study. They

will be destroyed 5 years after the study. Participants' right to self-determination was protected as they were not coerced to participate in the interview. I approached the participants and explained to them the purpose of the study and they have the rights to participate and not to participate in the study. I maintained full disclosure of the study by sharing the aim and purpose of the study, interview type, and the procedures in collecting the data with the participants. In doing so, the participants were treated fairly (Burns et al., 2003) and (Holloway, 2005).

Institutional Permission Including IRB Approval Numbers

I sought the approval of IRB to proceed with the study by completing the application form. The paragraphs below examine the ethical concerns related to recruitment, materials and processes and plan to address them ethical concerns related data collection and intervention activities, and the treatment of data.

Ethical Concerns

There were ethical concerns related to the recruitments, materials, and processes in conducting the interview. Situational factor such as interviewing may cause some of the participants to feel reluctant to participate in the interview. This problem was resolved by informing the participants of the nature of the interview. Environmental factors such as noise, lighting, and temperature were some of the concerns in recruiting participants for the interview process. But the issue was resolved because the room given to me by the authorities supervising the camp is large and spacious enough with lights and well-ventilated.

Ethical Concern Related to Data Collection/Intervention

There was the risk that vulnerable population such as children and the disabled might be included in the data collection process. The issue of vulnerable population inclusion was taken care of by excluding disabled population and children from the selected target group or population. Failure to ensure privacy, violating confidentiality agreement, and failure to store the collected data in a safe place may hinder the participation of participants in the interview. Informed consent form to ensure confidentiality was provided to participants to resolve these issues (Dawidowicz, 2016).

As the main conductor of the investigation in the natural environment of the participants, there was high probability that the findings might be distorted. However, bracketing techniques was used to avoid this concern. Bracketing helped to keep participant's perception of the phenomenon in tack. It helped to fosters understanding between the researcher and the participants. Bracketing helped me to distinguish one participant from another since the interview was one-and-one at different intervals. This prevented participants from sharing their answers with each other (Dawidowicz, 2016). Transient personal factors such as anxiety and fatigue, may hinder participants to take part in the study. To solve this, the interview was scheduled in the morning between 10 AM to 12 PM (consistent with suggestions by Holloway & Wheeler, 2002). It is true that participants may have refused to talk or participate in the interview in the presence of a camera or tape recorder. I informed participants of the use of tape recorders prior to conducting the interview. I told the participants that the use of tape recorders was to

ensure validity checks because I must review their words. This erased any doubt in the mind of the participants (Holloway et al., 2002).

Treatment of Data

In treating the data, the audio tape recording that was transcribed, interview notes and transcripts for the study were stored on my private computer as word document protected by a password. I alone have access to this computer. The interview notes, transcripts, and transcribed notes would be shredded after 5 years. I stored the data on a flash drive with the intention to discard the data after 5 years. The flash drive is kept in a small safe that I bought for the purpose of protecting the flash drives. I am the only person that have access to the safe. Confidentiality is therefore upheld.

Other ethical issues, such as conducting the study within my own work environment, was addressed by laying aside my preconceived ideas. This prevented any conflict of interest or power differentials in conducting the study. It also prevents the researcher's bias to give credibility to the study under investigation. Credibility was enhanced through triangulation, peer debriefing, and prolonged involvement (Burns et al., 2003).

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Summary

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The chapter is an explanation of the research methodology. The goal was to achieve valid answers relating to the research question. This was achieved by using exploratory/phenomenological approach. As the main data collection instrument of the study, data were collected through interviewing. The data were analyzed to give meaning and to ensure that the data is trustworthy. To achieve trustworthiness, the study examined

the credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability of the data collected.

Ethical consideration was addressed by observing that the participants are morally and

ethically protected. Chapter 4 discusses the introduction, pilot study, setting,

demographics, data collection, data analysis, evidence of trustworthiness, results, and the

summary.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The Northeast Nigeria has experienced violent conflict between government troops and Boko Haram. Although previous research has been conducted on the conflict, the researchers have not given priorities to the perceptions and experiences of those affected by the conflict. Researchers have focused more on the causes of the conflict. In this study, the purpose was to explore the poverty-conflict nexus and the activities of Boko Haram in the Northeast through the lens of experiences and perceptions of the citizens who were impacted by the conflict. Benet's polarities of democracy was used as the theoretical framework to examine the experiences and perceptions of the affected individuals.

In Chapter 4, I begin with a description of the pilot study that I conducted. I then described the setting for both the pilot study and the full study. I go on to present the demographics of the study participants followed by the data collection and data analysis sections. I then presented the evidence that my study conformed to issues of Trustworthiness, followed by the actual results of the study.

The Pilot Study

I conducted a pilot study in the IDP Camp Abuja. Upon arrival in Abuja on September 21st, 2020, I visited the National Emergency Management Agency that supervises the camp the following day. I was introduced to the IDP Camp by the head of the Abuja Operation Office, Samuel Bitrus. This enhanced my access to the camp. I returned to the camp the next day alone to begin with the selection of the participants for

the pilot study. I made face-to-face contact with six participants males and females individually.

I introduced myself to each participant and I explained to each of the participants the purpose of my interview. The selection criteria were based on participants who had lived and experienced the atrocities of Boko Haram in the Northeast. They must be above 18 years of age and must have a minimum educational level of high school diploma. All six participants met these criteria. The six participants were selected from Borno, Bauchi, Adamawa, Gombe, Taraba, and Yobe, which represent Northeast Nigeria. I scheduled appointment time for each participant based on their availability. The interview was conducted in a room given to me by the authorities supervising the camp. The interview lasted 60 minutes. I collected enough data during this period. I named the six participants as Interviewee 1, Interviewee 2, Interviewee 3, Interviewee 4, Interviewee 5, and Interviewee 6. Prior to the beginning of the interview process, I arranged two chairs and a table separating us in a face-to-face interview setting. I examined the tape recorder to make sure the battery was charged. I had bottles of water in the room for emergency purposes such as emotional reaction, fatigue, and dehydration.

I began the interview by thanking each of the participants for voluntarily accepting to participate in the interview. I read the consent form to each participant as per IRB requirement. The consent form was signed by me and each of the participants. I informed the participants that the interview is based on semistructured questionnaires, so they were free to express themselves. Interview questions were focused on participants experiences and perceptions in relation to research question. Participants were informed

to mute their phones prior to the interview. They were also informed that the interview will be recorded.

The interview was recorded by a Sony ICD-PX470 Stereo Digital Voice Recorder. It was imperative for me to conduct this study as a novice researcher. The pilot study gave me an insight on data collection type that was integrated in the main study. I was able to rectify small errors during the main study. It enhanced my ability to listen to probing, discussion, and verbal reactions before the main study. The study provided me with opportunity to observed participant's body language which was applied to the main study. My confidence and experience in conducting the main study interview improved. Although the pilot study was presumed large, it did not modify interview questions. The exercise was relevant to the study because I was able to identify my shortcomings in terms of utilizing tape recording and setting the interview environment.

Setting

I conducted the interview in a natural environment that was safe and convenient for the participants. The interview was conducted at the Internal Displaced Person's Camp in Abuja where the participants selected for the interview lived. The environment was safe for the participants and for me. I had no personal relationship with the participants and the officials of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) that may have influence the collection of the data. I found no organizational conditions that influences the participant's experiences during my visit to the camp. The room I conducted the interview was arranged perfectly. The only problem was noise from

torrential rainfall that required a pause in some of the interviews for a while. However, these factors did not impact the data collection process.

Demographics

Demographics refers studying a group of population based on factors such as race, sex, age, and other factors (Schreiber, 2012). Demographics information can be collected by means of a survey or a questionnaire to describe the sample of population. It provides data that a researcher uses to determine whether the participants of this study represent the target population for generalization purpose (Schreiber, 2012). A questionnaire was used to collect data from the target population. I selected 20 participants from the IDP camp Abuja that constituted the Northeast region of Nigeria. The selection of the participants was face-to-face individually. The selected participants for the interview were made up of Muslims and Christians who fled the conflict in the Northeast.

The participants had lived in the camp in Abuja for 5 to 10 years. The participants were made up of males and females. To simplify the demographics and characteristics, 10 males and 10 females were selected. Amongst the selected participants, three participants were 18 years old, seven were 25 years old, four were 40 years old, three were 50 years old, two were 55 years old and one was 60 years old. It should be noted that 12 of the participants had a high school diploma, five participants had a bachelor's degree, and three participants had a master's degree.

Data Collection

Twenty participants were selected for the interview. I assigned each participant a code number according to how they were interviewed. For example, Interviewee 1, Interviewee 2, Interviewee 3, Interviewee 4, Interviewee 5, up to Interviewee 20. This enabled me to match the notes and the audio recorder accurately. It was done to address the issue of confidentiality. The interview was conducted at the Internal Displaced Person's Camp in Abuja in a room offered to me by the authorities.

Prior to the interview process, I explained to individual participants the purpose of the study clearly. I assured each of the participants that their names would not be disclosed, and it is for this reason that I assigned a code number of each participant according to how I interviewed them. I read to each participants the informed consent that clearly explain their rights and responsibilities based on the IRB guidelines and regulations. The consent form was signed between the researcher and the participants. A copy of the signed consent form was given to the participants. I thanked each participant for participating in the interview voluntarily.

I gave participants the chance to ask questions relating to the study. Participants were informed individually that a follow up interview may be conducted. The interview lasted 60 minutes instead of the 2 hours as explained in Chapter 3. This is because I was able to collect enough data from each participant within 60 minutes. I was seeking saturation of information, a situation where repetition of previously collected data occurs. I conducted the interviews using the semistructured interview protocol questions found in Appendix A.

The interview was conducted for 4 weeks between 09/21/2020 to 10/20/2020. The interview was recorded by a Sony ICD-PX 470 Stereo Digital Voice Recorder. While conducting the interview, I wrote down notes on my ledger as I observed the body language of each participant. The notes helped me to remember vital information that are crucial to understand the phenomena under study.

Based on my observation of the body language of the participants, they were excited to explain to me their perception and experiences of the conflict. The participants did not show signs of distress during the interview. The interviews were later stored on my lap top computer and the flash drives and notes were stored in a secured safe. Access to the safe is reserved to me alone. The documents will be kept for a period of 5 years. The documents will then be destroyed as required by the IRB guidelines and regulations.

Data Analysis

Data collected were content analyzed through an inductive method. Qualitative content analysis represents a systematic and objective means of describing a phenomenon. Content analysis can be utilized in ether an inductive or a deductive manner (Schreiber, 2012). Inductive method or approach involves open coding, creating categories, and themes, whereby all the data are reviewed for content and coded for correspondence to identify categories and themes (Schreiber, 2012). The process began with the researcher transcribing the interviewee's statement verbatim.

Transcription/Coding

Ethically, the purpose of conducting the research was to make sure that it reflects the participant's perceptions and experiences accurately (Berg, 2004). This is consistent

with the phenomenological approach described in Chapter 3. The results of this chapter

conform to the phenomenological experiences of the participants as explained in Chapter

3. It took me 1 week to complete the transcribing of the recorded interview. I listened to

the audio tape recorder several times. I reread the transcribed texts and field notes several

times to ensure accuracy. As a result of the extensive review, I was able to identify

themes from the interview text. It should be noted that I addressed the study questions

adequately. The raw data were organized into segments, then coded and categorized into

themes based on the research questions and the responses from the participants.

I began with selective reading approach whereby I highlighted statement from the

transcribed texts that revealed the main themes, and the meaning of the participants

responses was utilized. This method enabled me to identify meanings from the

participants responses that arose from their perceptions and experiences related to key

research questions. Themes such as "Poverty and Conflict," "Boko Haram and

atrocities," "Participation and Democracy," "Government Troops and Boko Haram,"

"Election and Violence," "Emancipation," "Democracy and Inclusive Participation,"

"Participation and Representation," "Government Leaders and Effective Representation,"

"Insecurity and Trauma," Dialogue and Peace," "Citizen Participation and Democratic

Process," "Bombings and Killings," "Job Opportunities and Employment," "Kidnappings

and Raping," "illiteracy and Religion," and "Corruption and Emancipation" are some of

the themes that emerged from the data texts the researcher collected through

interviewing.

I used NVivo software to organize, code, and analyze the data. I then uploaded the data by selecting sources and by clicking on data from the ribbon. The ribbon is a horizontal panel across the top of the screen. By clicking sources and data from the navigation menu, I was able to upload documents into the program. The next step I did was to import source to begin organizing, coding, and analyzing the data. Once the source was selected, I clicked the open button which enables me to name my source file for easy identification. The source page is consisted of internals and memo. I clicked on internals where I named the participants according to how they were interview. For example, Interviewee 1, Interviewee 2, Interviewee 3, Interviewee 4, Interviewee 5, up to interview participants 20. I return to "Detail View" by clicking on internal source. In the detail page, I began to code by right-clicking on the highlighted content which permits me to attach a theme. In creating a new code, the researcher clicks on code. This process was repeated continuously until themes were categorized into patterns such as "Theme 1," "Theme 2," "Theme 3," "Theme 4," "Theme 5," "Theme 6," "Theme 7," "Theme 8," and "Theme 9." I made sure that the transcribed notes and field notes represent the actual stories of the participants. I tried to use the actual words of the participants during the coding process for accurate interpretation and conclusion. This was supported by the evidence of trustworthiness.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness in this study was established when the perceptions and experiences of the participants were represented accurately. The arguments of the inquiry put forward by me are supported by the findings. The data collection method, sampling

strategy was done accurately without discrepancy. Accuracy of the data collected was checked during and after the interview was conducted through a follow-up interview. Lincoln and Guba (1985) proposed four criteria to measure the trustworthiness for the study. They included credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability.

Credibility

I established credibility by explaining the perceptions and experiences of the participations accurately. I spent enough time with the participants to develop a trustworthy relationship. Triangulation enabled me to pay attention to conformity of the data during analysis. I conducted member checks to ensure credibility by discussing the themes and categories that were developed with the participants and I obtained feedback to make sure I represented their words accurately. Techniques suggested by Speziale et al. (2011) called bracketing and intuition, and reflexivity were applied to deal with issue of bias during the data collection process. All through the data collection process, I maintained an open-minded attitude and refrained from making judgement. The study was given to my PhD colleagues within the Department of Public Policy and Administration with specialty in terrorism, mediation, and peace to critic the study. The study was submitted to my committee chairs for critical review, and to ensure that the study is credible.

Transferability

I documented and explained in sufficient depth the experiences and perceptions of the participants during the data collection, analysis, and results. Thick descriptions of the phenomenon were provided to establish transferability. The findings of the study were

transferable to those participants who had lived in the Northeast and experienced the atrocities of Boko Haram. The information of the data collected helps the reader to understand the research study and to construct the scenes of the research study from the perceptions to the experiences of the participants in a way that implicit bias (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Dependability

Dependability implies the consistency of my findings and the stability of the data over a long period of time. It relates to the reliability of the research study. By consistency, it implies if the study is repeated with the same participants in a similar context, the outcome would be consistent. Dependability was established in this study by member checks with the same participants in a similar context. The member checks responses proved to be in consistent with the responses the same participants provided in their previous interview. The data from the study were scrutinized by my chair, committee member, and the URR to seek dependability and conformability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Confirmability

Confirmability ensures that the data collected, and the interpretation, have a logical sequence. To achieve confirmability, I demonstrated during the analysis that the findings of the study was derived from the data collected. I transcribed the words of the participants from the audio tape recorder and analyzed through decontextualization and recontextualization. The findings of the study were supported by the analyzed data to

prove integrity and competence. The normal rights of the participants were considered to enhance confirmability (Halloway & Wheeler, 1996).

Results

The results of the study represent the interpretation of the data collected from the study. The data were collected using 11 semistructured interview protocols questions (Appendix A). The responses to the questions by the participants led to the development of themes and the interpretation of their meanings. I focused on the participant's views, ideas, and expression from the data collected including the handwritten notes.

Central Research Question

The purpose was to explore the poverty-conflict nexus and the activities of Boko Haram in Northeast Nigeria through the lens of experiences and perceptions of the citizens affected by the conflict. The central research question was how do the people of the Northeast attacked by Boko Haram perceive the conflict, and how has the situation affected their lives? The key research question acted as a guide for me to conduct data collection, transcribe the texts of the data, code, and categorize into themes. The table below shows a summary of the themes that were developed from the data.

Table 1

Themes

Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3	Theme 4	Theme 5	Theme 6	Theme 7	Theme 8	Theme 9
Participants expresses insecurity and were traumatized by Boko Haram atrocities	Conflict between government troops and Boko Haram brought sufferings to participants	Efforts by the Nigerian government to end the conflict yield little success	Citizen's participation in democratic process is not inclusive	Interests of some citizens are not represented by the government leaders effectively	Corruption in the democratic process discouraged citizens from participating	Government's failures to represent the interest of all citizens contribute to the conflict	Poverty, religion, bad governance, and illiteracy are responsible for the violent conflict	Jobs, education, empowerment of the people will curb poverty and the conflict

The aim of the central research question was to foster an understanding of the perceptions of the participants who lived and experienced the conflict between Nigerian government troops and Boko Haram and its impact on their lives. The participants I interviewed at the IDP camp in Abuja, Nigeria were all born and raised in Northeast Nigeria. However, due to the conflict in their region, they have been displaced from their homes and are now living in the camp in Abuja for the past 5 to 10 years. The participants explained that their stay in the camp was temporary, but they have been living in the camp longer than expected. Participants complained during the interviews that the camp was not comfortable for them to live in with their children. They perceive the atrocities of Boko Haram to be devastating and traumatizing because the fighting has confined them in a place that they do not feel as a home.

Theme 1: Participants Express Insecurity and Trauma from Boko Haram Atrocities

As seen in the paragraphs below, many of the participants used the words "insecurity and trauma" to explain their experiences and perceptions of the conflict

between Boko Haram and the Nigerian army. The participants expressed their perceptions of insecurity caused by Boko Haram attacks.

Interviewee 1 stated during the interview that "I experienced indiscriminate killings, raping, kidnappings of school children, and women in my communities. I was traumatized and scared of my life because there was no security". Interviewee 2 said "I witnessed our home being burnt down, my family members killed, their farmland and cattle burned down to ashes. Insecurity in the Northeast scares me because Boko Haram were killing people like animals. I was not able to sleep at night because I sees only dead people in my dreams." Interviewee 3 said that "I was afraid of my life because Boko Haram burned down our house and killed my brother and sister inside the house. I was afraid that I would die too because of no security. I could not sleep at night because of what I experienced from Boko Haram." Interviewee 4 explained during the interview that "my parents' farmland was destroyed, and cattle killed by Boko Haram. I was afraid that Boko Haram will kill me and my parents because there was no security to protect us." Similar expressions were noted by Interviewee 5 during the interview. She explained that "I witnessed Boko Haram burning down our village and market. There were dead bodies all over the place. I was lucky to run and hide myself in the bush. I was traumatized by Boko Haram destruction. People were afraid to travel to a neighboring village market to sell their farm products because of insecurity."

Interviewees 6, 7, and 8, also noted that they experienced Boko Haram atrocities in their cities. For example, Interviewee 6 says that "I experienced Boko Haram bombing the police station, churches, and schools. Boko Haram behavior traumatized me."

Interviewee 7 says that "insecurity in the northeast makes people to flee to neighboring countries such as Cameroon." And Interviewee 8 explained that "I was really scared that I will die, and I was not able to sleep at night." I asked the participant what makes you to be scared? And she said that "insecurity because the government has failed to protect the people of the Northeast."

Interviewee 10, explained that "the government failed to provide us security as we were exposed to Boko Haram attacks." Interviewee 11 explained that "my experiences about the conflict have reshaped my thought psychologically. I believed that I could die anytime because of insecurity. I was traumatized of seeing dead people." Participants affirmed that they escaped into surrounding bushes and mountains when Boko Haram attacked their villages and towns. They explained how they spent months hiding in the bushes and mountains without food and water. For example, Interviewee 12 stated that "when Boko Haram came to my village, they began killing people with their guns, burning our homes, and forcefully taken women away. We ran into the bushes and the mountains to hide ourselves. we were traumatized. Indeed, we narrowly escaped death from the hands of Boko Haram." Interviewee 12 pointed out that "Boko Haram's intention was to replace the government in Nigeria with an Islamic state." Interviewee 13 emphasized that "Boko Haram does not want peace." Similar feelings were expressed by Interviewee 20. "This is because Boko Haram attacks and kill innocent people, kidnaps, and forcefully married women without their consent. Because the threats of Boko Haram are real, politicians or government leaders are afraid to travel to the Northeast for fear of not being killed."

Theme 2: Conflict Between Government Troops and Boko Haram Brought Sufferings to the Participants.

Most participants expressed the words "sufferings" as revealed in the paragraphs below. The conflict between Nigerian troops and Boko Haram has ravaged the Northeast region of Nigeria. There are no adequate medical facilities to cater for the health of the people and the death rate amongst children was higher than in other states in Nigeria. When I asked each of the participants in what way does the conflict between Boko Haram and government troops affects the people living within the Northeast, participant responses demonstrated by their experiences and perceptions that the fighting has shattered their livelihood.

Interviewee 1 explained that "the conflict brought massive sufferings to us in the Northeast region". Interviewee 2 said that "the conflict led to separation of families and a loss of their identity. We suffered because we were rendered homeless as our homes were destroyed." Interviewee 3 explained that "our children were unable to go to schools because schools were burnt down by Boko Haram. We cannot go to the church to worship because Boko Haram has destroyed most of the churches. Businesses were destroyed by Boko Haram, and this brought hardship to us. Life in the Northeast is unbearable as people could not feed themselves."

Interviewee 4 says that "farmers cannot cultivate crops and rear cattle because they are afraid of reprisals from Boko Haram. The situation increased sufferings and hunger as young children beg for money on the streets of Northeast. Hunger has encouraged young people to join Boko Haram who offered them food and money." In the

words of Interviewee 5 "we have lost our homes, farms, schools, and family members. People have died due to hunger and bad water. We are suffering because of the fighting between Boko Haram and government troops." Interviewee 7 said that "the fighting between Boko Haram and government soldiers has brought massive sufferings and hardship to us and made us become strangers in our own country. This is because many people are jobless, and we live now in the camp in Abuja". Interviewee 8 explained that "the conflict between the government and Boko Haram has crippled the economy. People are suffering." Interviewee 9 mentioned during the interview that "unemployment rate is high because people are not working. Infant mortality rate too has increased due to poor medical facilities in the Northeast. The prices of food stuffs like rice, beans, and maize have increased. People do not have the money to buy food because there are no jobs. The conflict between government troops and Boko Haram has brought hardship and sufferings to the people of Northeast Nigeria."

Interviewees 11, 14, 15, 16 and 18 also asserted that the conflict affected their persons. I asked the participants in what ways has the conflict affected their persons. Interviewee 11 responded that "the conflict between government troops and Boko Haram brought hardship to me because I lost everything I worked hard for." Interviewee 14 said that "my situation was terrible. I was suffering because I was not able to feed myself." Interviewee 15 pointed out that "the conflict between government soldiers and Boko Haram brought sufferings in his person because Boko Haram killed their cattle and destroyed their farmland." The participant explained that he was vulnerable emotionally. He explained that the condition of life in Northeast Nigeria was horrible when the

fighting intensified while they were homeless. Interviewee 16 felt that "the fighting between government troops and Boko Haram has disempowered her to support the development of her children in relation to education." Interviewee 18 explained that "Boko Haram are slaughtering people out there in the Northeast region."

Theme 3: Efforts by the Nigerian Government to Bring an end to the Conflict has Yielded Little Success.

The conflict in Northeast Nigeria has escalated. For example, while I was in Abuja to conduct data collection, Boko Haram ambushed the convoy of the Governor of Borno State, Governor Babagana Zulum. The governor was returning from Baga where he met with some displaced persons who were ejected from their communities by Boko Haram since 2014. The governor was not killed but 14 police officers and soldiers were killed. The bomb damaged some of the governor's vehicles. When asked what steps the Nigerian government has taken to bring an end to the conflict, participants responded that government efforts have been unsuccessful because Boko Haram attacks are still going on in the Northeast. Interviewee 1 explained that "the government have made efforts by sending troops to the region to protect the people, but this was not enough to curb the fighting." Interviewee 2 stated "the Nigerian military were pushing back Boko Haram attacks in Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa. But lack of effective communication of the Nigerian troops makes it hard to defeat Boko Haram." Interviewee 3 further explained that "Nigerian government efforts to end the conflict has been unsuccessful."

Interviewee 4 said that "government always claimed that they have captured most of the land occupied by Boko Haram. But Boko Haram still controls large part of the land

in the communities." Meanwhile, Interviewee 5 explained that "the effort by the Nigeria government to end the conflict has not been successful." A similar sentiment was expressed during the interview by Interviewees 6, 7, and 8. For example, Interviewee 6 said that "the fighting between Boko Haram and Nigerian army has yielded little success" Interviewee 7 stated that the "government has achieved little success in this conflict." Interviewee 8 noted that "the government has not been able to defeat Boko Haram since the fighting started. Boko Haram still controls large part in Northeast Nigeria."

Interviewee 10 explained that the "government has attempted to bring peace, although the fighting is persisting. However, this has yielded little success." Interviewee 11 says that "the government has called for dialogue so many times; but Boko Haram always turns down the request." Interviewee 16 noted that "Nigeria does not have effective political infrastructures to deal locally with the conflict. Government attempts to defeat Boko Haram were not successful." Interviewee 17 suggested that "despite effort by the Nigerian Government to destroy terror group, inefficient coordination makes it difficult for the government to achieve the goal in defeating Boko haram". Interviewee 19 pointed out that "Government efforts to destroy the group and end the conflict have not been successful."

Theme 4: Citizens Participation in the Democratic Process is not Supported by the Government, and the Processes are not Inclusive.

I asked individual participants what are the ways the Nigerian government have supported citizen participation in the democratic process, and to what extent these activities contribute to fair and inclusive participation? Based on the participants'

experiences and perceptions, most of the participants suggested that the democratic process is not supported by government and the processes are not inclusive. For example, Interviewee 1 explained that "the democratic process has not been fair and inclusive." Interviewee 2 said that "the fact that people do not usually have access to vote for a candidate of their choice is a problem. Most of the citizens vote in Nigeria do not count because of rigging and violence at voting stations." Interviewee 3 says that "People are killed in the process of violence and the government has done little to solve this insecurity problem at voting stations. This discourages people from participating in democratic progress." Also, Interviewee 4 mentioned during the interview that "corruption in Nigeria has taken the form of rigging of elections, buying of voter's cards and voters by a political party, or a politician running in office."

Interviewee 5 stated that "politicians of major political parties distributed money to people at the voting station for people to vote for them. There is manipulation in voter's registration, snatching of ballot boxes by armed thugs sponsored by some politicians. This situation has discouraged many Nigerians from voting or participating in the democratic process which makes the democratic process not be inclusive and fair." Interviewee 6 suggested that "political system, falsification of election results, and governance in Nigeria does not encourage mass participation in the electoral process. This is because people have lost the trust they have for their political leaders. Government failures to tackle the welfare and well-being of many Nigerians who are living in poverty has hampered massive participation in democratic process."

Interviewee 7 said that "during election period, promises are made by politicians. But after they are voted in office, these promises are not fulfilled. This situation discourages people from going to the polling stations during election day. Arms proliferation has been a characteristic of the political process in Nigeria." Interviewee 8 suggested that "small arms are supplied to the youths by some politicians to intimidate supporters of their political opponents at the polling stations. The disturbances at polling stations accompanied by killings of people have discouraged many people from participating in voting." Interviewee 9 explained that "when it comes to democratic process, the government has failed to support the citizens to vote." Interviewee 10 says that "participation is not inclusive because the government makes it hard for people to vote." Interviewee 11 explained that "some of the politicians use thugs to cause violence at the pooling station. People are afraid to participate in the democratic process because of insecurity".

Interviewees 12 comment that "the democratic process is not inclusive and fair because of the way it is run. Furthermore, Interviewee 13 suggested that "people do not vote because the government makes it difficult for people to get voting cards. Voter's cards are usually bought by the politicians. With this behavior, the votes of some citizens do not really count." Interviewee 15 explained that "insecurity makes people not to go out to vote. Election is usually marred by violence. Most people do not have voting cards and ID Cards to vote." Interviewee 16 reiterated that "voting cards are usually bought by politicians and government makes it hard for citizens to get ID cards to vote. This discourages people to participate in the democratic process." Interviewee 17 said that

"the government is not transparent when it comes to democratic process." The participant

explained that she tried to vote at one point in a presidential election and there was

fighting at the polling station. As a result of the fighting, many people were killed. This

experience made her stop participating in the democratic process."

Meanwhile, Interviewee 19, explained that "the government supported people to

go out to vote during election by enticing people with gifts such as money, food items,

and clothing." Interviewee 20 suggested that "during this period, politicians came around

and deceived them that they will bring changes in their lives. But after the election, the

politicians disappeared and the promises they made was never fulfilled. Participation in

the democratic process is not really supported by the government and are not inclusive."

The interviewee like others demonstrated their frustration with the government.

Theme 5: Interest of Some Citizens are not Represented by Government Leaders
Effectively.

In the data collection process, participants reiterated that government has lost the

touch with the common people in relation to representing the people. Interviewees were

asked in what ways government leaders did or did not represent the interest of all

citizens. Interviewee 1 stated that "the elected leaders who represent us in government do

not care for our interests. Our elected leaders amass wealth for themselves, families, and

friends." Interviewee 2 mentioned that "the poor people are excluded in Nigeria's

representative democracy and economic activities. Instead of seeking for policies that

would improve agricultural production and reduce employment, and insecurity in the

Northeast and Nigeria as a whole, representatives focused more on how to remain in

power." Interviewee 3 explained that "political resources are not equally distributed in many of the communities in the Northeast. The impact of this situation is that there is low level of turn out in political participation or political process."

Interviewee 4 confided that "the leaders I voted to represent my interest in the National Assembly are not fighting for my interest. The leaders only care about themselves, the interest of their family members, and friends." I asked the participant what makes you believe that your leaders are not representing you. Interviewee 4 responded that "I have never seen my representative leaders." Interviewee 5 responded by saying that "I only see my leaders during election as they come around to deceive people to vote for them."

The participants said the Northeast is the poorest region in Nigeria. They do not have good roads, schools, hospitals, and industries that can offer job to the people of Northeast. Most people in the Northeast are farmers. The land in the northeast is not fertile for crop production. People need fertilizer to improve crop production, but our leaders have not been helpful to the farmers. Interviewee 7 explained that" since I came to the IDP Camp in Abuja, none of my leaders have come to me here." Interviewee 8 said "my leaders do not represent my interest. They care only about themselves and their Families." Interviewee 9 noted that "the northeast region of Nigeria does not have schools, roads, and homes are all burnt down by Boko Haram." Interviewee 7 narrated that "My leaders I voted for do not care to build roads, schools, hospital, and industries" And Interviewee 8 suggested that "the failure of leaders to represent community interests have contributed to the fighting. Desperate youths and mature people are forced to join

Boko Haram in the fight against the government." Interviewee 9 explained that "some

people are taken by force to join the group. Boko Haram threatened the lives of people

that if they do not join them, they will kill every member of their families." This assertion

was supported by most of the participants during the interview.

Interviewee, 13 explained that some "governors in the Northeast region are trying

to build homes for people whose homes were destroyed or burnt down by Boko Haram."

I asked the participant whether the homes are built for everyone whose home were burnt

down. Interviewee 13 responded that "the homes are built for people with connection to

the governors and not for everybody." Interviewee 15 said that "our interest does not

matter to our leaders." Interviewee 16 noted that "our leaders do not care about us

because not everybody's interest is represented." Interviewee 17 says that "I voted for my

leader in my region with the hope that my situation will improve. But my condition has

not changed at all." Interviewee 19 mentioned that "we are being deceived by our leaders

because they do not support our interest after we have voted for them. However, you

have some people that our leaders are fighting for their interest." Interviewee 20

responded by saying that "we do not have good roads, hospitals, schools, and portable

water to drink."

**Theme 6: Corruption in the Democratic Process Discouraged Citizens from
Participating.**

Corruption is the word that most of the participants used to describe the nature of

democratic process in Nigeria. When I asked the participants if there are ways in which

the Nigerian government has discouraged citizen participation in a democratic process

and to what extent does this contribute to the unfair treatment of citizens, Interviewee 1 explained that "the citizens of Northeast are like foreigners in Nigeria. The government is corrupt, and they embezzle money for themselves and their family." Interviewee 2 said that "the rich get richer, and the poor remain poorer. The government makes a lot of promises but no action. This discourages people to participate in the democratic process." Interviewee 3 explained that the democratic process in Nigeria is corrupt because the voting cards are bought by politicians. As a result, a lot of people do not have the chance to vote. Interviewee 4 suggested that "ID cards to vote are made harder to get by the government during election period." Interviewee 5 said "many people are not participating in the democratic process because they do not have ID cards" Interviewee 6 pointed that corruption in government discouraged people to participate in the democratic process." Interviewee 7 reiterated that "our leaders are corrupt so to our participating process." Interviewee 8 mentioned that "I do not like to vote because of the corrupt nature of the participation process." Interviewee 9 said that "the voting process in Nigeria is corrupt. People do not participate in election because of the corrupt nature." Interviewee 10 explained that "corruption is deep rooted in the Northeast and Nigeria in general. This discouraged the citizens to participate in the democratic process." Interviewee 11 asserted that the "democratic process in the Northeast and Nigeria is corrupt. Many people preferred to stay at home instead of participating in the democratic process."

Interviewee 12 explained that "l felt left out in my own country." Interviewee 13 said that "basic goods and natural resources are not distributed equitably." Interviewee 14

said "we do not have good roads, potable water, good health care, facilities, in our communities." And Interviewee 14 added that "the Nigerian government has not done enough to end the conflict because there are people in government who like the conflict to continue because they profit from the conflict." Meanwhile, Interviewee 15 affirmed that "access to political participation is limited in our region. This discourages people to participate in voting their leaders in office."

Interviewee 15 explained that "ineffective coordination and corruption have hindered government progress to bring an end to the conflict."

Interviewee 16 said that "profits from oil revenue are stolen by our leaders. The people in the Northeast are living in poverty." Interviewee 17 narrated that "many of the Nigerian citizens are not happy with the government because of the unchecked corruption in the country. As a result, people are discouraged to vote because voting will not make any changes in their lives."

Interviewees 19 noted that "the failures of the government to combat corruption, poverty, and unemployment in the Northeast and Nigeria in general have discouraged many Nigerians from participation in the democratic process. People want a leader that would care for their needs. But this is not always the case because of the corrupt democratic process. Often, the government-imposed leaders on us and these leasers only care about themselves and not the people who are suffering. The imposed leaders embezzled money and deposit the money in foreign banks." Also, Interviewee 20 explained that elected leaders used some of the money to corrupt voters or the democratic process. All these discouraged us from participating in the democratic process."

Theme 7: Government Failures to Represent the Interest of all Citizens Contributed to the Conflict.

I asked individual participants whether there are ways in which government leaders failed to effectively represent the interest of all citizens and to what extent does this contribute to Bako Haram conflict. Interviewee 1 explained that "government leaders have failed to bring development in our communities in the Northeast. Unemployment is high and this has contributed to the fighting." Interviewee 2 mentioned that "the lack of jobs in the region has motivated young people to join Bako Haram in the fight against the government." Interviewee 3 attested that "effective representation occurs when there are jobs and safety. But in this case, these are lacking." Interviewee 4 says misrepresentation in the part of government leaders has not only contributed to the conflict but has prolonged the conflict in the Northeast region." This is because government leaders do not care for the people who voted them in office." Interviewee 5 suggested that "Boko Haram is sponsored by some government leaders, and it is the reason the fighting in persisting." Interviewee 6 said "some government leaders make money out of the conflict, and they do not want the conflict to end". Interviewee 7 mentioned that "government leaders do not represent the interest of all the people and because of that, the youths and some adults preferred to fight along the side of Boko Haram."

Interviewee 8 responded in her own words that "government leaders cared for the interest of some people in Nigeria, but not all the citizens in Nigeria." The participant said that the government has not effectively represented them in all aspects. "People have become disgruntled with the government and some people decided to join Baka Haram to

have food to eat." Interviewee 9 suggested that "our representatives in the Northeast region have done little to improve our lives. A lot of the youth are uneducated and are not working. The government leaders have not done anything to improve the education of the youths." Interviewee 10 explained that "the youths are brainwashed by Boko Haram, and they subsequently join the terror organization."

Interviewee 12 pointed that "they have representatives, but they do not see them. The situation has led to frustration within the communities in the Northeast." Interviewee 13 commented that "people join Boko Haram because the government leaders have failed to represent their interest in all aspect." Interviewee 14 added that "people join the terror group because they do not have food, or a home to live in. Besides, Boko Haram also give money to young people to carry out their attacks in the cities and villages." Interviewee 16 asserted that "government leaders have failed the people of the Northeast." Interviewee 17 explained that "leaders know that most of the people in the Northeast are farmers. The government should have built industries that produces fertilizers to help the farmers. The government have failed to encourage mechanize farming in the region."

Theme 8: Poverty, Religion, Bad Governance, Illiteracy is Responsible for the Violent Conflict.

Poverty is thought to contribute to conflict because persistent poverty may lead to social discontent. Most people in the Northeast and Nigeria live in acute poverty. The situation of poverty in Northeast is horrible. The region has the highest poverty rate in the

country. The purpose of the study was to examine the poverty-conflict nexus and the activities of Boko Haram in Northeast Nigeria.

When I asked the participants do you believe poverty contributes to the Boko Haram conflict in Northeast, and if so, what role do you see poverty playing, Interviewee 1 responded that "poverty plays a major role in the conflict. Northeast has the highest poverty rate in Nigeria because of no industries, markets, hospitals, roads, and drinking water. A lot of people are unemployed and idle." Interviewee 1 continued that "Boko Haram comes around and convince people with money to join the group. People collect the money and join Boko Haram to fight the government." Interviewee 1 concluded that "this is because the masses do not have means of livelihood and they blame the government leaders for their situation."

Interviewee 9 noted that "the lack of jobs has led to poverty and the fighting in our region. More so, people do not have food to eat because they do not have money to buy food for themselves." Interviewee 9 concluded that "these people are easily convinced by Boko Haram to join them by providing money and food."

Interviewee 11 explained that "the conflict reduced the movement of people across the border with Cameroon, Chad, and Niger to sell their products." Interviewee 11 added "this disruption of the markets and transportation decreases the demand for goods and this situation increases poverty and the persisting fighting in the Northeast." Interviewee 12 says that "the conflict has reduced people's ability to purchase goods and increases poverty". Interviewee 13 suggested that "farmer's productivity too has reduced due to disruption of the fighting." The participants explained that the economy of the

Northeast region is focused on pastoralism and farming. Interviewee 13 continued that "the conflict between Boko Haram and government troops have shattered the economy. The revenue in the Northeast region has reduced because of the fighting." Interviewee 14 suggested that "the government in the Northeast cannot collect taxes because there were no functioning businesses. The economy of the Northeast has collapsed because of the conflict." However, Interviewee 14 noted that, "although poverty is responsible for the conflict, religion has also contributed to the fighting."

Interviewee 18 explained that "poverty is the root of the conflict in the Northeast because there are no means of survival. There are no jobs for people to make money. The youths turn to join Boko Haram for survival." Interviewee 18 concluded that "Nigeria is rich but, because of the bad government, there is poverty in the country. Poverty is increasing especially in the Northeast because of bad governance." Interviewee 19 narrated that "Bad governance has made people to become skeptical of the democratic system that benefits mostly the elites. Bad governance has led to frustration and hopelessness amongst the youths as there is widespread poverty in the Northeast.

Interviewee 20 mentioned that "social and economic deprivation triggered Boko Haram to stage uprising and to recruit the youth in their quest for an Islamic state." Interviewee 20 added that "government failure to provide necessary goods to the people led to violent clashes as Boko Haram capitalized on the situation to attack government buildings and government troops.". Thus, Interviewee noted that the "failure of the government to provide jobs and education for the people in the Northeast have led to rampant robbing and insecurity." Interviewee 20 explained that "job availability and food

will prevent people from joining Boko Haram. There is no policy that the Nigerian government have formulated to improve the condition of the people."

Interviewee 20 suggested that "poverty and religion are responsible for the fighting." Interviewee 20 explained that "poverty is a reason for the fighting." He explained that "If you do not have work and food, what will you do? You join Boko Haram." Interviewee 20 concluded that "Boko Haram gives money, food, and clothing to people and it is the reason that people are joining the group to fight the government." Interviewee 20 explained that "the fighting cannot stop because Boko Haram are sponsored by some government leaders. These government leaders are profiting from the fighting in the sense that they stole the money that are allocated to the people in the Northeast."

Interviewee 20 further responded that "people do not like to fight, but because many people in the Northeast are poor, they are bound to join Boko haram for money." Interviewee 20 went on that "poverty is what created Boko haram. Members of Boko Haram are from poor homes. Boko Haram gives money to people to commit suicide bombing. However, people are sometimes forced by Boko Haram to join the group."

Religion also was seen by many as contributing to the violence. For example, Interviewee 6 affirmed that "the doctrine of Boko Haram is based on religion. As Boko Haram emerged in 2002, they preach jihadi war against the Christians and the West. They considered Christians as enemies.". Thus Interviewee 6 concluded that "Boko Haram saw no compromise with Christians; war with the West and those supporting the West was the only solution." Interviewee 7 explained that "in the Northeast, Boko Haram attacks the

Christians and Muslims supporting Christians. Boko Haram championed the establishment of the sharia law in the whole of Nigeria. Implementation of Sharia law led to violent clashes in the Northeast." Interviewee 7 explained that "the terror group believes the establishment of Islamic laws will end Christian domination in the country."

When I asked Interviewee 6, what do you perceive as the motivation for Boko Haram to engage in the burning down of schools, markets, and villages, Interviewee 6 responded that "Boko Haram members are illiterates and they considered education to be evil". Interviewee 7 explained "Boko Haram considered education evil." Interviewee 8 added that "Boko Haram viewed education as something from the white man's countries and is evil", and Interviewee 8 suggested that "Education is against the Koran." Interviewee 11 suggested that "Boko Haram dislikes western education and religion. They considered Western education and religion as evil. It is also the reason they burnt down schools and kidnaped school children."

Interviewee 15 confided that "Boko Haram are convincing the youths that the government is fighting against their religion, so they must fight back. Boko Haram are informing the youths that they are fighting a jihadi war." Interviewee17 says that "religion has been responsible for the fighting between Nigerian army and Boko Haram."

Interviewee 20 added that "religion is another reason Boko Haram is fighting. Boko Haram despises western religion and education, they regard western education and religion as evil." Also, in relation to the role of religion in creating the violence, Interviewee 20 noted that "Boko Haram tells the youths that they are fighting for Allah.

They tell the youths that if they die, they will go to heaven." Interviewee 20 added "so many youths joined the fighting because they want to go to heaven when they are killed".

Bad Governance was also suggested as a reason for the violence. Interviewee 2 said that "Bad governance has contributed to the fighting. Also, Boko Haram attacks have discouraged foreign investment and sky rocketed poverty in the Northeast region." Interviewee 2 added "farmers were running away from the conflict because of Boko Haram attacks. This led to food shortages in the communities and has contributed to the fighting." Interviewee 3 suggested that "there was the problem of drought that triggered shortage in food supply. Low productivity of agricultural products has increased poverty in the region which prompted young people to join Boko Haram to fight government soldiers." The participant reiterated that the situation prevented people from making money from the sales of agricultural products. "The standard of living of the people of Northeast drops as poverty condition worsened."

Interviewee 8 responded that "many people in the Northeast live under poverty due to bad governance and because of the poverty, the youth turn to join the Boko Haram." Interviewee 8 added that "bad governance is responsible for the conflict in Northeast Nigeria. There are a lot of children begging on the streets in the Northeast."

Interviewee 10 mentioned that "healthcare was a concern in the Northeast. There was increased risk of disease among the population due to bad water people are drinking and lack of access to medical facilities." Interviewee 10 added that "children are suffering from malnutrition. This is because of the bad government in place. The bad governance situation has encouraged Boko Haram to fight the government."

Interviewee 20 explained that "Boko Haram cannot be destroyed because they are sponsored by some government leaders." I asked the participants what makes you feel that government leaders sponsor the group? Interviewee 20 explained that "some of the government leaders make money out of the conflict and if the conflict stops, their source of making corrupt money will stop too. These government leaders provide money to Boko Haram to help recruit fighters."

Illiteracy was considered as another contributor to the violence. Interviewee 4 said that "most members of Boko Haram came from poor homes, and they are not educated. Because most of Boko haram members are illiterate, they cannot reason or realized that killing of innocent people is wrong." Interviewee 5 also mentioned that "high illiteracy rate in the Northeast contributes to poverty and the ongoing conflict. A lot of people in the Northeast cannot read and write so they are easily brainwashed by Boko Haram."

Interviewee 19 suggested "the illiteracy also has contributed to the fighting in Northeast Nigeria." Interviewee 20 explained that "illiteracy has contributed to the fighting because Boko Haram members are uneducated."

Theme 9: Employment, Education, and Empowerment may Overcome Poverty and Curb Conflict

I asked individual participants what are the measures that they see the government can take to overcome poverty in Northeast Nigeria. And did thy think those measures can help to end the conflict. The participants responded that employment, education, and empowerment may overcome poverty and reduce the conflict. For example, Interviewee 1 responded that "the government should provide job opportunities by building

industries, roads, encourage foreign investment, sensitize the population on the need to reduce birthrates and build medical facilities to reduce infant mortality." Interviewee 2 suggested that "government should invest in education. Most girls and boys do not go to schools so the government should do more on educating the youths. The government should embrace technology to reduce the rate of poverty in the Northeast."

Interviewee 3 explained that "government should empower the youths providing training to the people of the Northeast to enable them to find jobs." Also, Interviewee 4 says "Government should empower the people and build roads and industries. This will help reduce poverty. By empowerment, the government should encourage the people in the Northeast to learn trade like tailoring, shoe making, craftmanship, mechanics, electrician, and AC automation." Interviewee 4 suggested that "the government should hold talks with Boko Haram to end the conflict." Interviewee 5 explained that "the government should send more troops to the Northeast to recapture the land occupied by Boko Haram. Government should provide education to the children to reduce poverty." Interviewee 6 noted that "the government should empower the youths to eradicate poverty. Interviewee 7 said that "government should build good schools for the people." Interviewee 8 explained that "jobs are important as it will reduce poverty." Interviewee 9 pointed out that "jobs will occupy people's mind and they are not going to join Boko Haram." Furthermore, Interviewee 10 added that "the government should make peace with Boko Haram to end the fighting."

Interviewee 11 explained that "the only thing that can reduce poverty is jobs. The government should help the people to find employment by building more industries in the

region." Interviewee 12 responded to the question by suggesting that "government should improve the education of the people and provide jobs for them." Interviewee 13 suggested that "employment will reduce poverty." Interviewee 14 says that the poverty rate is so high in the Northeast because people are not working. "Government should implement policies that will bring jobs to the people." Interviewee 15 pointed out that "there are a lot of people with certificates, but they are not employed. Government should construct roads, build more industries, and encourage farming by providing fertilizers to the farmers. This will help reduce poverty and the conflict." Interviewee 17 suggested that "government should build more hospital to curb mortality rate." Interviewee 18 explained that "the government should build more schools to educate the population of Northeast Nigeria in order to curb poverty." Interviewee 18 suggested that "the government failed to teach the villages about the need for every child to be educated. As a result, the Northeast has one of the highest rates of illiteracy in Nigeria."

Interviewee 19 noted that "in the Northeast, most female children do not go to school. They either stay at home or get married early". Interviewee 19 suggested that "many schools should be built in the Northeast to educate the youths." Interviewee 19 added that "government should help train the youths and build industries for them to be employed. This will reduce poverty in the region."

Interviewee 20 said that "government should empower the youths to enable them to learn a trade such as tailoring. This will help reduce the poverty and bring a halt of the youths joining Boko Haram to fight the government." Also, Interviewee 20 explained that "Government should encourage dialogue within the communities of Northeast and

provide supports to the girls and women kidnapped and raped." Thus, Interviewee 20

noted "government should endeavor to reconcile the divided society of the Northeast.

The government should engage in conflict prevention or resolution measures to bring an

end to the conflict." Furthermore, Interviewee 20 added that "government should look for

ways to reintegrate some of the Boko Haram fighters by providing jobs." Interviewee 20

further explained that "government should work with foreign countries to help bring

peace in the region." Finally, Interviewee 20 said that "government should negotiate with

the terror group since military actions have failed to end the conflict."

Summary

In Chapter 4, I provided a concise explanation of the purpose of the study

supported by the key research question. As a novice researcher, I conducted a pilot study

consisting of six participants. This was done to enable me to identify my short comings in

relation to interviewing participants, setting the interview environment, and utilizing the

tape recorder. The demographics of the research participants were clearly articulated with

detail description of the settings, data collection, and data analogies. I analyzed the data

collected in a manner that enable him to extract the themes based on the responses of the

participants.

It should be noted that participants' responses are based on their own perceptions

and experiences about the conflict in the Northeast between the Nigerian government and

Boko Haram. The results of the study are based on a field study which is conducted in the

IDP camp in Algeria, Nigeria. I applied the IRB guidelines to ensure trustworthiness of

the research study and based on the responses of the participants, I inferred that although

there are other contributing factors, poverty is significantly responsible for the violent

conflict in the Northeast. Chapter 5 will be focused on the introduction, interpretation of

the finding the limitation of the study, recommendations, implication for social change

and conclusion.

Chapter 5: Summary and Conclusion

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to explore the poverty-conflict nexus and the activities of Boko Haram through the lens of experiences and perceptions of the citizens affected by the conflict in Northeast Nigeria. Researchers have conducted studies on the Boko Haram conflict with the Nigerian troops. However, the researchers focused more on the causes of the conflict rather than the experiences and perceptions of the citizens impacted by the fighting. None of the researchers have use the polarities of democracy theory (Benet, 2006) to conduct the study. These compelled me to conduct research on the topic. In addressing the gap, a qualitative approach and phenomenological method was applied in the study. This included an in-depth interview based on semistructured questions to probes the experiences and perceptions of the participants living in the Internal Displaced People's Camp in Abuja, Nigeria.

The approach allowed the me to select 20 participants to describe in their own words their perceptions and experienced of the conflict. My findings are an evaluative assessment and interpretation of the responses of the participants based on the research questions. The findings of the study enabled me to formulate salient recommendations that is useful for policy makers to implement to bring about social change not just in the Northeast, but Nigerian as whole.

Interpretation of the Findings

Interpretation of the Findings in Relationship to the Literature Review

The interpretation of the findings is based on the key research question. The central or key research question is how do the people of Northeast Nigeria attacked by Boko Haram perceive the conflict, and how has the situation affected their lives? The central research question was guided by semistructured questions protocol attached in Appendix A. The semistructured questions were designed to answer the central research questions. The findings of the study show significant impact of the participant's perceptions and experiences of insecurity and traumatization, sufferings from the conflict, unsuccessful efforts for peace, lack of support and inclusion in the democratic process, corruption in the democratic process, and poverty, employment, education, and emancipation. These were the themes that emerged from the participant's responses. Below is the elaboration of the nine themes that I identified.

Participants Express Insecurity and Trauma by Boko Haram Atrocities

I began by asking participants how long they have lived in the Northeast and in the Internal Displaced People's Camp in Abuja. Based on their responses, all participants were born and grew up in the Northeast. The 20 selected participants I interviewed have lived in the IDP camp for 5 to 10 years. I then proceed by asking the participants that while they live in the Northeast, did they experience or witness the conflict between Boko Haram and the government and what specific experiences did they witnessed. The conclusion drawn from participants' responses was that the conflict between government troops and Boko Haram led to insecurity and they were traumatized by the everyday

killings of people. By their own perceptions and experiences, the participants feel insecure and traumatized by the amount of violence.

The participants affirmed that the safety of their lives and those of their children were at stake. Participants are worried their children cannot go to school because the schools are target for Boko Haram attacks and kidnappings. All the participants expressed traumatic memories, fear, and uncertainty. The perceptions and experiences of trauma, fear, and uncertainty demonstrated by the participants indicates the Nigerian government has failed to provide security to the citizens of Northeast. Participant's narratives replicated Mehari's (2016) notion in the literature that Boko Haram is a threat to Nigerian security. The participants described their experience of the burning down of their homes, churches, schools, and market by Boko Haram. They provided vivid picture of the attacks on police station, government buildings, and suicide bombing by Boko Haram.

Members of Boko Haram are composed of illiterates who view education as evil. Members came from poor homes who are unemployed and dropped out from school. These findings are in line with Akanji (2015) and Ibrahim et al. (2016) who explained under the background of Boko Haram and the crisis in Northeast Nigeria. The beliefs of Boko Haram that education is evil were explained by the participants replicates the narratives in the literature by Agbiboa (2014). The participants expressed their dissatisfaction of living away from their homes.

Although they feel safe at the camp, their living condition is not comfortable compared to when they were living at their homes in the Northeast. Participants reiterated

the experiences of the conflict and how the perception of the fighting shaped their

psychological thought-process. They described their desperate escape into the bushes,

mountains, and to neighboring Cameroon without enough food and water. The

participants noted that while in Cameroon, the government of Cameroon generously

hosted them. The government of Cameroon gave them food and water and camps to live.

They were medically examined. However, they returned to Abuja because of the cross-

border attacks by Boko Haram. The studies conducted by Agbiboa, (2013), Akanji

(2015), Omede (2015), and Sani (2015) indicated 500 Cameroonians died because of

cross-border attacks by Boko Haram. This is consistent with the participants explanation.

Conflict Between Government Troops and Boko Haram Brought Suffering to the

Participants

I asked the participants if they experienced the atrocities of Boko Haram and what

are the ways the conflict between Boko Haram and government troops affected their

lives. Participants described the horror of the terror group. They experienced the

destruction of their homes, schools, churches, business, and farmland. The participants

explained that they witnessed the heading of people by Boko Haram. Dead bodies could

be seen all over the place. Based on the participants' responses, I concluded that the

conflict has brought sufferings to the participants. From the participants' narratives, it

appears the conflict has shattered their livelihood, medical facilities to care for the sick

people. Infant mortality rate increases because of lack of good medical facilities.

Participants' responses indicated the fighting separated families and rendered them

homeless.

The perceptions and experiences from the participants are in line with Awosusi (2017) suggestion in Chapter 1 regarding the social implication of the conflict. The scholar pointed that the attacks by Boko Haram created a humanitarian crisis in the Northeast including the Lake Chad basin made up of Cameroon, Niger, and Chad. Two million people were estimated displaced from their homes as the conflict intensified. And 80% of the displaced persons lives in areas without social amenities. Inadequate health facilities, water supply increases the risk of disease and the deaths of young children. The participants noted the number of youths begging in the streets have increased because of hunger. These beggars are known as almajiris. Participants explained that they feel as strangers in their own country. I interpreted this assertion to mean participants feel marginalized in their own country. The people in the Northeast have always felt underprivilege, a situation Boko Haram capitalized to launch attacks on the people who fail to cooperate and the government with the goal of eliminating poverty and marginalization in the Northeast.

The assertion of marginalization by the participants connects with Freire (1997) theory of education. According to Freire, marginalization may lead to sectarian violence. In other words, when certain citizens in a society feels they are oppressed, they will fight back to liberate themselves from the oppressed to bring about social change. Mohammed and James (2017) supported Freire's notion which replicates the current explanation of the participants. Mohammed and James explained that the oppressors are the elites who control the wealth in Nigeria. Marginalization in the Northeast led to the emergence of Boko Haram whose goal is to replace the federal system of government with an Islamic

state. Participants affirmed the fighting has disempowered them to educate their children. But the participants express their gratitude to some international organization that help in building a school in the camp for the children to learn.

Efforts by the Nigerian Government to Bring an end to the Conflict has Yielded Little Success

The findings that efforts by the Nigerian government to bring an end to the conflict has yielded little success is based on the responses of the participants. When I asked the participants what ways the Nigerian government has taken to bring an end to the conflict and to what extent has the efforts been successful or unsuccessful. most participants responded that the government efforts have been unsuccessful because Boko haram is still active in the Northeast. Some participants responded that the government sent troops to the region, but the troops have not been able to defeat Boko Haram. Boko Haram is still controlling a large part of the Northeast. The government has call for dialogue with Boko Haram to end the conflict, but the terror organization declined. The intention of the group is to replace the federal system of government with an Islamic state. The failure of the government to achieve peace is because of poor coordination and corruption in the government. The argument made by the participants is in line with Ibaba (2013) explanation in the literature that corruption in the government has hindered progress in ending the conflict.

The participants suggested that the government has failed to bring peace in the region because some government leaders are sponsoring Boko Haram. These leaders enriched themselves from the fighting and they knew that if the fighting stops, their

source of making money too would collapse. The government leaders provided funds and weapons to Boko Haram to fight the federal government. They provide information about the government plan to attack the terror group and government troop's positions in the battlefield. This situation makes it hard for government to be successful in implementing peace.

Participants explained that Boko Haram recruits from religious schools, unemployed youths, and sometimes force is used to recruits members. The response from participants replicates the argument made in the literature review by Adetoro (2012), Alahira (2015), and Omede and Omede (2015). The scholars named Senator Mohammed Ali Ndume of Borno South and Alhaji Banu Wakil who were arrested for sponsoring Boko Haram. Also, the ex-governor Kano State Ibrahim Sheharu and Isa Yuguda, and the governor of Bauchi State Bauchi State were accused of financing Boko Haram. These government officials provide information about the intention of the government.

Citizen Participation in the Democratic Process is not Supported by the Government, and the Process is not Inclusive

I identified this theme based on the participants response. I asked the participants what ways has the Nigerian government supported citizens participation in the democratic process? The participants responded that the government have not been supportive in the participation of democratic process and participation has not been inclusive. This is because most citizens do not have access to participate in the democratic process. Most of the citizens' vote does not count because the system is rigged and dominated by the elites. There is usually violence at the pooling station and

people are killed in the process. The government has done nothing to curb violence at the voting stations. This situation discouraged people from participating in the democratic process.

Boko Haram has taken advantage of the situation to launch attacks on the government. Benet's (2006) polarities of democracy theory can be applied in this situation. Benet developed the theory within the critical theory perspectives in bringing about positive social change by addressing institutional violence and oppression threatening the survival of human being. Ten polarities of democracy elements were developed and then paired into five elements. They included freedom and authority, justice and due process, diversity and equality, human rights and communal obligations, and participation and representation.

Participation as a polarity of democracy fits into the narratives of the participants. Participation is the ability of citizens to freely take part in the electoral process (Benet, 2006). Benet (2006) explained that democracy depends on the citizens and is expressed through meaningful participation and representation of all citizens. This means that all the citizens irrespective of sex, religion, culture, and age should be able to fully participate and represents in all forms of democratic institutions and the process. According to Benet, participation is the basic human rights of the citizens not excluding those in the Northeast. Any form of exclusion might encourage citizens to pick up arms especially if they feel the struggle will bring about social change. The fighting in the Northeast between Nigerian soldiers and Boko Haram is partly the lack of participation and inclusiveness of the citizens in the democratic process.

The participants' arguments in my study are in line with Cordenillo and Gardes's (2014) explanation in the literature that the democratic process in Nigeria is dominated by wealthy politicians. Minority groups are unable to fully participate in the democratic process or to vote for their own interest. Participation in the democratic process has not been inclusive and fair. Participants explained that politicians from major political parties buy the votes by bribing people to vote for them. Voter's registration is manipulated, and armed youths sponsored by some politicians appeared at the voting station and snatches ballot boxes. This condition discourages people from voting which makes the democratic process unfair and not inclusive. Citizens have lost trust on the government and political leaders. Falsification of election results and the political system discourages mass participation in the democratic process.

The government failures to combat the violence that impacts the welfare and well-being of many Nigerians who live in acute poverty has further hindered mass democratic participation. My study participants' responses are consistent with Falade (2014), Ibedo (2015), and Odo's (2015) arguments that participation in Nigeria is marred by violence due to irregularities. Political participation is controlled by money, ethnicity, and religion. The behavior of Boko Haram in the Northeast is partly due to lack of citizen participation in the Northeast. The participants told me that politicians make promises during the election, but the promises are never fulfilled. This factor including arms proliferation characterized by intimidation discouraged many citizens from participating in the democratic process.

Interests of Some Citizens are not Represented by Government Leaders Effectively

Representation as a polarity function is a system of government whereby citizens elect their leaders in a democratic process who represents them in the government (Benet, 2006). I asked the participants in what ways government leaders effectively represents the interests of all citizens. Based on their response, I concluded that the interest of some citizens is not represented by government effectively. The participants responded that they are being represented through the National Assembly that is composed of the House of Representatives presided by the House Speaker and the Senate presided by the Senate President. Participants noted that their representatives do not effectively represent their interests. Participants noted that the leaders enrich themselves and their immediate family members.

Based on the participants' responses, those who represented them in the National Assembly or in the government do not seek policies that favors their interest. Participants noted that the Northeast lacks industries and unemployment is high in the region. Farmers need fertilizers to improve agricultural production. The Northeast do not have good medical facilities, good drinking water, and good roads. These are their interests that they believed the government leaders or those representing them in the National Assembly should be advocating for them. But these leaders concentrate to maintain themselves in power. Political resources are not equitably distributed in many communities in the Northeast. The failure to represent the interests of the people in the Northeast has contributed to the fighting. However, some of the participants explained that there are few senators who are fighting for the interest of the people living within their local

government areas. The senators supplied motor bikes to some citizens to run transportation. But not everybody could get one of the bikes.

Some of the governors such as the governor of Bauchi State, Gombe State, and Borno State are building schools and homes for those whose homes were burnt down by Boko Haram to encouraged displaced people to come back home. However, not everybody whose home was destroyed has the privilege to have a home build by the governor. The participants explained that it is the reason they are still living in the IDP. Active terror activities by Boko Haram in the Northeast are scaring people from returning.

Participation and representation are two fundamental elements of the polarities of democracy theory coined by Benet (2013). According to Benet, democracy exists when all citizens of a country can express themselves through meaningful participation. This means all the citizens of Nigeria must be able to participate and be represented in all forms of democratic process. It implies the democratic institutions and democracy reflects the will of the people. Benet suggested that participation is a basic human right; the basic duty of all citizens to freely participate in an election, and representation the ability of the citizens to be fairly represented by their elected leaders. The failures of any government to implement these principles in the society risks conflict. When citizens view a struggle as the only means that can bring social change, they will pick up arms as we have seen with the situation in the Northeast.

Corruption in the Democratic Process Discouraged Citizens from Participating

The responses from the participants enabled me to draw this conclusion that corruption in the democratic process discouraged citizens from participating. Most participants used the word *corruption* to describe the democratic process in Nigeria. When I asked the participants that are there ways in which the Nigerian government has discouraged citizen's participation in a democratic process and to what extent does this contributes to the unfair treatment of citizens. The participants responded that the Nigerian government is corrupt as government officials embezzled money for themselves. The government discourages people from participation because voter's cards are bought by government officials. ID cards are also difficult to get during this period of election. This makes it difficult for people to vote. Political participation is limited in the Northeast.

The participants responded that leaders are often imposed on them. These leaders do not have their interest at heart. They feel they are unfairly treated by the government. The response from the participants reflects the argument made by Ogoegbunem (2014). Ogoegbunem suggested that corruption and mismanagement was responsible for the violent conflict in the Niger Delta Region and have contributed to the emergence of Boko Haram. Despite Nigeria's oil wealth, many northerners live in poverty and high-rate unemployment. The condition has discouraged many to participate in the democratic process. The corruption situation has led to resentment among the poor. Also, the situation has facilitated the conflict in the Northeast. Corruption in Nigeria is manifested in the form of bribery, embezzlement, and kickbacks.

Government Failures to Represent the Interest of all Citizens Contributed to the Conflict

I asked the participants what ways has the government leaders failed to represent the interests of all citizens and to what extent does this contributes to the Boko Haram conflict? The participants responded that the government had failed to represent their interests. For example, the elected leader has failed to bring development in their communities. Unemployment is high due to lack of jobs in the Northeast. This has motivated the youths to join Boko Haram. It has intensified the fighting and makes it hard for the government to defeat Boko Haram. The argument put forward by the participants is in consistent with what Mohammed and Mohammed suggested in 2015 that high-rate unemployment and lack of development have created poverty and exacerbated Boko Haram activities in the Northeast. Jobs and safety are the foothold for effective representation. However, these are non-existent in the Northeast region of Nigeria.

Participants suggested that misrepresentation by government leaders has protracted the fighting. Elected leaders focused more on themselves than those in needs. The behavior of the leaders was responsible for the youths to join Boko Haram because people are living in misery. The fact that the people of the Northeast do not always see their leaders in person has led to frustration and anger within the communities. Boko Haram has taken advantage of the situation to provide money and food to the youths. They are brainwashed and sent to carry out suicide bombing attacks on government buildings, civilians, and international organization's structures in Nigeria. The region has high illiteracy rate because most female children stay at home or gets married at early

age. The male children are made to work on the farms. They rear cattle that belongs to their parent. The situation makes the youths to be vulnerable for Boko Haram recruitment. As such they are easily convinced by Boko Haram to commit violent atrocities.

Poverty, Religion, Bad Governance, Illiteracy Contribute to the Violence

I arrived at this conclusion that poverty, religion, bad governance, and illiteracy is responsible for the conflict based on the explanation of the participants. When the participants were asked do you believe poverty contributes to the Boko Haram conflict in the Northeast, and if so, what role do you see poverty playing, the participants responded that poverty plays a major role in the conflict. Lack of industries has led to a high rate of unemployment. The region lacks basic medical facilities, roads, and schools. The fighting in the northeast has discouraged foreign investment into the region. The rate of poverty has increased. Food production has dropped because farmland has been destroyed by Boko Haram.

The farmers are escaping the fighting and moving to other parts of Nigeria for safety. Drought has affected agricultural production leading to low productivity. The fighting has also disrupted cross-border trade, transportation, and the ability for people to purchase. The economy of the region has collapsed because of the conflict. The Northeast is the poorest region in Nigeria. The assertion by the participants is supported by Oluwatayo's (2014) argument that the impact of poverty could trigger discontent and conflict. The effects of the conflict are accompanied by the destruction of people's assets, illness, and food shortages. Participants' responses about poverty in the Northeast is in

line with Khan and Cheri (2016) explanation in the literature. The authors suggested that the Northeast is the poorest and most disturbed region in the country. The region is 77.7 % poorer than any other region in Nigeria. Other researchers such as Musa (2012), Adetoro (2012), Aiyedogbon (2012), Ayegba (2015), and Ibaba (2013) have suggested in the literature that poverty is responsible for the persisting fighting in the Northeast between government troops and Boko Haram. The situation has impacted the lives of many people in the Northeast.

Religion was part of the reason of the ongoing conflict in the Northeast region. Participants suggested that Boko Haram are convincing the youths that the government is against Islam, so they must join the fighting and defend Islam. The youths are brainwashed by Boko Haram as they are ill informed that if they die, they are going to heaven. Many youths joined Boko Haram in the fighting because they intend to die and go to heaven. The terror organizations considered Christianity as evil. The participants suggestions about the impact of religion in conflict is consistent with Akinola's (2013) argument that religion is a contributing factor of the fighting in Northeast Nigeria. The religious conflict between Muslims and Christians in Nigeria has been highjacked by Boko Haram. They have misrepresented the teachings of Islam to the youths with the goal of establishing sharia law in Nigeria. The group has engaged in sporadic attacks on civilians and government officials to achieve this goal. Other scholars or researchers such as Adogame (2010) have supported the narratives of the participants in the literature of Chapter 2.

In relation to bad governance, the participants alluded to the fact that people have distrusted the government. Bad governance has brought about hopelessness and frustration amongst the citizens of the Northeast, especially the youths. It has led to social and economic deprivation and the rise of Boko Haram. The failure of the government to provide basic goods to the people of the Northeast has encouraged violence on the part of Boko Haram. Bad governance has encouraged high crime waves in the region. The government has done nothing to improve the lived of the people in the Northeast. The participants' perceptions and experiences replicate Mohamed and Mohamed's (2015) view about the governance in Nigeria. I reiterated that poor governance in Nigeria is responsible for the fighting in the Northeast. The rise of Boko Haram in the Northeast is because of failures to provide economic opportunities, basic goods, human development to the people of the Northeast.

Finally, illiteracy has a role to play in the conflict. The participants' perceptions and experiences explained that the Northeast has the highest rate of illiteracy in the country. A lot of people could not read and write. Their only source of education is the religious schools where they are manipulated about the teaching of Islam. This makes it hard for people to distinguish between rights and wrongs. As a result of this, the people are easy targets for Boko Haram recruitment. It is also the reason the youths who had joined Boko Haram and Boko Haram leaders killed people without remorse. It should be noted that the participants' explanations are consistent with Musa (2012) and Fulgence (2015) in the literature.

Employment, Education, and Empowerment May Overcome Poverty and Curb the Conflict

When I asked participants, what are the measures that you see the government can take to overcome poverty in Northeast Nigeria and do you think those measures can help to end the conflict, their responses were that employment, education, and emancipation man overcome the poverty and curb the conflict. In relation to employment, the participants explained that the government should provide jobs by constructing roads, encourage foreign investment, and educate the people on the need to reduce birth rates. The government should build hospitals to reduce infant mortality. The government should encourage technology in the Northeast to reduce poverty.

The participants suggested that the Nigerian government should invest in education in the Northeast because young boys and girls do not go to school. Education will help them become aware of the evils of Boko Haram. The participants explained that the government should empower people by providing training to the people to enable them to search for jobs. People should learn trade such as mechanics, tailoring, shoe making, electrician, etc. to eradicate poverty in the society and to bring an end to the conflict. The participants believe that when the people's mind is occupied with something to do, no one will think of joining Boko Haram.

Interpretation of the Findings in Relationship to the Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework used for this study was Benet's (2013) polarities of democracy. Benet suggested that societies consist of structural forces that work to create oppression. To overcome the conditions of oppression, Benet identified 10 essential

democratic values that are arranged as five interrelated pairs. The five paired elements include Freedom and Authority, Justice and Due Process, Diversity and Equality, Human Rights and Communal Obligations, and Participation and Representation. To overcome oppression Benet states that these five pairs must be leveraged to maximize the positive aspects of each pole while minimizing the negative aspects. In examining the experiences and perceptions of those impacted by the conflict in Northeast Nigeria between the army and Boko haram, the findings suggest that at least three of the pairs are not being leveraged well: Freedom and Authority, Human Rights and Communal Obligations, and Participation and Representation. Further, because each of the polarities of democracy pairs are also interrelated with the other pairs this suggests that the Diversity and Equality pair and the Justice and Due Process pair are also negatively managed.

Clearly the results of the study identified significant suffering experienced by the people of Northeast Nigeria who were victims of Boko Haram violence. These findings suggest that the freedom and authority pair was not being managed effectively by the regional government. By failing to use the legitimate authority of the government to either protect the freedom of the victims or to address the needs of the victims once they were harmed, the government was unable to obtain the positive aspects of the freedom and authority pair. The consequence of this failure is that authority in Northeast Nigeria broke down and the region became chaotic.

The perceptions of the study's participants also suggest that the human rights and communal obligations pair is not being managed. Boko Haram engages in inhumane treatment of the citizens while the government is unable to provide public goods such as

good roads, hospitals, schools, and industries to provide jobs to the people. The outcome of this failure was the emergence of the violent conflict that led to the separation of families, homelessness, killings, and diseases in Northeast Nigeria. The interviewees attested that there is high unemployment rate, high poverty rate, bad roads, poor medical facilities, and bad drinking water. Thus, the government is failing to protect the human rights of the victims of Boko Haram violence while also failing to meet the communal obligations of society.

Participants in the study also revealed that participation in the democratic process is not supported by the government. The people of Northeast Nigeria and Nigeria in general do not have access to participate in the democratic process. The participants alleges that some citizens are not represented by government leaders effectively. In addition, the findings suggest that the positive aspects of representation are not being achieve because of corruption among governmental officials. This also discouraged citizens from participating.

Thus, the findings of the study suggest that because of the failure on the part of the government to effectively manage the polarities of the democracy, the conflict engulfed Northeast Nigeria and brought insecurity as the people in the Northeast were traumatized by the mass killings conducted by Boko Haram. Participants in the study felt they are unfairly treated, which is an indication of the failure to achieve justice. This situation had led to some disgruntled individuals joining Boko Haram in fighting against the government. With the present conditions, it is hard for the government to achieve any form of positive social change within Northeast Nigeria. However, the study participants suggested that employment, education, and empowerment may overcome poverty and curb the conflict.

But the study suggests that this can be achieved only if the Nigerian government is able to maximize the positive aspects while minimizing the negative aspects of the polarities of democracy. Thus, the findings of the study suggest that the polarities of democracy may be useful to plan, implement, and evaluate the policy recommendations that I make to achieve positive social change in the Implications section below.

Limitations of the Study

The focus of the study was to explore the poverty- conflict nexus and the activities of Boko haram in Northeast Nigeria. To achieve this, the study was guided by a central research question: How do the people of Northeast Nigeria attack by Boko Haram perceive the conflict, and how has the situation affected their lives? Understanding the experiences and the perceptions of the citizens affected by the fighting helps in addressing the research question. The experiences and perceptions of the participants regarding the conflict was achieved from the data collected and analyzed. The study gave participants the voice to express themselves in relation to the topic. From their own words, important themes about their experiences and perception were identified.

I endeavored to provide detailed explanation of the procedure and context of the data collected for readers to interpret and apply the interpretation or results in their own way. This was done to enhance transformability. The significance of the findings of the study was limited to the participants who had lived and experienced the conflict. This implied the data collected was from 20 selected participants living in the IDP camp in Abuja, Nigeria. The participants provided a reflected story of their experience of the conflict during their interview. I considered the narratives accurate because the

participants witnessed the atrocities of Boko Haram in the Northeast. However, I understand that there were certain things that some of the participants kept secret with them because they did not want to shed tears. This situation limits the ability of the researcher to extract pertinent information. Overall, the limitation did not influence the outcome of the results.

Environmental factor was another limitation the researcher experienced during the interview process. There were moments that I experienced noise from torrential rainfall. This was a situational factor that the researcher could not control. I had to pause the interview for a while and proceed when the noise reduced. This condition did not influence participants response.

The assurance of confidentiality from the researcher resolved a limitation factor known as socially desirable of response and acquiescence. The issue of bias on the part of the researcher which can distort the findings was solved by bracketing and reflexivity. The study contributes to other body of research by providing recommendations that policy makers can implement to bring peace and social change in the Northeast region of Nigeria. The study also provided room for further research.

Recommendations for Further Research

I examined the perceptions and experiences of the displaced participants that were affected by the conflict. Based on their responses and the limitation of the study in terms of the scope, the result of the study may not apply to all the people in the Northeast region. This is because only 20 participants were selected to represent the Northeast region. My decision to limit the sample participants to 20 is because other researchers

have previously used smaller samples to conduct qualitative research. My study focused

on 20 participants affected by Boko Haram atrocities. I recommended that study should

be conducted for people who experienced the violence of Boko Haram in other countries

like Cameroon, Niger, and Chad.

I had the privilege to interview only the displaced persons in the IDP camp in

Abuja who had lived and experienced the conflict in the Northeast. However, I did not

have the opportunity to interview those who had experienced the violent conflict and are

still living in the Northeast. It is for this reason that I recommended future researchers to

conduct interview on those left behind in the Northeast to gain an insight of their own

perceptions and experiences about the conflict. A researcher should examine the

perceptions and experienced of the people who decided to stay behind in the Northeast.

Further research should be conducted on Boko Haram members to identity their attitude,

perceptions, and experiences of the conflict. In my opinion, this will create a balance in

knowledge of how the conflict is reported on the academic arena.

Implications for Social Change

Peace Initiatives

It is true that conflict is unpredictable, and it comes with consequences beyond the

killings of people caught in the conflict. The conflict in the Northeast has caused

immigration, separation of families, destruction of infrastructures, and refugee problems.

In other words, the economic, political, and social institutions were destroyed. The

conflict has had a spillover effect as Nigeria's neighboring countries such as Chad,

Cameroon, and Niger are drawn into the conflict because of Boko Haram cross-border attacks.

Social change can be realized more effectively in Northeast Nigeria when there is peace. I recommended the Nigerian government to engage in negotiations with Boko Haram. The interests of the militant group must be reconciled for any successful negotiation to occur. The government should investigate the concerns of Boko Haram and devise creative solutions into these problems. These gestures will help to mitigate the violence and encourage the citizens to engage in rebuilding the ravaged society for the benefits of all.

First track or official diplomacy is recommended as a contributor to peace in Northeast Nigeria because it provides opportunities for joint efforts, communication, and cross-cultural understanding between the parties in conflict. The approach encourages constructive engagement and joint problem solving.

Furthermore, I recommended a principled negotiation that emphasizes mutual gains which could be useful in managing the conflict. It is a form of consensus building that requires informal face-to-face interaction between Nigerian government and Boko Haram. It is an approach that involves an all-win rather than a win-lose. Principled negotiation is recommended because it seeks agreement between Boko Haram and the Nigerian government and addresses their key concerns. Lewicki, Barry and Saunders, (2007) noted that principled negotiation helps the parties in conflict to recognize how their relationships are entangled with substantive issues so that both parties look for a peace solution.

Next, I recommended the use of a participatory approach in conflict management that involves a joint effort of the Nigerian government and Boko Haram to find a mutually acceptable solution. Theis means the parties must talk to one another, exchange information about their interests and priorities, work together to identify the issues that divide them. This may help to transform the society in Northeast Nigeria that has been crippled by the fighting. Pruitt and Kim (2004) suggested that this approach can de-escalate tensions.

I recommended second track diplomacy to bring an end to violence in Northeast Nigeria. This implies all the chiefs, Imams, government representatives, and clergymen in Northeast Nigeria must come together in the form of a conference to address the problems that led to the conflict and to derive solutions to the end of the conflict. According to Davies and Kaufman, second track diplomacy implies the coming together of opinion leaders, influential individuals, and professionals within Northeast Nigeria to work together to find solutions that would help transform the conflict.

Multi-track diplomacy is another viable recommendation that can mitigate the conflict in Northeast Nigeria and help bring about positive social change. This requires the involvement of some international powers such as the United States and Britain to act as mediators. As Davies and Kaufman (2003) articulated, multi-track diplomacy looks at the web of interconnected activities that operate together to help attain a common goal.

Finally, the government must embark on disarming Boko Haram fighters. Social change can never be realized in a weaponized society. The government must endeavor to collect and destroy all the weapons that are in the hands of Boko Haram fighters. The

fighters should be re-integrated into the society. Re-integration involves the process of training the ex-fighters so that they can easily find jobs in the society. This may contribute to the society becoming more stabilized.

Governmental Policies

The study findings suggest important policy recommendations that policy makers in the Nigerian government can utilize to impact the situation in the northeast. One recommendation is that the Nigerian government prioritize good governance that is effective and accountable. The government should address corruption by developing anticorruption laws and regulations enforced by investigation and prison terms when violations occur. Also, the establishment of oversight mechanisms in government processes to ensure accountability is recommended. Budget deficits should be kept under control by mobilizing revenue and increasing the efficiency of the tax system that is beneficial to the citizens.

I recommended that the Nigerian government should create advisory councils to advise on joint military political policies consisting of Boko Haram and the Nigerian troops. In addition, the government should restore managerial capacity for governance which involved training, recruitment, and appointment of public policy/administration personnel. The selection should be on merit-based criteria. Capacity building must be encouraged through advanced training and mentoring.

Furthermore, I recommended the Nigerian government reform the public administration sector to ensure that the country's resources and regulatory powers

are not abused by government officials. Corruption, cronyism, favoritism, and the use of government policies and regulations to benefit the powerful or the rich must be discouraged. The Nigerian government should encourage administrative oversight to root out malpractices in government. Furthermore, the Nigerian government should create monitoring mechanisms of civil service personnel in the Northeast region to mitigate inefficiency, corruption, and discrimination that is not healthy for peace.

Inclusive and broad-based public participation is key to social change not just in the Northeast but Nigeria as a whole. The government should encourage civic participation and empowerment. By this, all the citizens should have the opportunity to engage in public activities including the political process. Women must be included too in the political process. Civic participation and empowerment could act as a check on the government and might mitigate the violent conflict that has ravaged the Northeast. This may help transform the conflict and enhance a situation whereby the citizens can strengthen their common values and societal norms for a better future. The Nigeria government should address the issue of exclusion by the Northeasterners and other minority groups in Nigeria who felt victimized and marginalized. In doing so, these agitating groups would realize the promotion of their interests by the government.

The Nigeran government leaders must endeavor to represent the interests of their citizens. This implies that the citizens should be allowed to choose their own leaders to represent their interests in the National Assembly. The citizens should have the power to remove the leaders in office if they fail to represent their interests. Transparency and

accountability can serve as a blueprint for social change to occur in the Northeast and Nigeria as a whole.

Government should invest in the training and education of the citizens of the Northeast to reduce illiteracy and a lack of professional skills. A society with high literacy rates is good for innovation and the development of local communities. The government must reform the security sector by training the citizens for effective governance. When there is security, peace is more likely. Economic opportunity and growth can contribute to peace. This is because poverty has been a root cause of the violent conflict in the Northeast. To achieve this goal the government should embark on monetary and fiscal policies that will curb inflation and provide jobs to the people. The government should approach infrastructure development if social change is to be realized. The government should build roads, schools, electric power, pipe borne water, and telecommunications lines. This is because infrastructures are important for economic, psychical, social, and political continuity. This can create jobs for the youths in the Northeast. It can provide income to the poor families and narrow the poverty gap. These measures may sustain the economy of the Northeast and Nigeria as a whole. The Nigerian government should rehabilitate the agricultural sector in the Northeast. Revamping the agricultural sector damaged by the conflict can provide employment to many people in the Northeast and transform the conflict for the better.

Finally, the Nigerian government should protect natural resources that are integral to economic recovery and political stability. The government should reinforce issue-based politics over identity politics. More so, the development of a vibrant civil society

should be encouraged by the Nigerian government. This is important for the realization of social change in the communities of Nigeria.

Conclusion

The goal of the study was to examine the poverty-conflict nexus and the activities of Boko Haram in Northeast Nigeria. The research design was a qualitative study based on a phenomenological approach to answer the key research questions. This was guided by semistructured interview protocol questions attached in Appendix A. The findings of the study are in line with previous studies conducted in Northeast Nigeria. However, previous studies failed to focus on the experiences and perceptions of the affected citizens. I filled this gap by focusing on the perceptions and experiences of the affected participants who were victims of Boko Haram violence. If the experiences and perceptions of the citizens of the Northeast have been examined by researcher's unknown to me, none have utilized Benet's (2013) polarities of democracy as a theoretical framework to conduct research in Northeast Nigeria. The polarities of democracy was important to the study because it provides an understanding of the ongoing conflict.

A literature review on the topic discussed the literature search strategy, the conceptual framework of Johnson's (1992) polarity management and the theoretical framework of Benet's (2013) polarities of democracy. The two frameworks guided the researcher in achieving the goal of the study. The theoretical foundation of Benet's model and the theoretical proposition/assumptions was examined to understand how the theory utilized for this study originated. The poverty conflict-nexus and the activities of Boko Haram in the Northeast, the recruitment, tactics, sponsorship, and the communication

method of the group was examined. Poverty as a concept, and the polarities of democracy in the context of the study was discussed. I elaborated on the theory to provide readers with an insight of the theoretical model. The literature review assessed John Lock's theory of separation of powers, Rousseau's notion of freedom and authority, Freire's theory of education, and the works of other scholarly researchers who had conducted relevant studies in Northeast Nigeria. The aim of reviewing the peer review articles and journals was to uncover gaps that would enable the researcher to conduct his study based on the gaps. In other words, the articles the researcher reviewed served as a road map in structuring the study.

Regarding data collection, I used a semistructured interview protocol that involved face-to-face interviews. Purposive sampling was used to select the target population. The target population are those who had lived and experienced the conflict in Northeast Nigeria. They were 18 years to 70 years. In all, 20 participants were selected for the interviews that occurred in the IDP camp in Abuja, Nigeria. The data collected were transcribed verbatim from a Sony audio recorder. The evidence of trustworthiness of the study was established by credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability. Finally, the results of the study enabled me to develop recommendations for further research, recommendations for peace, and recommendations for positive social change.

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Appendix A: Semistructured Interview Protocol Questions

1.   How long did you in live in Northeast Nigeria?

2.   While you lived in Northeast Nigeria, did you experience or witness the conflict

between Boko Haram and the government? If so, what specific conflict activities did

you experience?

3.   Did you experience or witness atrocities on the part of Boko Haram?

4.   In what ways does the conflict between Boko Haram and the government troops

affect the people living within Northeast Nigeria?

5.   What steps has the Nigerian government taken to bring an end to the conflict? To

what extent have these efforts been successful or unsuccessful?

6.   In what ways has the Nigerian government supported citizen participation in the

democratic process? To what extent do these activities contribute to fair and inclusive

participation?

7.   In what ways do government leaders effectively represent the interests of all

citizens?

8.   Are there ways in which the Nigerian government has discouraged citizen

participation in the democratic process? If so, to what extent does this contribute to the

unfair treatment of citizens?

9.   Are there ways in which government leaders fail to effectively represent the

interests of all citizens? If so, to what extent does this contribute to the Boko Haram

conflict?

10.   Do you believe that poverty contributes to the Boko Haram conflict in Northeast Nigeria? If so, what role do you see poverty playing?

11.   Are there measures that you see that the government can take to overcome poverty in Northeast Nigeria? If so, do you think those measures can help to end the conflict?

Appendix B: NEMA Acceptance Letter

THE PRESIDENCY
NATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY
ABUJA OPERATION OFFICE
No. 58, Mambolo Street, Wuse Zone II, Abuja, Nigeria, P.M.B. 357 Garki,
Tel: 08028128008, 07067723201 E-mail: nemafct@yahoo,com, nemaa0063@gmail.com

NEMA/AZOO/GM/56/II

Emmanuel Agbormbai
Walden University
100 S. Washington Avenue
Ste 900, Minneapolis
55401, USA.

RE: A REQUEST TO CONDUCT DATA COLLECTION AT THE INTERNALLY
DISPLACED PERSONS (IDP's) CAMP IN THE FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY (FCT)
ABUJA.

Your letter dated 20th November, 2019, to conduct data collection in the form
of interview at the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP's) Camp in the Federal
Capital Territory is acknowledged.

2. Please note that you have the Agency's cooperation at all levels of your
research findings.

3. You are further informed that the data collected shall remain confidential
and not accessible to anyone outside the research team without the Agency's
permission.

4. Please accept my assurances and warmest regards.

BITRUS SAMUEL
HEAD,AOO
31st January, 2020.

Website: www.nema.gov.ng, E-mail: info@nema.gov.ng