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Nonreligious Explanations of Boko Haram's Resilience in Nigeria

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Walden University

College of Health Sciences and Public Policy

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Jimmy Imo

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
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the review committee have been made.

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Walden University
2022

Abstract

Nonreligious Explanations of Boko Haram's Resilience in Nigeria

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MPhil, Political Communication, University of Liverpool, 2003

MSc, Industrial Relation & Personnel Management, University of Lagos, 1991

BSC Political Science, University of Lagos 1987

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Public Policy and Administration

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August 2022

Abstract

Over the past decade, Boko Haram has become one of the world's deadliest terror organizations. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore nonreligious explanations for the problem of resilience of Boko Haram in Nigeria. Rational choice theory provided the primary framework for the study. Data were collected through in-person and telephone interviews with 14 religious and government subject matter experts. Other sources of data included media publications, documents, audio-visual materials, and the internet. Data were inductively coded and subjected to thematic analysis. Findings showed that instead of religious ideology, Boko Haram's resilience was due to poor policy formulation and implementation as well as corruption and other government failures. Recommendations included comprehensive reviews of government policies, adequate implementation, and a combination of hard military offensive and nonmilitary measures capable of making Boko Haram unattractive to youths. Findings may be used to enhance positive social change through the understanding of researchers and policymakers in developing blueprints for counterterrorism, boosting socioeconomic and political developments in Nigeria, and promoting a return to normal life of Nigerians in the northeast.

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June 2022

Dedication

To the “Gentleman and his Lady”

Sir Samuel and Lady Agnes Imo

My dear parents

They loved till the end

Even death could not separate them

Forever in our hearts

May 15, 2021, a day like no other

Acknowledgments

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My parents (while they lived) and my brothers and sisters all played significant parts in supporting me during this dissertation. I say thank you! My wife, Yinka, and children, Kevin, Martin-Luther, and Ijeoma, you have been amazing, and I love you all. The great parts you all played leading to the completion of this dissertation will remain

inestimable. And to all other friends and family too numerous to mention, thank you and God bless you all. Finally, my gratitude would not be complete without my great appreciation to my governor and boss, His Excellency, Distinguished Senator Hope Uzodimma. Words elude me to thank you for the great confidence you repose in me. May God continue to order your footsteps as you formulate great policies to lead Imo State to the higher levels of development.

This research project would not have been possible without the grace of the Almighty God. In Him I find my being. To Him, I give all the glory!

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

The intent of this study was to probe the role that Islamic fundamentalism or radical Islam played in Boko Haram's terrorist activities in Nigeria. Though Nigeria is constitutionally considered a secular state without an official state religion (Nigerian Constitution, 1999), Boko Haram tended to anchor its terrorist activities on the quest to overthrow the secular status of Nigeria and replace it with an Islamic State. When the Boko Haram terrorism phenomenon started in 2009, it was viewed as another localized conflict that would quickly be arrested by the Nigerian authorities (Cook, 2011; Shuaibu & Salleh, 2015). However, 10 years later, the terror group has expanded beyond its initial scope to become one of the world's deadliest terror organizations (Foreign Terrorist Organization, 2013; Global Terrorism Index, 2015).

Although some writers about Boko Haram (Ababa, 2013; Campbell, 2014; Malasowe, 2016; Ozoigbo, 2016; Shuaibu et al., 2015) implicated Islamic fundamentalism for the terror organizations' resilience, there are indications that nonreligious factors may be culpable for the resilience and exponential spread of Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria and neighboring countries. Consequently, it became pertinent to ask whether Islamic fundamentalism was the reason behind the resilience shown by Boko Haram, or whether there were nonreligious factors that could be blamed for the phenomenon. In the current study, I explored the role of nonreligious factors that may be responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram in the past decade. Findings may be used to promote the formulation and implementation of appropriate government policies aimed at tackling the terrorism menace.

I conducted a qualitative case study of one of the world's deadliest terrorist organizations as determined by the Foreign Terrorist Organization (2013) and the Global Terrorism Index (2015). The Islamic terror group Boko Haram has become the deadliest terror group in the world, averaging 14 deaths in each of its attacks in 2014. Due to Boko Haram's deadliness, it was said to have recorded the highest number of deaths second only to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS/ISIL; Global Terrorism Index, 2015). Global Terrorism Index stated, "terrorism remains highly concentrated with most of the activity occurring in just five countries — Iraq, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Syria" (p.2). In Iraq, the terrorist group responsible for the greatest number of fatalities is ISIL. The group is also known by other names such as Islamic State (IS), ISIS, or its Arabic name Daesh (Global Terrorism Index, 2015). Global Terrorism Index observed that "while 24 per cent of terrorist attacks resulting in deaths were not attributable to any organization in 2014, of the deaths that are attributable, over 50 per cent were caused by either ISIL or Boko Haram" (p. 14).

Despite pronouncements to that effect (Campbell, 2014; Shuaibu et al., 2015), it is not clear that Islamic fundamentalism is responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram. Therefore, I explored the nonreligious factors that may be responsible for the continued existence of Boko Haram. Since 2009, over 20,000 people have been killed and 2.6 million people have been displaced from their ancestral homes (Al Jazeera, 2016). In 2014, though ISIS extremists captured the major news headlines around the world, Boko Haram was a deadlier terror organization (Global Terrorism Index, 2015). In that year, Boko Haram killed 6,644 people, of whom 77% were private citizens, compared to 6,073

people killed by ISIS (Ratnam, 2015). A more recent study by two different groups that monitor violence in Nigeria indicated higher casualty figures caused by Boko Haram terrorism. According to Campbell and Harwood (2018), a compilation of data from the Council of Foreign Relations known as Nigeria Security Tracker and the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project, based at the University of Sussex, revealed that Boko Haram's deadly impact is far higher than previously thought.

From 2009, Boko Haram has metamorphosed into the terror organization that it is today. Boko Haram has killed thousands and bombed government facilities such as police stations and military installations. Private homes, churches, mosques, and entire villages have not been spared. The United Nations (UN) office building in Abuja, Nigeria's capital city, was also bombed. The bombing of the UN building by Boko Haram on August 26, 2011, introduced an international dimension to the campaign of terror (Bartolotta, 2011). That incident, which claimed the lives of 21 UN employees and injured 73 others, was described by Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, then secretary-general of the UN, as an assault on people whose lives were devoted to serving others (Guardian, 2011). Nigeria's minister of state for foreign affairs, Mrs. Viola Onwuliri, described the carnage as an attack on the world and not only against Nigeria (British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), 2011).

Boko Haram also kidnapped 276 young schoolgirls from their government schools' hostel in Chibok town, Borno State, northeastern Nigeria (Al Jazeera, 2016). This event occurred on April 14–15, 2014. Although some of the girls managed to escape, about 218 others were not so lucky (Al Jazeera, 2016). They were taken into

captivity and held for over 2 years. According to Hill (2014), the Chibok school girls' kidnapping resembled the kidnapping of schoolgirls in the 1990s and 2000s in Algeria. Hill noted that the girls were kidnapped to be used as sex slaves and to cow the civilian population into submission. It was not until October 2016 that the Nigerian government managed to secure the release of 21 of the girls. The terms of the agreement with Boko Haram, under which the 21 girls were released, though not yet clear, were reportedly negotiated by the Swiss government and the International Committee of the Red Cross (BBC, 2016). In March 2017, the government of President Muhammadu Buhari also secured the release of another 82 of the girls, in a swap agreement between the government and the terror organization.

Almost 3 years after their kidnapping, about 100 of the girls were still in the custody of the terror group or were not accounted for (Busari & Croft, 2017). Boko Haram, in another brazen display of terror in 2018, reenacted the mass kidnapping of another group of schoolgirls. The event took place in Dapchi, Yobe State on February 19, 2018. On that day, as if to taunt the government of President Muhammadu Buhari who had claimed to have technically defeated Boko Haram, the terror organization abducted 110 schoolgirls from a government-owned school in Yobe State. The most prominent captive from the Dapchi schoolgirls, who is still being held by Boko Haram, is the young Christian girl, Leah Sharibu (Olokor, 2018). Despite concerted efforts by government, local, and international civil society organizations, she was reportedly still being held because she refused to renounce her Christian faith before her captors (Olokor, 2018).

Even though the government of President Buhari has secured the release of most of the girls through a means that was shrouded in mystery, there are lingering questions about the abductions and release of the girls. These questions speak to the religious and/or nonreligious reasons for the continued existence, resilience, and spread of Boko Haram. Despite the religious motivations of Boko Haram, as alluded to by some writers (Campbell, 2014, Shuaibu et al., 2015), I explored the nonreligious factors that may have been responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram in the last 10 years. For instance, despite the professed radical Islamic faith of Boko Haram, it is not clear how the kidnapping of the Dapchi girls was possible and executed in almost the same way as the kidnapping of the Chibok girls.

Bolaji (2018) raised pertinent questions arising from the abductions of the Dapchi girls. According to Bolaji, it is not clear who ordered the withdrawal of troops from security checkpoints near the school and other strategic locations in the community. Second, Bolaji stated that Amnesty International claimed to have forewarned the Nigerian Army headquarters about the impending attack by Boko Haram, yet the girls were still kidnapped. Finally, the kidnapped girls were returned by their captors in broad daylight, laden with their luggage, unchallenged by government security forces. These circumstances suggest that extraneous, nonreligious factors may have accounted for Boko Haram's resilience.

Boko Haram, an affiliate of al-Qaida in the Maghreb, was founded by Mohammed Yusuf, a Sunni Islamic cleric. After his death, the Number 2 man, Abubakar Shekau, took over as the head. Under the leadership of Abubakar Shekau, the organizations' activities

became more vicious. Shekau aligned Boko Haram with ISIL by pledging an oath of allegiance to the Islamic fundamentalist group. After almost 10 years of contending with Boko Haram, the Nigerian government has not formulated clear policies or effective strategies to dismantle Boko Haram (Bartolotta, 2011). That the actions and policies of the government have direct bearing on the resilience or otherwise of the terror organization is evidenced by what happened when the Nigerian government changed hands on May 29, 2015. After the handover of the government by President Goodluck Jonathan to President Muhammadu Buhari, strategy and policy changes were introduced by the new government. These included the relocation of the military high command to Maiduguri in the Northeast region where Boko Haram's activities were prevalent. This act by the newly elected government resulted in an initial lull in the activities of the terror group. With the implementation of this new strategy, the Nigerian military recaptured the local government areas that had fallen into the hands of Boko Haram. The policy changes by the government of President Buhari against Boko Haram yielded dividends. On December 26, 2015, President Muhammadu Buhari declared, that Boko Haram had finally been defeated. The President praised the Nigerian Army for capturing the Sambisa Forest, a place said to be the last stronghold of Boko Haram (Al Jazeera, 2016).

Although this announcement was warmly welcomed locally and internationally, there are lingering questions that need to be answered (Al Jazeera, 2016). Analysts stated that the Nigerian government's claims of victory against Boko Haram were hasty and noted that it was too early to conclude that Boko Haram had been defeated (Al Jazeera, 2016). This is probably because previous claims of victory against Boko Haram by the

Nigerian government were not substantiated. Boko Haram has been known to show resilience by rebounding on many occasions, including launching further attacks against several communities and other government targets. Even though Boko Haram lost control of their base in Sambisa Forest, several other terror attacks, especially increased suicide bombings, have evidenced the terror group's resilience and shift in tactics (Campbell & Harwood, 2018). The kidnapping of the Dapchi girls in 2018 and other attacks launched by Boko Haram also support this conclusion. Despite having suffered tremendous setbacks in the hands of the Nigerian armed forces, Boko Haram remains a potent terrorist group whose activities continue to pose tremendous challenges to the government and people of Nigeria. I explored whether Boko Haram's resilience has resulted from its radical Islamic ideology or other nonreligious factors.

A recent leadership tussle that factionalized the terrorist organization was indicative of a weakened organization. The leadership of ISIS, the terrorist organization to which Boko Haram is now affiliated, made an announcement in the first week of August 2015 that Abubakar Shekau had been removed and replaced by Abu Musab Al-Barnawi, said to be one of the sons of Mohammed Yusuf, founder of Boko Haram. However, when Shekau resurfaced, he rejected and denounced his purported removal. Ever since, there has been reported infighting between both factions of the terror organization (Hamza, 2016).

Since 2009, when the world's attention became riveted to Boko Haram, with the steady rise in the level of its atrocities, many writers have written on the subject from various perspectives. In attempts to determine the resilience of Boko Haram's terrorism,

writers on the subject pointed mainly to Islamic fundamentalist religion. Though Boko Haram anchors its terrorist activities in the Islamic fundamentalist ideology with the aim of instituting a Sharia state in Nigeria, the resilience shown by the terror group may have other explanations. Many writers, however, subscribe to the Islamic fundamentalist explanation of Boko Haram. Shuaibu, et al. (2015) observed that Boko Haram is driven by their radical Islamic views. Chothia (2012) also noted that Boko Haram is motivated by its quest to impose Sharia laws and establish an Islamic State in Nigeria. Despite these assertions, Campbell (2014) stated that the terrorist organization “combines a sectarian, radical Islamic agenda with violence” (p. 1). Although a preponderance of the Islamic fundamentalist explanation is understandable because members of the group profess the Muslim religious faith and claim to be propagating a jihad, the resilience of the terror group in the last decade may be attributed to other nonreligious factors.

For instance, in the second year of Boko Haram’s activities, “the new leader, Abubakar Shekau, declared jihad against the Nigerian Government and the United States in 2010” (Global Terrorism Index, 2015, p.41). Although the religion-driven terrorism explanations of Boko Haram’s terrorism have been stated (Campbell, 2014; Shuaibu, et al., 2015), not much attention has been paid to other nonreligious factors that may be responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram in the last decade. It was imperative to interrogate the notion that the main reason behind the resilience of Boko Haram was Islamic fundamentalism. The current study was intended to shed light on the nonreligious factors that may be implicated in the continued existence of Boko Haram.

Despite the pro-Muslim rhetoric of Boko Haram, Boko Haram has carried out attacks against both Muslim and Christian institutions. According to Campbell and Harwood (2018), it is not quite clear why Boko Haram has attacked more mosques than churches. Khan (2015) also noted that Boko Haram was responsible for the death and destruction wrought against many Muslims and Muslim institutions, as well as Christians. Boko Haram's selections of targets have been diversified and wide ranging, to the point that they lacked a clearly specified rhythm. As a result, the one-dimensional religious explanation of Boko Haram's actions is insufficient to explain the continued existence and terrorist activities of the terror group. The force propelling Boko Haram is unclear. Although Boko Haram's ideology is anchored in Islamic fundamentalism, the group's continued sustenance may be fueled by nonreligious factors such as the policies or lack thereof of the government. The terror group's motives are hazy and require investigation. Langer et al. (2016) agreed that Boko Haram's real intentions are hazy. This made the case study of Boko Haram to ascertain the nonreligious driving force of the terror group both imperative and compelling. When light is shed on this aspect of the terror groups' motivations, government policies may be formulated and implemented to curb the terror tendencies of the group.

The current study had direct social change implications for the estimated 2.6 million people that the UN estimated to have been displaced from their homes and the 7 million others said to have been exposed to the risk of starvation (Campbell & Harwood, 2018). Finding and implementing solutions to the menace of Boko Haram may bring about life-changing outcomes to the millions of people affected in the Northeast of the

country. They may be able to return to their homes to begin to reconstruct and restore the broken educational, health, and other basic infrastructures. The rebuilding of the economy of Northeast Nigeria can only begin when the terrorist activities of Boko Haram are curbed or eliminated. When that is done, the residents of those areas affected by the activities of Boko Haram may return to the social-religious and economic activities they are accustomed to, without having to live in constant fear for their lives. This may bring about positive social change in the lives of millions who are caught up in the Boko Haram quagmire.

The findings of this study may also spur the Nigerian government and other affected neighboring countries to formulate proactive social-economic policies that address the nonreligious causes of terrorism in Nigeria. Instead of the fixated focus on Islamic fundamentalism, there is a need for the formulation and implementation of policies that would improve the social-economic conditions of Nigerian nationals. The socioeconomic policies envisaged from the findings of this study may target the grievances of fringe elements and the dispossessed in the society through direct government actions. These categories of Nigerian are often targeted and recruited by Boko Haram Islamist fundamentalists. Addressing the grievances of these sets of Nigerians through direct government socioeconomic policies may go a long way to discourage terrorism. Such government policies may bring about positive social change in the lives of the nationals of Nigeria and neighboring nations affected by the activities of Boko Haram.

Boko Haram has also made severe incursions into Nigeria's neighbors like Cameroun, Chad, and Niger republic. The finding from this study may serve as blueprint for the governments of these countries to curb the terrorist activities of Boko Haram. This may bring about positive social change in the lives of nationals of these countries.

Findings from this study may offer a new prism to look at Boko Haram terrorism. In focusing on nonreligious factors responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram, this study may unveil a new body of knowledge to fill the gap in prevailing explanations that implicate Islamic fundamentalism as the major factor responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram's terrorism. The gap in knowledge that this study attempted to fill was the need to look beyond Islamic fundamentalism as the explanation for the resilience of the terror group. Islamic fundamentalism explanations may have reached a saturation point. It became imperative to focus attention on nonreligious factors that may be behind this resilience. A proper articulation of some of these reasons may mark the beginning of finding lasting and holistic solutions to the terrorism conundrum that Nigeria is currently enmeshed in. This new body of knowledge may provide a better understanding of why Boko Haram's terrorism has persisted despite the efforts of two successive governments to subdue the group. Findings from this study may offer new insights about Boko Haram and engender effective policies that, if implemented, would go a long way to bringing about the safety, security, and well-being of the nationals in the countries concerned.

In Chapter 1, I present the problem statement, research questions, the purpose of this study, conceptual framework, and nature of the study. Definitions of the terms used

in this study and the assumptions made are also presented. Finally, the limitations, scope, and significance of this research are contained in this chapter.

Background

In April 2015, President Goodluck Jonathan, the incumbent Nigerian President, lost the presidential election to Muhammadu Buhari, and that defeat went down in the history of Africa as one of the rare occasions when a sitting president lost a major election to the opposition. Many reasons have been proffered for this historic loss. Among the reasons that analysts have given was the ineffectual handling by the government of the security breaches caused by Boko Haram (Guardian, 2015). According to an influential Nigerian newspaper, *The Guardian*, the failure of the government of President Goodluck Jonathan to effectively tackle Boko Haram's terrorism played a significant role in his loss of the election to the opposition. The Guardian (2015) further noted that this earned President Jonathan "the dubious distinction" as the first president in Nigerian history to lose an election. The newspaper went further to articulate that "Jonathan's perceived casual indifference to the suffering of his people was compounded when he was photographed celebrating his niece's lavish wedding just a few days after Boko Haram had killed 2,000 people in the town of Baga" (Guardian, 2015, para. 9).

It was, therefore, welcome news when the new President (Buhari) pledged to defeat the terror organization by December 2015. Although some Nigerians were skeptical of this pledge, many believed the new President. As a retired army general who was Nigeria's military head of state from December 31, 1983, to August 27, 1985, many believed the no nonsense general would effectively tackle Boko Haram (Borger, 2015).

By December 2015, 7 months after the new government came into power, Boko Haram was not defeated, but available evidence suggested that the group had suffered tremendous setbacks. Consequently, President Buhari declared that the group had been technically defeated (BBC, 2015). Even though the government proclaimed the defeat of Boko Haram, the government's claims were exaggerated. Each time the military high command claimed to have defeated Boko Haram, the terror group was known to bounce back more ferociously (BBC, 2015). The Nigerian chief of army staff, General Buratai, admitted that despite the catastrophic defeats suffered by Boko Haram insurgents, the terror organization's resilience to continue fighting baffled the government (Daily Trust, 2016). A news report stated that "at a time when the Federal Government claimed it had defeated Boko Haram insurgency, the terrorist group struck again... in Madagali, Local Government Area of Adamawa State, killing scores" (Vanguard, 2017, para. 1).

As if to belie the claim of the president that Boko Haram was defeated, the terror group carried out several other attacks and killed many in the process. Some of the atrocious attacks by Boko Haram were bombing a mosque in Adamawa State and killing 20 people on December 21, 2015; killing 16 people on December 25, 2015, in Kimba, Borno State; a suicide attack killing two people at a mosque in Kolofata on January 8, 2016; killing 12 and injuring one on January 13, 2016, in Kouyape, Far North Cameroon; and another four killed on January 18, 2016 (Rufai, 2017).

Boko Haram, according to Shuaibu et al. (2015), means "Western education is forbidden," but the group is also known by the religious name Jama'ah al-Ahlu al-Sunnah Li al-Da'wahwa al-Jihad. Shuaibu and Salleh (2015) stated that Boko Haram started as a

local Islamic group of the Salafist sect and traced the origin of the terror group to the year 2002. According to Shuaibu and Salleh (2015), Boko Haram started off with the aim of preaching to Muslims and carrying out charity work to benefit the poor. Its leader then was Mohammed Yusuf, a radical Muslim preacher in Borno, Maiduguri State. Yusuf operated from a religious complex called Markaz after he had been expelled from other mosques in Maiduguri because of his radical views. The Markaz complex contained a mosque and an Islamic school. It was at these premises that he preached and radicalized his adherents made up of poor Muslim families from Nigeria and its environs. Markaz became the recruiting center for jihadists; Boko Haram's aim was said to be the creation of an Islamic State and the imposition of Sharia laws (Chothia, 2012). Prior to the leadership of Mohammed Yusuf, who popularized the group, Boko Haram operated under the name Shabaab Muslim Youth Organization, and it was led by Malam Lawal. After Lawal travelled to Medina in Saudi Arabia to further his education, Mohammed Yusuf became the leader (Chothia, 2012).

Writing about the rise of Boko Haram, Cook (2011) also traced the transitional phases of the terror group from when it was an unknown local Salafist group that had a largely quietist nature to when it became a deadly Salafi-Jihadi group. However, the deadly phase of Boko Haram's activities began in 2009 and was triggered by seemingly innocuous legislation by the government of Borno State that required motorcycle riders to wear crash helmets. This caused a clash between members of Mohammed Yusuf's sects and the police authorities. With the government's order to enforce the wearing of helmets, the police authorities stopped members of the sect who wore no helmets on their

way to a funeral. This led to a clash and resulted in the death of some members of the sect. Many more people sustained injuries during the clashes. Following this incident, the charismatic leader of the group, Mohammed Yusuf, wrote a letter to the federal government of Nigeria and threatened to unleash unprecedented jihad in Nigeria if the government failed to respond within 40 days (Murtada, 2013). Following this threat, from July 26–29, 2009, a religious insurgency started under the leadership of Mohammed Yusuf. Security forces clashed with members of the sect, and this resulted in the killing of over 1,000 people, while many more sustained injuries (Cook, 2011). Mohammed Yusuf and some of his cohorts were subsequently arrested by Nigerian government security agents. While in custody, Yusuf was killed in controversial and extrajudicial circumstances (Umar, 2013).

After the controversial death of Mohammed Yusuf, his hitherto unknown second in command, Abubakar Shekau, took over as the head of the terror group. From then on, the activities of the group became more deadly. In many attacks, Boko Haram turned against fellow Muslims whom they perceived as not radicalized, the police, politicians, the military, and churches. Boko Haram's attacks seemed like a declaration of war against Nigeria and Nigerians. Shuaibu and Salleh, (2015) noted "since the rise of the new leadership, the attacks have escalated in terms of frequency and intensity" (p.219). From this period, some of the attacks carried out by Boko Haram led by Shekau were as follows: In September, over 700 inmates who included members of Boko Haram escaped following a prison break in Bauchi State; the June 16, 2011, audacious suicide attack on the Nigerian police headquarters building in Abuja; and the bomb attack of the UN

building in Abuja in August 2011, in which 21 people were killed and over 60 sustained injuries. Other attacks carried out by Boko Haram included the coordinated attacks in Kano in January 2012 with over 180 people killed (Shuaibu and Salleh, 2015). The impact of numerous and sustained Boko Haram attacks on the Nigerian society has been tremendous. Apart from the destruction to lives and property, studies showed significant negative socioeconomic and political impact of Boko Haram's activities. For instance, a study of Madagali Local Government Area in Adamawa State, one of the areas badly affected by Boko Haram activities, by Medugu (2017) "empirically proved that Boko Haram activities had a negative effect on educational development in Madagali LGA" (p.22). As a result of the escalation in the attacks by Boko Haram, the government of President Goodluck Jonathan declared a state of emergency in the Northeast states of Adamawa, Yobe, and Borno.

A most audacious attack carried out by Boko Haram was the kidnapping of 276 teenage schoolgirls while they slept in their hostels in Chibok on April 14, 2014. It was this brazen kidnapping that led the UN Security Council blacklisting Boko Haram on May 22, 2014 (Nichols, 2014). The years 2013 and 2014 witnessed some of the worst attacks by Boko Haram. Over 5,000 individuals were killed, and more than 300,000 others displaced from their homes (Blanchard, 2014). Nigeria's corporate existence became seriously threatened when Boko Haram's leader, Abubakar Shekau, declared that some of Nigeria's territories in the Northeast had become a new caliphate that would be controlled by Boko Haram using Sharia laws (Sahara Reporter, 2014). In November 2014, Boko Haram attacked the central Mosque in Kano, killing over 100 and injuring

twice as many others. Three members of the terror group detonated suicide bombs while another group fired at worshippers who attempted to escape the gruesome attacks in the mosque. In that attack, over 100 people were killed, and 200 others were injured (Nichols, 2014). In a town called Baga, in Borno State, Boko Haram was reported to have carried out a massacre of over 2,000 people in what was later described by Amnesty International as the worst ever attack carried out by Boko Haram (Mark, 2015).

When this phase of Boko Haram's activities started, a vast majority of shocked Nigerians across the country expressed disgust and disbelief. The reason was not far-fetched. Prior to the start of Boko Haram's terrorism, the attitude of most Nigerians toward terrorism, especially suicide bombing, was that it could never happen in Nigeria. Even after the September 11, 2001, attacks in New York, Nigerians believed that terrorism was a far-fetched possibility on Nigeria's shores. As a result of this collective mindset, when Boko Haram's terrorism began manifesting, Nigerian people and the government were caught unaware.

The government lacked a cohesive or coordinated strategy to contend with the strange phenomenon. The appropriate policies or legislation to deal with terrorism were virtually nonexistent. Instead, the government treated the growing incidence of terrorism as criminal acts. The immediate response from the Nigerian government to the attacks by Boko Haram was the unleashing of the Nigerian military might against the terror group. The military's counterattacks attracted criticism of severe human right abuses (Barna, 2014). As the Nigerian military waged battles against Boko Haram insurgents, the inadequacies of the ill-equipped Nigerian army in handling this kind of asymmetrical

warfare became more glaring. This demoralized Nigerian soldiers who were in the battle front in the Northeast. Consequently, many soldiers deserted the battlefronts (Barna, 2014).

It was not until 2013 that the Nigerian government officially proscribed Boko Haram, declaring it an illegal organization. The proscription law criminalized any support given to the organization, whether financial, material, information, or incitement. The law made these acts subject to criminal proceedings under the Terrorism Prevention Act of 2011. Offenders under this law were to be subject to 20 years imprisonment (Barna, 2014).

That the Nigerian government did not have the requisite policies and strategy to deal with Boko Haram is evident in the way the judiciary handled terrorism cases. According to Barna (2014), because terrorism was a new phenomenon in Nigeria, the first case handled by the judiciary was that of a member of the militant group Movement for Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND), Mr. Edmund Ebiware. MEND is a Southern militant organization that is agitating for the control of oil resources in the Niger Delta. During the October 1, 2010, Nigerian independence celebration ceremony in Abuja, the federal capital, 12 people were killed and many were injured when a bomb was detonated by alleged members of MEND. Subsequently, some members of the group were arrested and put to trial. Those put-on trial were Charles Okah, Obi Nwabueze, Francis Osvwo, and Edmund Ebiware. These individuals were put on trial under the Criminal Code Act because the Terrorism Prevention Act would not be enacted until 2011. During the trial, Ebiware's lawyers applied that he be tried separately. Subsequently, he was

tried, convicted, and sentenced to life imprisonment. The trial judge, Justice Gabriel Kolawole of the Abuja High Court, relied on Section 40(b) of the Criminal Code Act to sentence the accused. That section of the Criminal code states “anyone who is aware of an act of terrorism but fails to report same to the President, a Governor, Security agent or a Peace Officer in order to prevent the commission of the crime, is liable to a life imprisonment” (Nnochiri, 2013). The other accused individuals (Charles Okah and Obi Nwabueze) were convicted on March 7, 2018, by Justice Gabriel Kolawole. The third accused, Francis Oswo, had died in prison. All these fellows were convicted under the Criminal Code Act, not the Terrorism Act. This is an indication that the Nigerian government was not prepared with the appropriate policies to handle terrorism when it began to emerge in Nigeria. Though the Nigerian military recommended to the government the trial of hundreds of suspected Boko Haram members in government’s custody, none had been subjected to legal trial (Barna, 2014).

The government’s policy in dealing with budding terrorism in Nigeria, at best, can be described as policy of appeasement in the hope that the problem will go away. For instance, in April 2013, President Goodluck Jonathan set up a special body known as the Committee on Dialogue and Peaceful Resolution of Security Challenges in the North. This body recommended that the government initiate dialogue with Boko Haram and set up a victim support fund. However, this recommendation (Victims Support Fund) was rejected by President Jonathan in November 2013. Despite that, the government extended an olive branch to Boko Haram in the form of amnesty to members of the group willing to renounce terrorism. The government’s offer of amnesty was out rejected by the terror

group (Barna, 2014). This policy of appeasement that had been applied to the Niger Delta militants to dissuade and pacify them from further terrorist activities had only measured success. The qualified success of the government's efforts could be attributed to the fact that the demands of the Niger Delta militants were mainly economic. On the other hand, the attempt by President Goodluck Jonathan's government to apply the same palliatives to the Boko Haram conundrum had no effect. This was because MEND was agitating to control oil resources in the Niger Delta. Boko Haram's stated intent is the Islamization of Nigeria and imposition of Sharia laws across the country.

There have been divergent and somewhat conflicting reasons given by writers regarding why terrorism took hold in Nigeria. Ahmed (2015) opined that when a burgeoning number of youths in volatile countries are matched with a lack of economic opportunities, poor education, and unemployment, the condition for terrorism becomes rife. However, Ahmed pointed out that providing jobs and access to education were not sufficient to deter potential terrorists. Some of the reasons why people become terrorists include marginalization, discrimination, injustice, and physical violence that individuals and their family members may suffer. Idowu (2013) attributed the incidence of terrorism in Nigeria to injustice, corruption, poor governance, and unemployment.

For H. Cohen (2013), anarchy, corruption, instability, ethnic exclusions, hopeless poverty, and corruption were some of the conditions that made Boko Haram thrive in Nigeria. According to Bamidele (2013) and Adesoji (2010), economic dislocation, party politics, religious sensitivity, and the failure of some Islamic leaders to condemn the terror activities of Boko Haram when it initially started explaining the incidence of

terrorism. In the same light, Ababa (2013) identified rabid religious identity, poverty, and deprivation as factors responsible for Boko Haram. Interestingly, Ababa noted that Boko Haram's terrorism was "fueled by the terrorism of the Nigerian State" (p.435). Onuoha (2010) pointed out that poverty and sociopolitical exclusion may be responsible for Boko Haram's terrorism because most of the members of the terror organization were unemployed youths and disaffected individuals. Hansen and Musa (2015) posited that poverty was behind Boko Haram's rise because the group was populated mainly by poor people, especially youths. Chizea and Osumah (2015) argued that a set of complex insecurities in Nigeria occasioned by inequality, poverty, corruption, and the proliferation of youth militia groups gave rise to Boko Haram. Tonwe & Eke (2013) claimed that the fragility of the Nigerian state is a major factor in the resilience of Boko Haram in the country.

To conclude, although postulations on why terrorism erupted in Nigeria range from religious fundamentalism to socioeconomic and political issues to state failure, Langer et al. (2016) took the position that the real intentions of Boko Haram are not known. However, Langer et al. traced the root causes of terrorism by Boko Haram to factors such as religious fundamentalism and ideology, bad governance and institutional fragility, and sustained poverty and unemployment in the northern parts of Nigeria. It is evident that the marginalization that occurs in Nigeria (manifested through socioeconomic deprivations of the people) may be behind the rise of social unrest as exemplified by Boko Haram. However, although this may somewhat explain the phenomenon, it does not sufficiently answer all the questions. If socioeconomic

considerations were the primary reasons for the action of the terrorists, some of the government's previous palliative measures of social and economic engagements would have stemmed the rising tide of terrorism in Nigeria. When a conflict situation is engendered by ideological or religious reasons, it becomes harder to quell and to arrive at a compromise because of the maximalist nature of the demands of the groups involved.

Problem Statement

The intent of this study was to explore Islamic fundamentalism's role and the role of nonreligious factors in the resilience of Boko Haram, a terror group that has terrorized Nigeria and neighboring countries in the last 10 years. Though some writers on the subject (Ababa, 2013; Campbell, 2014; Malasowe, 2016; Shuaibu et al., 2015) noted that Islamic fundamentalism is a major influence of Boko Haram's terrorism, there are indications that other nonreligious factors (including the Nigerian government's policies) may have played roles in the resilience of Boko Haram. I probed whether Islamic fundamentalism or other nonreligious factors could be implicated in the terrorism phenomenon that has been plaguing Nigeria for the last 10 years.

The problem that this study addressed was the prevailing notion that Boko Haram terrorism is simply fueled by Islamic fundamentalism. Ababa (2013), Malasowe (2016), and Ozoigbo (2016) attributed religious fundamentalism, among other factors, to Boko Haram's terrorism. Other writers identified factors such as frustration, which leads to aggression; failed state status ascribed to Nigeria; and corruption. Though the explanations of Boko Haram appear disparate and somewhat conflicting, the religious reason that manifests in the form of Islamic fundamentalism seems to underlie many of

the explanations. I attempted to look beyond the Islamist fundamentalist explanations of Boko Haram's persistence by focusing on the nonreligious reasons for the continued resilience of the terror organization. Nonreligious factors, including the absence of clear-cut policies of government directed at Boko Haram, may be responsible for the resilience of the terror group. The gap in the literature was the absence of a thorough examination of how government policies or the lack thereof may be behind the resilience of the terror organization. Qualitative interviews were conducted for this study. Knowledgeable respondents including Muslim and Christian clerics, government officials, and members of civil society organizations were interviewed for this study.

That Boko Haram terror group has become a major international problem worth studying is evident in its terror activities since 2009 when it commenced its violent phase. From that point, the terror organization has killed thousands of people and made incursions into Nigeria's neighboring countries including Cameroun, Mali, and Niger. Boko Haram's killing capacity has surpassed that of ISIL. In its 2015 report, Global Terrorism Index noted that Boko Haram had overtaken ISIL as a deadlier terrorist organization. In the report, deaths caused by Boko Haram were said to have "increased by 317 per cent in 2014 to 6,644... ISIL was responsible for 6,073 terrorist deaths" (Global Terrorism Index, 2015. p.1). Consequently, Boko Haram was identified as "the deadliest terrorist group in the world" (Global Terrorism Index, 2015, p. 4). In an estimate by the UN, Boko Haram was said to have killed over 20,000 people and dislodged more than 2.6 million others from their ancestral homes (Vanguard, 2016). More recent data from Nigeria Security Tracker, a unit of the Council of Foreign

Relations and the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project, a University of Sussex based nongovernmental organization, pointed to higher casualty figures due to Boko Haram activities. According to Campbell and Harwood (2018),

From June 2011 through June 2018, the NST documented 2,021 incidents involving Boko Haram, in which 37,530 people were killed, nearly double the conventionally cited estimate of twenty-thousand. Over the same period, ACLED identified 3,346 incidents, in which 34,261 people were killed (p.2).

In the early stages of Boko Haram terrorist activities from 2009 to 2014, many Christians and churches in Nigeria's Northeast states of Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe were attacked. Because Boko Haram couched its activities as a jihad, the impression was that Boko Haram's intent was the Islamization of Nigeria. Campbell and Harwood (2018) noted that since 2015, Boko Haram has attacked more mosques and Muslims than churches and Christians, and the reason for this shift is not known. Beyond the attacks on religious institutions, there have been recorded attacks on government buildings, including police stations and military installations. The UN building, schools, banks, markets, and entire villages have been ravaged by Boko Haram terrorist attacks. It is unclear whether Boko Haram is propelled by its professed Islamist fundamentalist ideology or by the actions/inactions of Nigerian governments' unclear policies directed at the terror group.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the role of nonreligious factors responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram in the past decade of its existence. I

set out to determine whether the lack of clearly defined and well-executed government policies against Islamic fundamentalism was responsible for the resilience that Boko Haram has exhibited since it came into existence in 2009. Until the terrorist attacks by Boko Haram began, it was unimaginable that a Nigerian would engage in a suicide bombing. Suicide bombing was considered an alien act completely at variance with the Nigerian culture and attitude. That myth has since been shattered. The first suicide bombing in Nigeria took place in the expansive compound housing the headquarters of the Nigeria police on June 16, 2011. Since that ill-fated attack, many other terrorist attacks have claimed hundreds of lives. In the process, millions have also been displaced from their homes. I attempted to find out whether Islamic fundamentalism or the government policies (or lack thereof) may be responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram. Findings from this study have the potential to fill an existing gap in the literature. Although terrorist acts of Boko Haram have been blamed on Islamic fundamentalism, poverty, and other factors (Campbell, 2014; Shuaibu et al., 2015), not much attention has been given to nonreligious factors, such as the role of government policies or lack thereof, in the resilience of Boko Haram terrorism.

Research Questions

Central to my study was the role that religious (Islamic fundamentalism) and nonreligious factors (including government policies) play in the resilience of the terror group Boko Haram. The research questions (RQs) that I used to guide this study were the following:

RQ1: What role, if any, has Islamic fundamentalism played in the resilience of Boko Haram in the past decade?

RQ2: What nonreligious factors, if any, are responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram in the past decade of its existence?

RQ3: What government policies, if any, are responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram in the past decade of its existence?

Theoretical Framework

The instrumental theory views terrorism from the prism of being an instrument deployed to attain stated political objectives. According to Ozdamar (2008), terrorism occurs in “response to external stimuli like governments policies” (p.91). The instrumental theory sees terrorism as an instrument used for the attainment of political objectives. The rational choice theory sheds some light in understanding of what appears to be irrational acts of terrorists. For instance, although suicide bombing appears an irrational act, the rational choice theory explains that it is a conscious choice made by terrorists in expectation of future gratification. The economic theory’s explanations of terrorism have it that poor economic conditions in a society may lead to frustration, which consequently leads to aggression that may be expressed as insurgency or terrorism. Finally, the theory of fundamentalism has to do with radicalization. According to Malasowe (2016), fundamentalism is the belief in the absolute truth of religion, which must be adhered to. Malasowe noted that the theory of fundamentalism is hinged on three attitudes: Believers must revert to iron clad rules of the past, there is only one accepted interpretation of these rules, and religious rules are superior to secular rules.

Nature of the Study

Abusabha and Woelfel (2003) stated that the consideration for a researcher's use of a methodology should not simply be guided by the researcher's knowledge of the methodology, rather, a methodology should be adopted after consideration of a suitable research design. Qualitative methodology is what I considered to be most suitable for my case study to answer my research questions.

Yin (2009) posited that a case study is conducted to examine a case or several cases in the natural environment, context, or setting of the subject being studied. Creswell (2013) noted that a "case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time" (p.97). This has to do with "detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g., observations, interviews, audiovisual material, and documents) and reports a case description and case-based themes" (Creswell, 2013, p.97). Data for this current study were collected through face-to-face interviews with key respondents in Nigeria. The respondents included knowledgeable Muslim and Christian clerics, Muslim and Christian policymakers in government, and informed Muslim and Christian members of the Nigerian public. Additional data sources for triangulation were documents and audio-visual materials.

Kielborn (2001) noted that qualitative research is like an umbrella that covers several types of inquiries. A qualitative study enables a researcher to understand and explain social events without disrupting the original setting of what is being studied. The three types of case studies are single, multiple, and intrinsic. According to Creswell

(2013), a case study begins with a specific case Creswell. The “specific case” in the current study was Boko Haram. Creswell noted that case studies are about “real-life cases that are in progress” (p.98). My research study was conducted in Nigeria, the country that is most affected by Boko Haram’s terrorist activities. The respondents were individuals who has knowledge of and/or has been impacted by Boko Haram’s terrorist activities and consequent government policies toward the terror group.

Definitions

Fundamentalism: Fundamentalism is a term that was originally used for certain Christians who believed the literary interpretation of the Bible to be the absolute truth, even when those truths conflicted with modern scientific discoveries. Fundamentalism was considered somewhat derogatory. When applied to Muslims, Esposito (1992) noted that Islamic fundamentalism was also used by outsiders pejoratively to describe “Islamic revivalism and Islamic activism” (p.8). Bleher (2000) agreed that the derogatory word (fundamentalism) was later used to describe certain Muslims “in order to charge the discussion emotionally, out of fear that a rational discussion would not produce the desired enemy image” (para. 3).

Fundamentalism was used in the current study to describe Muslims who revert to the foundation or basis of the Muslim religion (Quran and Sunnah) to give extreme and literary interpretation of these holy books. These sets of Muslims advocate and use violence in defense of their faith, especially in the bid to eschew whatever they believe to be “corrupting non-Islamic influences from every part of their lives” (Roy, 1994 p.215). Fundamentalist groups such as Boko Haram aim at the imposition of Sharia laws and

ultimately an Islamic State because they perceive secular and Western influences to be the roots of the socioeconomic and political problems bedeviling Nigeria and the world today in general. Choueiri (1998) attributed the rise of Islamic fundamentalism to the writings of three Muslim scholars: Sayyid Qutb, Abu al-'Ala al-Mawdudi, and Ayatollah Ruhollah al-Khumayni. According to Choueiri (1998), “whereas al-Khumayni and al-Mawdudi made original contributions towards formulating a new Islamic political theory, it was Qutb who offered a coherent exposition of Islam as a philosophical system” (para. 1).

Islam: Islam is said to be the world’s fastest growing religion (Burke, 2015), and the world’s second largest religion (Pew Research Center, 2012). Islam is a religion introduced by Prophet Muhammad, who is considered by Muslims to be the last of the prophets of God. Muslims believe in monotheism or one God who is incomparable. Muslims also believe that human existence is solely for the purpose of worshipping God.

Islamic teachings take their roots from the Muslim holy book, the Quran, which is considered a text containing God’s verbatim words to Muslim adherents through Prophet Mohammed. The Sunnah and Hadith are other Islamic holy books from which Muslims draw their faith. Islam began around the 7th century in Mecca, considered the holy land, and quickly spread across the Arabian Peninsula and to different parts of the world. Almkhtar et al. (2016) identified two main sects of Islam Sunni and Shia. The Sunnis are said to constitute 75%–90% while Shiites are about 10%–20% of the Muslim population in the world (Pew Research Center, 2009). Boko Haram profess to belong to the Sunni sect. Although Islam is believed to be a religion that advocates peace, radical

Islamist or fundamentalists have been described as an eclectic mix. According to Lapidus (2002), Islamic fundamentalism is “an umbrella designation for a very wide variety of movements, some intolerant and exclusivist, some pluralistic; some favorable to science, some anti-scientific; some primarily devotional and some primarily political; some democratic, some authoritarian; some pacifist, some violent” (p.823).

Jihad: The term jihad means holy war. Greater and lesser jihads exist. A greater jihad is said to be a spiritual struggle to surmount temptation and live a pious life as Muslim while a lesser jihad involves physical struggle using violence to defend the Muslim faith (Rufai, 2017). In the current study, jihad referred to the use of violence in the name of the Muslim religion to promote or defend certain beliefs that are considered sacrosanct and fundamental to the Muslim faith.

Secular: A secular state is a state in which matters of religion and the state are kept separate. In such states, government institutions and state officials are constitutionally kept separate from religious institutions and religious leaders. In a secular state, no religion is officially adopted as a state religion. In such a state, government activities and political functions should not be influenced by religious teachings and beliefs of any kind. A state is deemed to be secular when there is a clear distinction between government and religious matters. The Nigerian Constitution (1999) stated that “the Government of the Federation or of a State shall not adopt any religion as State Religion” (Section 10). Despite this clear constitutional provision, many writers have contended that Nigeria is not secular in practice. Okolie (2015) argued that the participation of successive Nigerian governments in Muslim and Christian pilgrimages by

both the federal and state governments is evidence of the non-secularity of Nigeria. Adeosun (2016) opined that rather than being a secular state, Nigeria is governed as a multi-religious government. In this type of state, the government recognizes various religious groups and participates in their activities. Adeosun further argued that because the Nigerian national anthem, pledge, and government activities encourage participation in Christian, Muslim, or African traditional religions and their festivals, Nigeria cannot be referred to as a secular state, but is rather a multi religious state.

Differentiating between a secular and a multi religious state, Adeosun (2016) noted that the government of a multi religious state identifies with all religious groups in the country by protecting the citizens' rights to adhere to any religious faith and participate in religious affairs. This is contrary to a secular state in which the government does not participate in any form of religious activity. Nigeria is described in the 1999 Constitution, as amended, to be a secular state. In the current study, I adopted the ordinary interpretation and assumed that Nigeria is a secular state.

Terrorism: Terrorism is one of those terms whose definition is contentious because the definition is said to be largely dependent on who is giving it (Terrorism Research, n.d.). There have been varied definitions of who a terrorist is and what amounts to terrorism. Throughout history, there have been individuals and groups dubbed by various governments as terrorists even when they view themselves as freedom fighters. For example, under the leadership of Nelson Mandela, the Apartheid regime in South Africa was labeled a terrorist organization by the military wing of the African National Congress. The African National Congress claimed to be a freedom fighting organization.

The Irish Republican Army was also treated by the British government as a terrorist organization even though the Irish Republican Army saw their fight as fight for self-determination. Borum (2004) stated that terrorism is violent in nature and perpetrated against civilians, often with political, ideological, or religious objectives, not merely threats or coercion. Borum also observed that defining terrorism is a vexing problem. Terrorism Research (n.d.) noted the various definitions and interpretations of terrorism adopted by U.S. government security agencies. For instance, the U.S. Department of Defense (2018, as cited in Terrorism Research, n.d.) defined terrorism as “the calculated use of unlawful violence or threat of unlawful violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological” (para. 3). The definition is said to contain the concepts of violence, fear, and intimidation (Terrorism Research, n.d.). The Federal Bureau of Investigation (F.B.I) defines terrorism as “the unlawful use of force and violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives.”

<http://www.nij.gov/topics/crime/terrorism/Pages/welcome.aspx>

The U.S. Department of State defined terrorism as a “premeditated politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience” (Country Reports on Terrorism 2012).

A common thread that runs through the definitions of terrorism is the unlawful application of violence targeted at civilians and/or institutions to achieve parochial socioeconomic or political objectives. Although terrorism has been defined differently,

the three critical elements of the phenomenon common to the divergent conceptual frameworks are the nature of the violence, the general targets, and the general objectives of terrorist organizations. Types of terrorism are lone wolf, cyber, suicide, and religiously motivated, among others. Boko Haram uses violence in pursuit of its religious objectives.

Sharia: Sharia is regarded as a body of Islamic laws that regulates and governs adherents of the Muslim faith. Rehman (2007) noted that these moral and religious laws guiding the Muslim religion have their origins from the Muslim holy books, especially the Quran and the Hadith. As a result, they are derived from prophesies of Prophet Mohammed instead of legislation made by governments. According to Coulson (2011), because these laws emanated from God through Prophet Mohammed, the laws are infallible laws given by God to humans. Sharia law covers many aspects that secular laws also deal with. These include marriage, contracts, crime and punishments, trade, and personal matters such as diet, prayer, hygiene, among others. Although I identified the enthronement of Sharia laws as a cardinal objective of Boko Haram, I explored whether nonreligious factors were propelling Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria.

Assumptions

The philosophical assumption that underpinned this study was that the case study was the most suitable approach to understand the phenomenon of Boko Haram. M. Q. Patton (2015) opined that qualitative research is best conducted in the natural habitat of the subject without manipulating or controlling the subject. I also assumed that purposeful sampling of respondents would provide sufficient insights in drawing conclusions about the motivating force of Boko Haram. It was further assumed that Boko

Haram is a Muslim fundamentalist group whose ultimate purpose of waging terrorism against the Nigerian nation is the quest to forcefully introduce Sharia laws and Islamize Nigeria using violence. The terrorism being unleashed by Boko Haram is different from the violent militancy of the Niger Delta groups. Although Boko Haram's assumed purpose is the Islamization of Nigeria, the Niger Delta militant groups use violence to fight for economic rights.

Next, I also assumed that Nigeria is a secular state without an officially adopted religion by the government and with clear separation of state and religion. In addition, I assumed that the Nigerian government is serious about the fight against terrorism and is open to implementing policies capable of bringing about social change in the situation that precipitated terrorism in the first place. This assumption was made because successive Nigerian governments, from 2009 when Boko Haram began its violent campaigns until the present, made many pronouncements that were indicative of some seriousness in tackling the phenomenon of terrorism in Nigeria. Finally, I assumed that the interview participants selected for this study were knowledgeable about matters concerning Boko Haram and were aware of or may have witnessed some of the attacks carried out by the terror group.

Scope and Delimitations

This study was limited in scope to the nonreligious factors (including government policies) responsible for the resilience shown by the Islamic fundamentalist terror group Boko Haram. This scope was weighed against the views that Islamic fundamentalism was responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram. Creswell (2009) noted that data collection

in qualitative research may be done through observations, interviews, documents, and audio-visual materials. I applied these methods in the current study. The interviews were in-depth and were conducted with Muslim and Christian clerics who were knowledgeable about the activities of Boko Haram in Nigeria's Northeast region. I also interviewed Christian and Muslim policymakers in various agencies of government who had been involved in policy decisions concerning Boko Haram. Finally, I interviewed several individuals in civil society organizations conversant with the activities of Boko Haram. In total, 14 respondents were interviewed.

Patton (2015) stated that an initial sample size is only a starting point that can be increased or decreased while conducting the research. Through the selected sample, I sourced related unclassified documents that may not be in the public domain. Additionally, secondary sources such as Nigerian newspapers and audio-visual materials were to enrich this study. I neither sought nor interviewed Boko Haram terrorists due to the obvious dangers in doing so.

In the analysis of data collected for this research, I used hand coding and content analysis. The process by which information is retrieved from an original text and analyzed separately is content analysis (Glaser & Laudel, 2013). The content analysis of the data collected was done through categorizing verbal or behavioral data to classify, summarize, and tabulate them (see Libweb, n.d.). The analysis of the collected data was done on basic and higher levels (see Libweb, n.d.). The basic levels were descriptive without comments while the higher levels were interpretations and inferences. Although these methods of analysis have advantages, there are also some pitfalls. In their

examination of coding and qualitative content analysis, Gläser & Laudel (2013) noted some of the advantages and pitfalls of these methods. According to Gläser and Laudel, coding that entails subjecting the original and indexed text to further analysis consequently leads to “an overload of codes and an overload of texts. As a result of this overload of codes and text, a researcher is confronted with the problem of handling or memorizing what has been referred to as the code swamp (Friese, 2011). Another problem identified by Glaser and Laudel is that coding fails in limiting the amount of information contained in a text. However, this problem is solved by content analysis because it reduces the amount of data that is to be analyzed (Glaser & Laudel, 2013).

In qualitative research, the researcher is considered the instrument for data collection, analysis, and interpretation. The problem with this is the possibility of bias being injected into the research during the process of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data (Creswell, 1998, 2013; Goulding, 2002; Nachmias & Nachmias, 1987). Being aware of the possibility of bias influencing the current study, I maintained my neutrality to mitigate possible bias. In doing so, I let the collected data speak for themselves (see Stanfield, 2016). In addition, I used member checking and multiple data sources to confirm my findings (see Creswell, 1998, 2013; Goulding, 2002). Member checking is a process of testing the data collected, interpretations made, or conclusions reached on the person from whom the data were collected. Though member checking is considered controversial, D. Cohen and Crabtree (2006) observed that it is a crucial technique for establishing the credibility of a study.

Purposive sampling was the participant recruitment technique used in the current study. The successful use of this technique depends on obtaining the participants who know and understand the subject of the interview. Additionally, the researcher must also be conversant with the population being studied (Singleton & Straits, 2005; Trochim, 2001). In qualitative research, autobiography matters (Stanfield, 2016). This means that the background of the researcher and their knowledge of the population are important for the success of the research. I considered myself suited to carry out this research on Boko Haram considering my original background is Nigerian. As a result of this background, I was uniquely situated to engage knowledgeable participants from the Nigerian population in interviews. I also witnessed some of Boko Haram's attacks and saw firsthand the impact of Boko Haram's terrorist activities in Nigeria.

Limitations

The main criticism often made against qualitative research is that it is not as scientific as quantitative research. Lincoln (1995) admitted that qualitative research is emerging and not yet fully defined. Despite these criticisms of qualitative research, credibility, quality, and trustworthiness in qualitative research are achievable. Silverman (2000) and Shenton (2004) posited that credibility, quality, and trustworthiness can be attained in social research. According to Shenton, Guba's constructs had been widely accepted over the years as the "frameworks for ensuring rigor in this form of work" (p.63). The four criteria set forth by Guba, according to Shenton, include credibility, which means that a researcher shows an accurate picture of the phenomenon being examined; transferability, which means providing enough detail of the fieldwork

performed so that the reader can compare it to another situation or environment that they are used to for purposes of applicability; dependability, which means striving to ensure that future researchers on the subject can repeat the study; and conformability, which means letting the findings proceed from the data collected instead of from the researcher's predisposition.

I endeavored to attain these attributes. However, trustworthiness in qualitative research does not equate to validity and reliability in quantitative research. In qualitative research, Guba's construct was said to have "won considerable favor" (Shenton, 2003, p.63). Qualitative research must have the qualities for credibility/trustworthiness, transferability, dependability, and conformability. Guba (1981) preferred these terms in place of validity and reliability used in quantitative research.

The qualitative research design for the current study included interview methods. McLeod (2014) and Maxwell (2005) stated that the strength of the structured interviews is that they are easy to replicate and quick to conduct but lack flexibility. I used unstructured interviews. These are more flexible than structured interviews and are said to have the capacity to generate qualitative data that is more in-depth. The internal validity of unstructured interviews is higher than in structured ones (McLeod, 2014).

Unstructured interviews also have their own weaknesses. They can be time-consuming and expensive to conduct, especially if the case being studied is more than one (McLeod, 2014). My case study research was, however, a single case (Boko Haram). I used unstructured interviews to yield more in-depth data. My sample size was not very large. Maxwell (2005) and Stanfield (2016) noted that in qualitative research, the

researcher is the research instrument. Qualitative researchers' eyes and ears becomes necessary tools in the conduct of the research (Maxwell, 2005; Stanfield, 2016).

Significance

The cases of terrorism in Nigeria changed the socioeconomic and political landscape of the country. There have been two different kinds of terrorism in Nigeria. The first, perpetrated by Boko Haram, is mainly in the northern parts of the country. The other kind of terrorism has been waged by Niger Delta militants in the southern parts of Nigeria. Many reasons have been suggested for the resilience of Boko Haram since the outbreak of terrorism in Nigeria in 1999. Although Islamic fundamentalism was identified as a trigger in Boko Haram's terrorist activities (Campbell, 2014), the quest to control the economic resources accruing from oil exploration was the driving force of the Niger Delta violence and terror. The current study's significance is the attempt to look beyond what has been considered the driving force of Boko Haram terrorism (Islamic fundamentalism) by exploring how nonreligious factors, including the policies of the government, may be responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram in Nigeria.

Boko Haram's terrorism created enormous socioeconomic and political problems in Nigeria. Part of the social consequences of Boko Haram's activities has been the displacement of millions of people from their ancestral homes. As a result, these people became refugees in their own country. These refugees are today referred to as internally displaced persons. Economically, in the Northeast states where Boko Haram's activities are more prevalent, the indigenous people became further impoverished due to the destruction and havoc committed in their communities by Boko Haram. In the Northeast

states of Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe, Boko Haram's activities decimated the largely farming and trading subsistence of the locals. Politically, the advent of terrorism in Nigeria's northeast further sharpened the division between the northern and southern parts of Nigeria. The fact that Boko Haram couched its mission as a jihad, with the early attacks on churches and Christian residents in the Northeast, did not help matters. This pitted Christians against Muslims, causing Nigeria to totter on the brink of a religious war. Prior to Boko Haram's terrorism, adherents of the Christian and Muslim religions lived among each other peacefully. This was the case for many decades until the terrorism of Boko Haram changed it all. Many had believed that Boko Haram's terrorism was unthinkable and out of sync with the Nigerian character and psyche. The deflation of this notion because of the sudden intrusion of terrorism in Nigeria is a phenomenon that needed to be interrogated further.

Prior to the beginning of terrorist attacks by Boko Haram in Nigeria in 2009, the citizens of Nigeria, a country of over 180 million people, coexisted peacefully except for occasional interethnic clashes, rivalries, and the Nigerian-Biafra civil war that lasted from 1967 to 1970. Because Nigeria's population is evenly divided between the northern parts where Muslims predominate and the southern parts where Christians are in the majority, the country is considered a secular state. Boko Haram is a threat to Nigeria's secularity, as enshrined in the country's constitution. Consequently, studying a group such as Boko Haram was significant not only to Nigeria but also to the affected neighboring countries and the world community. The international community has been dealing with the fallout

of Boko Haram's terrorist activities. Such fallouts include but are not limited to refugee and health crises in Northeast states of Nigeria.

The significance of this study was further underscored by the fact that the study was an attempt to generate a new body of knowledge to fill the void in the explanations so far given regarding the role of Islamic fundamentalism in the terrorists' acts committed in Nigeria by Boko Haram. This new knowledge hinged on the notion that nonreligious factors, including government policies, may be exacerbating the problem of terrorism in Nigeria. Because the terrorist acts of Boko Haram are an ongoing life event, my aim in this study was to enrich the existing body of knowledge on Boko Haram. Findings may promote solutions to the seemingly intractable problem of terrorism in Nigeria. These solutions may serve as a useful blueprint for other West African and sub-Saharan African countries. Some of Nigeria's neighbors such as Cameroun, Niger, and Chad have suffered attacks by Boko Haram. The findings from this study may be useful to these countries and other secular nations in Africa that may come under the throes of terrorism. Finally, it was also my expectation that the findings would encourage the Nigerian government and other governments to create policies that mitigate terrorism rather than exacerbate it. Such policies may elicit positive social change in the lives of Nigerians and others living in the country.

Summary

Since 2009, Nigeria has been under the throes of terrorism perpetrated by the Islamic fundamentalist terrorist group Boko Haram. The terrorist activities of Boko Haram led to the killing of over 20,000 people. An additional 2.6 million people have

been displaced from their homes and 7 million others face the threat of starvation (Campbell & Harwood, 2018). Boko Haram became known as the deadliest terrorist organization in the world (Global Terrorism Index, 2015).

Many writers on the subject proffered disparate explanations regarding this deadly phenomenon that started in Nigeria's Northeast states of Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe. Islamic fundamentalism was identified as the common thread that ran through many of the explanations of the resilience of Boko Haram. I interrogated the view that Islamic fundamentalism is implicated in the resilience of Boko Haram in the last decade. I also probed nonreligious factors, including the policies of government that may have been responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram.

In Chapter 1, I articulated the background, purpose of the study, and problem statement. The conceptual framework and the nature of the study were explained while some of the key terms used in the study were defined. Assumptions, scope, limitations, and significance were also outlined. Chapter 2 provides an exhaustive examination, analysis, and synthesis of the existing literature on Islamic fundamentalism, Boko Haram, and the secularism of the Nigerian state and addresses the gap in the literature regarding the nonreligious reasons (including government policies) that may be responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The problem addressed in this study was the prevailing notion among some writers that Boko Haram's terrorism is fueled only by Islamic fundamentalism. Some of these writers include Ababa (2013), Campbell (2014), Shuaibu et al. (2015), and Malasowe (2016). The purpose of this study was to look beyond the Islamic fundamentalist explanations with a view to offering an alternative explanation for the resilience of Boko Haram. This study focused attention on possible nonreligious factors (including the Nigerian government's policies or lack thereof) influencing the resilience of Boko Haram in the decade of its terrorist activities in Nigeria. In Chapter 2, I provide an exhaustive examination, analysis, and synthesis of the existing literature on Islamic fundamentalism, Boko Haram, terrorism, and secularism of the Nigerian state and address the gap in the literature.

This chapter begins with highlighting the literature sources used for the study and the key search terms used. The theoretical foundation of the study is explained including instrumental, rational choice, organizational, political communications, economic, psychological, and theory of fundamentalism. I explain that the instrumental, rational choice, economic, and theory of fundamentalism were more relevant to the study and describe how these theories were applied.

Literature Sources

A literature review said to be a "comprehensive summary of previous research on a topic" (Coffta, 2010). The current literature review was structured using studies on Islamic fundamentalism, secularism of the Nigerian state, terrorism, and Boko Haram. I

examined the contending views on these subjects and reviewed the methodology and conceptual frameworks of studies with a view toward evaluating the positions taken and conclusions reached.

To accomplish this, literature searches become imperative. Literature search is “a systematic and thorough search of all types of published literature in order to identify a breadth of good quality references relevant to a specific topic” (LHU, 2012, p.3). In conducting my literature searches, I was “systematic and thorough” (LHU, 2012 p.3). The importance of literature searches in a study of this nature cannot be overstated. It was asserted that literature searches are important for the following reasons: helps in the review of critical opinions/theories that exist; identification of research findings on a particular topic; identification of models or research methods for the purpose of comparison with a researcher’s own findings (LHU, p.3).

To review the literature on the subject, materials were accessed from Walden university library and other university libraries in Nigeria and the United States. The sources of the literature utilized for this study include books, articles in academic journals, newspapers, and conference proceedings on terrorism related issues. Other sources of literature search are ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, Full Text databases, EBSCO (Academic Search Premier and Business Search Premier) and search engines such as Google Scholar.

Literature Review Strategy

At the inception of this research, I set up a “Google Scholar alert” with keywords such as “Terrorism” “Boko Haram,” “Islam” “violence,” “Nigeria” and

“fundamentalism”. After setting up “Google alert,” I continued receiving several scholarly articles and abstracts sent to my email. These formed the basis of the literature review. These research materials were regularly reviewed by me and relevant materials to my research topic were utilized. Some of the accessed library databases and search engines used include:

- www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/sampling.php
- <http://www.terrorism-research.com>
- <http://www.crec.co.uk/docs/Trustworthypaper.pdf>
- <http://www.sagepub.com>
- www.usip.org/publications
- www.pewforum.org
- www.eajournals.org
- www.cfr.org/nigerias
- www.academicsjournal.com
- www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov
- www.state.gov
- www.ctc.usma.edu

Theoretical Foundation

What constitutes theoretical and conceptual frameworks are sometimes mixed up.

To clarify on this; a conceptual framework is said to be a researcher’s idea on the exploration and resolution of a research problem (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

Conceptual frameworks have also been referred to as research paradigm (Kuhn, 1970).

According to Kuhn a paradigm is “the entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques, and so on, shared by the members of a given community” (p.175). An example of conceptual framework is the statement; “New teaching method improves students’ academic performance” (Regionel, 2010). A conceptual framework, therefore, has to do with what a researcher is focused on. The conceptual framework constitutes an integral part of the research design. It has been defined as the system of concepts, expectations, assumptions, beliefs, and theories that informs and supports research (Miles & Huberman, 1994); Tavallae and Talib (2010). According to Miles and Huberman (1994), a conceptual framework is a visual or written product which “explains, either graphically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied—the key factors, concepts, or variables—and the presumed relationships among them” (p. 18).

On the other hand, a theoretical framework is much broader and has to do with theories that have been tested over time which contains the results of different investigations on how a phenomenon happens. For instance, the statement, “stimulus elicits response” is a theoretical statement. It is broader in scope and scale than a conceptual framework.

Ozdamar (2008) stated that though terrorism is an aged phenomenon, common characteristics of terrorism have not been subjected to systematic analysis and rigorous theorizing until recently. According to Ozdamar (2008) in “reviewing the literature on terrorism, one concludes that it has yet to develop a grand theory of terrorism” (p.99). He further noted that since terrorism is “primarily a political phenomenon” (Ozdamar 2008 p.90), the best developed theories of terrorism are the political theories. They are

Instrumental, Organizational and Political communication theories of terrorism. Apart from these theories, Ozdamar (2008) also discussed the Economic and Psychological theories of terrorism and concluded that the bourgeoning of terrorism theories is evidence that “there is not a fully developed, widely accepted theory of terrorist behavior” (p.90). In this study, I examined some theories of terrorism to determine the one(s) that served as the theoretical foundations for this study. Some of the theories I examined include Instrumental, Rational Choice, Organizational, Political Communications, Economic, Psychological, and theory of Fundamentalism. Of relevance to this study are the instrumental, Rational Choice, Economic theories and theory of fundamentalism. It must be pointed out that these theories are interconnected with one another if a clear understanding of Boko Haram’s terrorist activities in Nigeria are to be properly understood. I will briefly explain the theories below.

Instrumental Theory

The instrumental theory views terrorism as a deliberate choice made by a political actor (Crenshaw, 1995). Under this approach, acts of terrorism are conducted with a view to achieving political objectives. Crenshaw (1995) noted that the instrumental approach assumes that violence is intentionally used by terrorists as instruments to accomplish objectives which are political. Crenshaw (1995) stated that terrorism is deliberately applied by a political actor with the purpose of achieving a political objective. It has also been noted that terrorism occurs in “response to external stimuli like governments policies” (Ozdamar 2008 p.91). Unlike other theories of terrorism which views violence as an end, the instrumental theory sees terrorism as an instrument to attain stated political

objectives. In this theory, terrorists perceive the existing government and other political actors as rivals whose policies are detrimental to their existence. Consequently, terrorists use violence or force as an instrument to attempt their desired change in the positions or policies of the government or other political actors. It has also been noted that terrorist groups are non-state actors who weigh the costs of their actions and the benefit therefrom, before carrying out terrorist acts. In his study of Boko Haram, Iyekekpolo (2016) argued that “political opportunity” (p.9) must exist.

Rational Choice Theory

The rational choice theory is said to be like the instrumental theory. According to Ozdamar (2008), the assumption is “terrorists are rational and make their decisions in strategic interactions with other actors” (p.92). Perrya and Hassisi (2015) adopted the rational choice theory) in their study. They take the position that though suicide bombing may appear, terrorists who embark on suicide missions feel future gratification that they consider to be of greater importance than the immediate cost of the suicide mission. To such terrorists the seemingly irrational decision becomes rational.

Organizational Theory

Ozdamar (2008) posited that the organizational theory likens a terrorist organization to a normal organization whose main goal is organizational “survival”. Under this theory, terrorist organizations are not really influenced by ideological or political factors but rather organizational instinct to survive. For the organization to survive, it will do whatever is necessary, such as delivering tangible goods to their

members or intangible goods, like respect or the feelings of belonging which they give their members.

Political Communications Theory

This theory posits that terrorism is embarked upon for the sole purpose of communicating certain political messages to achieve a desired end. Ozdamar (2008) further stated that this theory views terrorism as a vehicle that uses fear or threat of violence to communicate or channel a message with a view to getting allegiance or compliance to its position. The individuals or groups targeted are not usually the target of allegiance or compliance, rather violence is used to communicate certain messages to another group.

Economic Theories

Economic theories suggest that economic factors offer explanations on why terrorism occurs. The economic theories posit that poor economic conditions in a society result in frustration which consequently leads to aggression that expresses itself as insurgency or terrorism. According to Iyekekpola (2016), the “frustration-aggression” theory states that when a group has a relative disadvantage as against others, the resulting frustration “breeds grievance and aggression,” (p3). Iyekekpola (2016) further asserts; “greed for material gains motivates insurgencies” since even rebels are all about enriching themselves.

Psychological Theories

Psychological theories profile the personalities of terrorists, their recruitment, beliefs and what motivates them to engage in terrorism. This theory considers terrorists as

“mentally ill” individuals (Ozdamar 2008 p.98). The Psychological theory of terrorism has it that psychological forces are compelling factors responsible for engaging in violence or terrorism (Ozdamar, 2008).

However, it has also been observed that the psychological theory alone cannot explain or predict terrorism. Ozdamar (2008) admitted that even though psychological theory links terrorism and ideologies, the theory still lacks the ability to give accounts of terrorism comprehensively. Ozdamar (2008) argued that the psychological theory can neither explain nor predict the behavior of terrorists without recourse to other theories like Instrumental, Organizational or “strategic interactions among actors in terrorist acts”.

Theory of Fundamentalism

Malasowe (2016) linked religious fundamentalism with radicalization and defined it “as a belief in an absolute religious truth which is challenged by the forces of evil and which must be followed today in the same way as in the past” (p.247). According to Malasowe (2016) the theory of fundamentalism is anchored on three attitudes – believers must revert to iron clad rules of the past; there is only one accepted interpretation of these rules and religious rules are superior to secular rules. Malasowe (2016) further observed that fundamentalism is sometimes used pejoratively for anyone who is considered to have a closed mind. He also noted that fundamentalism is usually “against” something which the fundamentalists object to and would like to supplant with something that is more in agreement with their subscribed views.

Malasowe (2016) examined two theories - the Social Conflict theory and Theory of fundamentalism - in his study of Boko Haram. After applying both theories, he

concluded that the theory of Fundamentalism better explained the motivations of Boko Haram. Malasowe (2016) noted that though state failure leads to terrorism, improvements in the socio-economic well-being of people were not sufficient guarantee to prevent such persons from becoming terrorists. Consequently, the Social Conflict theory did not adequately explain the existence and motivations of Boko Haram. Malasowe (2016) noted that since some of the terrorists who attacked the Twin Towers in New York were educated and came from middle-class backgrounds, it could not accurately be said that poverty motivated them in engaging in the act of terrorism.

Application of Theories

Maxwell (2012) posited that pre-existing theories should guide what a researcher sees and reports. This study, therefore, is anchored on the tripod of Instrumental, Rational Choice and Fundamentalism theories, since no single theory can absolutely give answers to what motivates the terrorist acts of Boko Haram. In a previous study about Boko Haram, Iyekekpolo (2016) examined three theories of terrorism — “religious ideology”, “economic”, and “political opportunity”. He came to the conclusion that “political opportunity” was the most significant factor in the advent of Boko Haram in Nigeria, According to Iyekekpolo, “There is no arguing the fact that economic hardship is endemic in northeast Nigeria, but the economic conditions are not significant enough to result in an insurgency; if they were, all developing states would have been experiencing insurgencies” (Iyekekpolo, 2016 p.6).

On religious ideology, Iyekekpolo (2016) cited Melson (1989) to contend that “no matter the extreme nature of the ideology, it remains harmless until it is combined with political authority” (p.7). He surmised that “while the economy and ideology played important roles, it was the political opportunity created by political actors that ensured the start of the Boko Haram insurgency” (Iyekekpolo, 2016, p.12).

In other words, there existed economic challenges which caused frustrations among the people. These frustrations are consequently framed by some sectarian leaders in religious ideological positions. However, the economic and religious ideologies by themselves are incapable of leading to violence or terrorism without the existence of “political opportunities” created by Nigerian political actors. Expressed in mathematical terms, Iyekekpolo’s main thesis can be stated thus: Economic frustrations + Religious ideology + Political opportunities = Terrorism. He asserted that while economic and religious ideology theory may help explain the coming of Boko Haram in Nigeria, “political opportunity” actually was responsible for triggering terrorism in Nigeria (Iyekekpolo 2016). Political opportunities, in this case, maybe said to have been enabled by the policies of government.

It has been stated earlier that Instrumental and Rational Choice theories are similar (Ozdamar, 2008). In this study, I take the position that economic theory and the theory of fundamentalism are useful, in the explanation and understanding of the Boko Haram phenomenon in Nigeria. Economic theory and the theory of fundamentalism constitute the theoretical foundations of this research study. In the case of the Instrumental theory, Boko Haram has continued to use violence and instruments of terror

in the quest for its declared political goal, which is the enthronement of Sharia law and the Islamization of Nigeria. Violence by Boko Haram may be construed to be reaction against the policy position(s) and actions of the Nigerian government. The resilience of the terror group may be explained from the prism of the terror group's continued access to the Instruments of violence, the prevailing poor economic conditions in the northeast strong hold of Boko Haram, the belief of the membership in the rationality of the acts of terrorism, in addition to their adherence to the strict tenets of Islamic fundamentalism.

Boko Haram has consistently rallied against the secularism of the Nigerian nation and what the group perceives to be the westernization of Nigeria. The name Boko Haram literally interprets to mean "western education is a sin". The rational choice theory is also relevant in understanding the phenomenon of Boko Haram and the resilience that it has shown. The terror group engaged in several suicide bombing missions against non-Muslims and Muslims alike. As irrational as these acts may appear, they can be explained using the rational choice theory. Though suicide bombings or attacks against fellow Muslims and non-Muslims alike may appear to be irrational behavior, the fact that the individuals who embark on such acts have expectations of future gratification which they consider to be greater than the cost of their terrorist acts, to that extent, their actions may be considered as rational.

The theory of fundamentalism is particularly relevant in understanding the terror activities of Boko Haram and the resilience it has shown. From many of the group's utterances and actions, the anchor of their terrorist activities is on the purity of the Islamic religion which they claim has been destroyed by the secularism espoused by the Nigerian

constitution and governments. Consequently, Boko Haram claim to be championing a return to the tenets of the Islamic religion in its undiluted form. To achieve its goal, Boko Haram continues to engage in terror activities as an instrument for the Islamization of Nigeria and implementation of Sharia laws. Finally, I agree with Professor Stanfield's position that; "it is certainly possible and necessary to be impartial in how we use methods to test and to revise our theories but there is no such thing as being value free or what 19th century-oriented scientists used to call objectivity" (Stanfield, 2016, para 5).

Islamic Fundamentalism

Marshallsay (2004) noted the confusion in the interchangeable usage of the term Islamic fundamentalism with other such terms as Political Islam, Islamism, Islamic terrorism, radical Islam, and even Islamic terrorism. Differentiating between these terms, Marshallsay (2004) stated that

"Subsuming the various Islamic movements (political, social, cultural, economic and local) under the general rubric of Islamic fundamentalist movements blinds us to the divergences, internal divisions and evolutionary nature of the various groups" (p.2).

Marshallsay opined that it is necessary to make distinctions when term or words like Islamic fundamentalism, Islamism, political Islam are used. This is to make their meanings, connotations and limitations clear. Accordingly, Islamic fundamentalism is said to be associated with "militant piety" (Marshallsay, 2004, p.3).

In this 21st century, Islamic fundamentalism has emerged as a concept which policy makers and western political observers consider to be an ideology and movement considered even more dangerous than Communism since the Soviet Union collapsed

(Chang 2005). According to Chang, “the war between communism and the West has been replaced by a new war between the West and Islamic fundamentalists” (Chang, 2005 p.57). This new war is traceable to the terrorist attacks on United States soil on September 11, 2001, carried out by a group of Islamic terrorists. After the attack and the launch of Operation Enduring Freedom by President Bush, the term Islamic fundamentalism immediately began to gain currency around the world.

What really is Islamic fundamentalism? The term is said to be a coinage given to some Muslims by non-Muslims, in the same way as the term “Uncle Sam” is said to be given to Americans by non-Americans (Khan, 1996). It has been noted that the term “fundamentalist” has a Christian origin. Khan (1996) stated that fundamentalism is a term that was first ascribed to some United States Christian theologians in the nineteenth Century. These theologians were said to have published some booklets titled ‘The Fundamentals: Testimony to the Truth’. The booklets were said to have defined the fundamentals of Christianity in literary terms; and the supporters of those beliefs as enshrined in the booklets were referred to as fundamentalists (Khan 1996).

Armstrong (2001) traced the term fundamentalism to Protestants in America in the early part of the 20th Century. These fellows tried to distinguish themselves from liberal Protestants who they felt were misrepresenting the fundamental teachings of the Bible. The aim of the fundamentalists was to revert to the fundamentals of the Christian tradition by interpreting the Bible literally and strict doctrinal acceptance (Marshallsay, 2004).

Malasowe (2016) affirmed that religious fundamentalism relied on the following three attitudes:

“One, believers should go back to absolute and unchangeable rules established in the past; two, these rules allow for only one interpretation to be held among believers and three, religious rules should prevail over secular ones. Fundamentalism may be understood in terms of whatever it is against” (p.247-248).

Khan (1996) argued that broadly speaking fundamentalism refers to strictly upholding the fundamental principles of a belief system. However, when the term Islamic fundamentalism is mentioned, many equate it to “medieval backwardness and retrogression” (Chang 2005, p.58). It has been further asserted that at the mention of the term Islamic fundamentalism, some view it to be “radicalism, extremism, terrorism, and incompatibility with Western democratic systems” (Chang 2005, p.58).

Islamic fundamentalism in its proper context is said to be “the religious and political movement that seeks a return to the golden age of the Prophet Muhammad and the four rightly guided Caliphs on the basis of pure Islam” (Chang 2005, p.58).

Therefore, Islamic fundamentalists’ aim is to “reconstruct the Muslim communities that are intoxicated by western culture and neo-colonialism” (Chang, 2005, p 58). Islamic fundamentalists are said have negative views of western societies and Israel; consequently, blaming the decline of Muslims societies to western decadence, aggression, corruption, and the effects of colonialism (Chang, 2005). According to Chang Islamic fundamentalists operate from the standpoint of their desire to “overthrow the established system” (p.60) brought about by westernization and industrialization.

Historically, Islamic fundamentalist resurgence has been traced to the 1920s. According to Chang, to address what was seen as the “backwardness” of Muslim nations, the writings and thoughts of three authors, Muhammad Abdul (1849-1905), Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1838-1898) and Rashid Rida (1865-1935) were pivotal in the “Salafiyya” movement, otherwise known as the “return to the ancestors” (p.59). It has been noted that the fundamentalist movements that emerged because of the writings and thoughts of al-Afghani, Abduh and Rida, “like all other fundamentalist reformist movements, it rejected common law (adat, urf), maraboutism (belief in the powers of intervention of certain individuals blessed with Baraka, or divine charisma), and rapprochement with other religions” (Roy 1996, p. 32).

The resurgence of Islamic fundamentalism has further been traced to Hassan al-Banna (1906-1949) the founder of Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt in 1928, Abu al-Ala Mawdudi (1903-1979), who founded the Islamic Society in India and Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966), said to be “the architect of militant and radical Islam” (Zhang 1995; Chang 2005 p.59). Though these advocates of Islamic fundamentalism lived in different countries and wrote at different times, their thoughts were anchored on what they perceived to be the causes of the “weakness and subservience of Muslim societies” to the industrialized nations of the West and East (Chang 2005 p.59). According to these Islamic fundamentalist advocates, Muslim nations exhibit lack of faith in Allah by abandoning the ways of God and copying the decadent capitalism of the west or the Marxism of the East. These Islamic fundamentalist advocates drew attention to glorious days of Islamic empires of old, urging a return to the past glory. According to these advocates, this is

possible “through return to Islam, the re-implementation of God’s law and guidance for state and society” (Chang 2005 p.59).

The Muslim fundamentalist advocates also canvassed the importance of science and technology in attaining Islam’s lost glory. Science and technology, Muslim fundamentalists advocates argued, must be “used within an Islamically-oriented and guided context, in order to avoid the westernization and secularization of Muslim society” (Chang 2005 p.59). It has been asserted that while Qutb advocated a more militant Islam than al-Banna, there is little or no difference between their political and religious ideologies, though they differed from the “established system in their methods of struggle” (Chang 2005). According to Chang (2005) “Qutb not only denied the legitimacy of the existing social and political order but went so far as to suspect existent Islamic culture and tradition” (p.59). Consequently, Qutb is said to have advocated that it was every Muslims sacred duty to participate in a Jihad. (Chang 2005)

Islamic fundamentalism has been categorized into “moderate”, “legal” and “radical” (Chang 2005 p.61). However, the Islamic fundamentalists’ position, whether the militant or non-militant variant, is the overthrow of the established Islamic lethargic order brought about by the capitulation of Muslim nations to western ways and industrialization; subservience of the rulers of Muslim nations to western capitalist or Eastern European interests and the humiliation of Arab countries because of the continued support of Israel by western countries, even though Muslim leaders remain subservient to them (Chang 2005). In modern times, the activities of the radical Islamic fundamentalists have been most noticeable because of their violent campaigns which

manifests as kidnapping, bombings, assassinations of prominent individuals in government or the society and bombings of infrastructures. The radical Islamic fundamentalists engage in these acts to force western countries not to support secular Muslim nations, cut off financial aid and foreign investments from western countries (Chang 2005).

The dual causes of Islamic fundamentalism have further been identified to be “economic” and “political”. According to Chang (2005 p.60) “the gap between rich and poor countries is one main cause of Islamic fundamentalism”. As a result of this ever-widening gap, Islamic fundamentalists latched onto prevailing mass discontent to emphasize the equity and social justice which they claimed the Islamic religion guarantees its adherents. Since many Muslims were obviously dissatisfied with their current economic conditions, the calls of the Islamic fundamentalists seem attractive. Politically, some of the factors that led to the rise of Islamic fundamentalism have also been identified. Chang suggested that “the Arab defeat by Israel in the 1967 war was a turning-point for Islamic fundamentalism” since “the defeat was interpreted by Islamic activists as the failure of nationalist ‘secular’ regimes in the Middle East... to be a panacea to the people in Islamic countries” (Chang 2005 p.60).

Iranian revolution which occurred in 1979 and the consequent occupation of the American Embassy in Tehran from November 4, 1979, until January 21, 1981, is another political factor said to have led to Islamic fundamentalism. The fundamentalists who were emboldened by this saw it as the ability of Islam to stand up to America’s imperialist powers. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan also is said to have provided

further impetus to Islamic fundamentalism. According to Chang (2005) “many Islamic fundamentalists from different Middle Eastern states who had joined the fight in Afghanistan returned to their homes as experienced ‘Guerrilla leaders’. This was an additional reason behind the increase of fundamentalist terror, especially in the Middle East” (p.60). The crisis in the Gulf from 1990-91 which led to the defeat of Iraq is said to have had tremendous consequences on other Arab countries just like the defeats suffered by Palestine in 1948 and in the 1967 war with Israel. Islamic fundamentalism arose in the quest “to regain Arab Muslim independence and Islamic dignity” (Chang 2005 p.61).

Islamic fundamentalism, therefore, is “a continuation of the post-colonial, anti-western nationalist struggle, couched in the language and garments of radical Islam. It is “the reincarnation of the nationalist movement with...an Islamic face” (Chang 2005 p.61). In spite of the rise of Islamic fundamentalism, Chang (2005) does not see it as a threat to western civilization, adjudged to be more advanced.

It has been observed that Islamic fundamentalist groups that exist in the Middle Eastern countries are neither unified nor have common objectives (Zhang, 1995; Chang, 2005). Therefore, Chang concluded that “the Islamic threat is very much exaggerated” (p.62). His reasons for this conclusion are two-folds. The first, he said, is that most rulers of Middle Eastern countries employ the Islamic threat to exert aid, both military and financial, from western countries. Secondly, he asserted that some “political confrontationists and policy makers in the west, especially America, want to find a new enemy to replace the former Soviet Union and communism, and to provide the basis for their own domestic and diplomatic policies” (Chang 2005 p.62).

Secularism

Secularism, as a concept, was first coined in 1851 by George Jacob Holyoake, a British writer. He used the word “secularism” to mean a social order which though separate from religion did not amount to dismissing out rightly or condemning religious belief. Holyoake, an Agnostic maintained that “secularism” was not against Christianity but was rather independent of the Christian religion. His position was that even though Christianity might shed light on several issues, there was also light to be gained from secular truth. Secularism, as espoused by Holyoake did not question Christianity but advanced other views. In a publication in 1896 titled “English Secularism,” George Holyoake defined secularism as:

A code of duty pertaining to this life, founded on considerations purely human, and intended mainly for those who find theology indefinite or inadequate, unreliable, or unbelievable. Its essential principles are three: (1) the improvement of this life by material means. (2) That science is the available providence of man. (3) That it is good to do good. Whether there be other good or not, the good of the present life is good, and it is good to seek that good” (Holyoake 1896 a.).

The National Secular Society of the United Kingdom noted that “secularism is a principle that involves two basic propositions. The first is the strict separation of the state from religious institutions. The second is that people of different religions and beliefs, are equal before the law” (NSS n.d. para.1). The National Secular Society enunciated certain characteristics of a secular society. These are: secularism advocates the separation of religion from state, with neither state nor religious organizations interfering in the others

affairs; secularism protects equally all citizens religious beliefs, believers and unbelievers alike; secularism balances the right of practicing religious beliefs equally with the right not to practice any religion; secularism guarantees equality before the law such that religious affiliation does not confer undue advantage or disadvantages to a citizen of a country; secularism guarantees that all citizens have equal access to public service and infrastructures in such a way that no citizen is denied the use of these facilities on account of religious orientation or lack of it; secularism is also not to be equated with atheism, which is the lack of belief in God. On the contrary, secularism neither challenges the tenets of any religion, nor seeks to promote and project atheism; secularism makes it possible for religious people to enunciate their religious beliefs and while also guaranteeing those that are opposed to such religions, the right to publicly raise their objection (NSS n.d. para 6-13).

The definition of the concept of secularism by the National Secular Society seems to be an attempt to settle the unending disputes of the varied interpretations of the concept of secularism which has persisted among scholars and practitioners. Like many concepts in the social sciences, the concept of secularism has attracted its fair share of interpretations and misinterpretations. Berlinerblau (2012) observed:

“Secularism must be the most misunderstood and mangled ism in the American political lexicon. Commentators on the right and the left routinely equate it with Stalinism, Nazism and Socialism, among other dreaded isms. In the United States, of late, another false equation has emerged. That would be the groundless

association of secularism with atheism. The religious right has profitably promulgated this misconception at least since the 1970s” (para 1).

Berlinerblau (2012) further asserted that though secularism proposes “religious freedom and freedom from religion,” it does not interpret to mean that religion is “poison” to the American government, especially since the “Church” is an institution recognized by the American government. Despite being a concept that has been around for ages, Berlinerblau (2012), lamented that (American) secularism remains a term that has been “defined, derided, used and abused in a bewildering variety of ways” (p.xii).

Kosmin (2009) noted that the concepts of “secularism” “secularization” and “secular,” have different meanings. These words, he stated, are from the Latin word *saeculum* “which means both this age and this world and combines a spatial sense and a temporal sense” (p.2). Kosmin (2009) opined that during the Middle Ages, “Secular” was a term used for priests in local parishes. Other priests who had taken vows of poverty and worked in secluded monasteries were referred to as “religious”. During the era of reformation, “secularization” was the term used to describe the properties of Catholics which were seized and converted to non-religious use. Kosmin (2009) further asserted; “in all of these instances, the secular indicates a relative opposition to the sacred, the eternal, and the otherworldly” (p.2).

Kosmin (2009 p.1) advanced the secularist argument by categorizing secularism into “hard” and “soft”. He was of the view that “the hard secularist considers religious propositions to be epistemologically illegitimate, warranted by neither reason nor experience” (Kosmin 2009 p.3). On the other hand, soft secularism means “the

attainment of absolute truth was impossible and therefore skepticism and tolerance should be the principle and overriding values in the discussion of science and religion”

(p.3). Explaining the concepts of ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ secularism, Sampson (2014) argued:

Hard secularism in its contemporary form is associated with the French *laïcité* which denotes the strict absence of religious involvement in government affairs as well as absence of government involvement in religious affairs. In its classical form, it abhors or prohibits the use and display of religious symbols in public institutions, while religious references are generally considered out of place in mainstream politics and vice versa. *Laik* is the Turkish model of hard secularism, modelled after the French *laïcité*. The soft (moderate) variant of secularism practiced in most liberal democracies attempts to separate government affairs from religious dogmas while divesting religious leaders of authority over political decisions. Nevertheless, in such systems religious symbols and connotations are commonly used in public institutions, while religious beliefs are widely considered a relevant part of the political discourse in many of these countries.

(p.325)

Berlinerblau (2012) noted that questions about the existing relationship between the state and the church have always been a matter of concern for all governments, whether democratic or authoritarian. To deal with the matter, Berlinerblau (2012) observed that different states normally enacted different policies like separation of the state and church. The French maintains models of monitoring and regulating the church to address that concern.

Secularism has been traced back to the Age of Enlightenment in Europe. It was said to have defined the United States principle of the separation of the state and the church. In France, *laïcité* is said to have existed even in the Islamic world during the Middle Ages (Lapidus 1975). Berlinerblau (2012) dismissed the view held by many Christian scholars and conservative politicians that secularism is the antithesis of religion and is a concept which seeks to remove religion from society and consequently replace it with atheism or nihilism. Sampson (2014) also adopted this position.

The secularism debate is certainly not confined to America alone! In Nigeria, the controversy is a raging and ongoing one. The prevailing 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, on the face of it, appears to advocate for secularism. Section 10 of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution clearly states that the government of the federation or a state shall not adopt any religion as official religion. However, this constitutional provision has been attacked on many fronts, especially by Muslim groups. The reasons for these attacks stem from the interpretations given to various provisions of the constitution. For instance, Ogbu (2014) pointed out that the confusion as to the secular status of the Nigerian constitution is because the 1999 Constitution did not definitely assert the secularism of Nigeria, even though the constitution clearly forbids the federal government and the federating states from adopting any religion. Secondly, “there is no agreement as to the meaning of secularism” (Ogbu 2014, p.2).

The 1999 constitution also expressly enshrines several constitutional rights that include rights to freedom of religion, thoughts and conscience and guarantees against discrimination based on religious beliefs. While these freedoms are contained in the

Nigerian constitution, the confusion stems from Chapter II, the “fundamental objectives and direct principles of the state policy”. This section makes it mandatory for the federating states to put in place, facilities for the religious lives of the people. In the same constitution, provision is also made for Sharia Courts of Appeal to be constituent parts of Nigeria’s Judiciary. Further to this, the Nigerian constitution requires certain public officers to be administered with religious oaths prior to assuming office. As a result, the 1999 Nigerian constitution has been given “tendentious interpretations” on the matter of its secularism (Ogbu 2014 p.2).

Ogbu (2014) highlighted the sharp divide between Christians and Muslims in the secularism debate in Nigeria. According to him while the Christian community advocate for more secularism of the Nigerian constitution, many adherents of the Muslim faith maintain a contrary view. Ogbu (2014) cited the views of many prominent Nigerian Muslims who he said prefers that Nigeria be governed under Sharia constitutional law, instead of a secular one. According to Ogbu (2014) “many Muslims in Nigeria appear to seek to be governed by the Sharia in all their human activities” (p.1).

Examining the secularism question in Nigeria, Sampson (2014) traced the genesis of the objections to Nigeria’s secular status by the predominantly Muslim north, to the precolonial and colonial eras. During these periods in Nigeria’s history, the British Colonialists encouraged and promoted Sharia laws in the administration of Nigeria’s Northern region because it served the interest of the British. With the political independence granted Nigeria and the introduction of a ‘secular’ government, the predominantly Muslim north considered secularism anti-Muslim. This was because the

North, having become used to Sharia laws, viewed such laws to be integral parts of the Northern regional governments. The present-day agitations by many Muslims for Sharia to be incorporated into the Nigerian constitution and the consequent campaigns for the non-secularity of the Nigerian nation originated from this historical period. The Muslim religion is a way of life that is all encompassing, according to proponents of non-secular Nigeria nation. To bridge the gap in the various interpretations of Nigeria's secular status, Sampson (2014) advocated for what he calls "moderate or concessional secularism" (p.325)

As a result of the secularism debates of the Nigerian constitution, the question that arises is whether Nigeria is a secular nation or not? As earlier stated, there are many who view Nigeria to be anything but a secular state. A major proponent of this position is an umbrella association of Muslims in Nigeria, *Jama'atu NasrillIslam* (JNI). The group made its position known in a press conference titled; The Nigerian Constitution and the Nigerian Muslim *Ummah*, published in the *Nigerian Guardian newspaper* on March 15, 1999. The arguments of the JNI centers on the following: that nowhere in Nigerian constitution is secularism provided for; that Nigeria's constitution mandates states to promote religious affairs and moral education which is religion centered; and that various practices of the Nigerian government amounts to Christianization of Nigeria.

To address the secularism question of the Nigerian constitution, Ogbu (2014) explained what he terms the "spectrums of secularism" (p.8) or "degrees of secularism" (p.9). While the United States is cited as an example of a strict secular state (Ogbu,

2014), some other countries like Turkey operate a different variant of secularism (Wing and Varol 2006).

The different types of secularism as stated by Dhokalia (1990) include: formal and functional theocracy; formally theocratic but functionally secular; formally secular but functionally theocratic; formally as well as functionally secular; and egalitarian and protective secular states. Nigeria can be classified as an “egalitarian and protective secular states” (Dhokalia 1990). Ogbu (2014) agreed that Nigeria’s secularism is ‘egalitarian and protective secularism’ since no church or religion is foisted on Nigerians by the State; instead, the Nigerian State treats the predominant Muslim and Christian religions equally without showing hostility to any (Ogbu 2014 p.11-12). For Adamolekun (2012 p.152), secularism prevails when the government is fair and does not favor one religious’ faith against the other. Yusufu (2016) also affirmed the secularity of the Nigerian State while Adamolekun asserted the “need to respect and uphold the secular status of Nigeria’s Constitution and the provision for fundamental human rights and religious freedom in the spirit of true federalism in each state of the Federation” (Adamolekun 2012 p.152).

On the secularity of the Nigerian state, a Nigerian constitutional lawyer, Professor Nwabueze preferred the term “religious neutrality” to secularity (Nwabueze, 2001). Ogbu (2014) stated that Professor Nwabueze argued that in so far as the Nigerian government constitutionally prohibits the adoption of any state religion, Nigeria is religiously neutral. Therefore, it becomes a moot argument whether this “neutrality” is deemed secularity or referred to by any other name.

Some other proponents, like Professor Nwabueze, maintained that since religion permeates almost every aspect of the lives of Nigerians, Nigeria cannot be accurately said to be a secular state. Rather, Nigeria should be considered a “multi-religious” country (Balogun 1998; Sampson 2014; Adamolekun 2012 p.151). A multi-religious country has been defined as

“a state where one religion is not superimposed on the other; a society where people will have freedom of worship, where no government makes a proclamation in favor of one religion to the detriment of other religions; and a society where government does not promote any religion as the official religion” (Balogun, 1998 p.62, 65).

Balogun agreed that “a multi-religious society is an ideal state for Nigeria.” (p.65)

There are yet some others who dismiss Nigeria’s secular status, preferring instead to say that Nigeria operates religious “pluralism,” a concept said to have been infused into Nigeria by the colonialist. This “religious pluralism” was not a feature of African societies, but the introduction of Christianity and Islam infused it into Nigeria, the attendant consequences being social upheavals that arose because of the introduction of different cultures and ideas (Uzoma 2004). It must also be pointed out that the term religious pluralism has oftentimes been used interchangeably with “multi-religious”. Sampson (2014) noted that France and Turkey operate strict secularism even though they are multi-religious countries largely because “religion is kept out of government and its institutions” (p.332).

Ogbu (2014) concluded that since there are spectrums of secularism and secularism aims at protecting religious freedom; to that extent Nigeria is a secular state,

even though the 1999 constitution does expressly pronounce Nigeria “secular”. Ogbu correctly argued that even though Section 10 of the Nigerian 1999 constitution does prohibit the Nigerian federal government and states from adopting any state religion, that section is still ambiguous because of the provisions of other sections of the constitution. For instance, other parts of the Nigerian constitution provide for Sharia Courts of Appeal, for any state that requires it. Another section mandates states to provide facilities for the religious life of people of their states. This ambivalence notwithstanding, Ogbu (2014) maintained that Nigeria is a secular state when section 10 of Nigeria’s 1999 constitution takes into consideration other relevant sections of the constitution. These sections asserted the supremacy of Nigeria’s constitution and guarantees basic freedoms of thought, religion, conscience, and any form of discrimination, including religious discrimination.

Going by the ‘spectrum of secularism’ concept, I agree with Ogbu’s argument that Nigeria is a secular state. The Nigerian constitution does not quite fulfill the dual propositions of secularism enunciated by the National Secular Society, UK. The proposition stated that for a nation to qualify as a secular state, it must have ‘strict separation’ of state and religious institutions and must guarantee equality before the law of people of different religious faiths (NSS n.d.). In Nigeria, while there is separation of state and religious institutions, this separation cannot be termed “strict” because of the support that the federal and state governments give to the two major religious groups (Muslims and Christians) in Nigeria. On the second proposition, it is fair to say that people of all religious faiths in Nigeria are deemed equal before the laws of the land.

Sampson (2014) concluded that Nigeria operates a variant of secularism which he terms “moderate or concessional secularism” (p.325). He opined that the support that the Nigerian government offers to the two main religious institutions in Nigeria does not make Nigeria less of a secular state. In a comparative analysis, Sampson stated that the US governments’ secularism is not negated by the fact that references are made to religion during national engagements. Again, religious symbols and phrases like ‘God bless America’ is commonplace in America. The United States also imprinted the phrase, “In God We Trust” on its currency. American government officials and justices of the Supreme Court swear to oaths of office, using either the bible or other holy books. Also, the American pledge of Allegiance mentions ‘one nation under God’. Further, some Justices of the Supreme Court annually attend a religious ceremony, the ‘Red Mass’ before the commencement of the Court session (Sampson, 2014). According to Sampson (2014) many countries in Europe are “deeply entrenched Euro-Christian” (p.332), yet they make strong claims to secularism. This is said to be true in countries like the UK, Italy, and Turkey. Sampson (2014) further observed that in the UK, “the secularism that has emerged clearly rejects the church’s total authority over society and its collective institutions” (p.325), even though the church plays prominent roles in some of the government affairs. The same is also true in Italy where the secular status is maintained in the face of the all-embracing roles that the Catholic Church plays in the affairs of the country (Sampson 2014).

After an examination of how secularism operates in different climes; and distinguishing the soft from the hard variants, Sampson argued that secularism does not

amount to “irreligion or disregard of the sacred as some have attempted to assert” (p.332). He concluded that: “it is safe to assert that Nigeria is a moderately secular or soft secular state, as there is ample constitutional evidence of an unambiguous intention to separate state affairs from religious creeds” (Sampson 2014 p.332).

Terrorism

Defining terrorism has proved to be challenging, not only for academics but also for governments and individuals alike. The reasons for the existence of a plurality of definitions stems from the saying; ‘one man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter’. By this, it means that while an individual or government may label an organization a terrorist organization, those behind the organization(s) might view themselves as freedom fighters or nationalists, struggling for the liberation of their countries or fighting against some form of perceived injustice or persecution. Many liberation struggles faced this dilemma during the fight for independence of colonized countries, especially in Africa. For instance, the Apartheid regime in South Africa considered Mr. Nelson Mandela’s African National Congress (ANC) military wing, a terrorist organization, and consequently tried and jailed Nelson Mandela and others for being leaders of “the Umkhonto we Sizwe” (Spear of the Nation), the military wing of ANC. However, the ANC viewed itself as a political organization, fighting for the emancipation of South Africa. For his role in ANC, Nelson Mandela was arrested, tried for terrorism, and jailed for life on June 11, 1964 (Mandela n.d. p.323). In the heat of the struggle against the Apartheid regime of South Africa, Nelson Mandela defiantly stated:

I have made a choice. I will not leave South Africa, nor will I surrender. Only through hardship, sacrifice, and militant action can freedom be won. The struggle is my life. I will continue fighting for freedom until the end of my days.

(Mandela, n.d. p. 328)

The Irish Republican Army (IRA) was at one point considered a terrorist organization by the British government, but it has been noted that the organization evolved out of nationalism to free the whole of Ireland from British domination (Townshend, 1971). In the same light, several post-colonial political organizations that formed the governments of many African nations were at some point in their political trajectory regarded as terrorist organizations, during the colonial periods.

Terrorism is, therefore, difficult to define. The definition oftentimes depends on who is defining it. This is possibly why terrorism has been described as “both a tactic and strategy”; “a crime and a holy duty”; “a justified reaction to oppression and an inexcusable abomination” (Terrorism Research n.d. para.2). Terrorism has also been described to be “an effective tactic for the weaker side in a conflict... (and) as an asymmetric form of conflict, it confers coercive power with many of the advantages of military force at a fraction of the cost” (Terrorism Research n.d. para2). Terrorist groups are secretive in nature and “often offer opponents no clear organization to defend against or to deter” (Terrorism Research n.d. para 2)

Borum (2004), argued that even though defining terrorism has remained “a vexing problem”, terrorism has to do with “acts of violence (as opposed to threats or more general coercion) intentionally perpetrated on civilian non-combatants with the goal of

furthering some ideological, religious or political objective” (p.4). While this definition holds somewhat true, one can also make the point that terrorism can and has also been perpetrated by terrorists against military combatants. It is a known fact that terrorists have attacked military personnel and positions, with the aim of inciting fear on nationals and countries concerned. For example, in August 2008, about 15 suicide bombers and militants numbering up to 30 attacked Camp Salerno, a United States military base in Afghanistan. There are many more of such attacks against military installations and personnel.

Since terrorism is perpetrated against combatants and non-combatants alike, I share Walter Laqueur’s conclusion that “Many terrorisms exist, and their character has changed over time and from country to country. The endeavor to find a “general theory” of terrorism, one overall explanation of its roots, is a futile and misguided enterprise...terrorism has changed over time and so have the terrorists, their motives, and the causes of terrorism” (Laqueur, 2003).

Psychiatrist Jerrold Post agreed with Laqueur and noted that “there is a broad spectrum of terrorist groups and organizations, each of which has a different psychology, motivation and decision-making structure” (Post, 2001).

The Department of Defense in the US defined terrorism as; “the calculated use of unlawful violence or threat of unlawful violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious or ideological” (Terrorism Research, n.d. para. 4). Boko Haram is a terrorist organization driven by the religious ideology of Islamic fundamentalism.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) defined terrorism as “The unlawful use of force and violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives” (Terrorism Research, n.d. para. 4). The United Nations, on its part, defines terrorism thus: “an anxiety-inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by (semi-) clandestine individual, group or state actors, for idiosyncratic, criminal or political reasons, whereby - in contrast to assassination - the direct targets of violence are not the main targets” (Terrorism Research, n.d. para. 5).

Terrorists aim to impact an audience beyond their immediate victim. The strategy of terrorist is to draw as much attention as possible to their evil acts. Their attacks, therefore, aim for maximum publicity possible. Consequently, “the effectiveness of the terrorist act lies not in the act itself, but in the publics or government’s reaction to the act” (Terrorism Research n.d. para. 6). It can therefore be argued that the victims of the September 11, 2001, attacks in the US were not the main targets. The United States, other western European countries, governments, and ordinary citizens, far removed from the Twin Towers were the real targets of the terrorists’ attacks. It can, therefore, be said that for every Boko Haram attack, the real impact goes beyond the immediate victims and location of the attacks. Therefore, “terrorism is designed to produce an overreaction and anecdotally, it succeeds at that almost all the time” (Terrorism Research, n.d. para 6).

To conclude, I agree that defining terrorism poses significant challenges. This is because the concept of terrorism is still evolving. A person considered a terrorist today might emerge to become a President or a member of the ruling political group.

In summary, terrorism can be said to be violent acts deliberately calculated by the perpetrator(s) to induce fear on the rest of the populace, to achieve ideological, religious, political, or even socio-economic objectives. To simplify the challenges that abound in attempting a definition of terrorism, I advocate out rightly outlawing the use of violence of any kind to achieve political, socio-economic, or ideological goals and objectives. Any group or individual that uses violence to achieve an end should simply be dubbed a terrorist(s), no matter how justified the cause might be. Martin (2015) opined that a religiously-inspired violence is

A type of political violence motivated by an absolute belief that an otherworldly power has sanctioned and commanded terrorist violence for the greater glory of the faith. Acts committed in the name of the faith will be forgiven by the otherworldly power and perhaps rewarded in an afterlife. In essence, one's religious faith legitimizes violence if such violence is an expression of the will of one's deity. (p.130)

Boko Haram

In this section, I present the divergent and somewhat conflicting explanations about the origins, motivations, and resilience of Boko Haram in Nigeria. The preponderance of these explanations includes poverty, religion and corruption, frustration-aggression; Nigeria as a 'failed state' (Ababa, 2013; Malasowe, 2016; Ozoigbo, 2016). While varied, disparate and often conflicting reasons have been proffered as being responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram; the religious fundamentalism *raison d'être* which has often resonated is examined in this study. Ababa

(2013); Malasowe (2016); and Ozoigbo (2016) identified poverty and religious fundamentalism as being responsible for terrorism in Nigeria.

Ahmed (2015) theorized that terrorism often takes root in volatile countries where many youths lack economic opportunities, education, and employment. Although, admitting that the provision of education and employment were not sufficient guarantees against becoming a terrorist, Ahmed posited that factors such as injustice, marginalization, corruption, discrimination, or violence that people or close family members suffer from government security forces, may explain why people become terrorist.

The violent phase of Boko Haram began in 2009, after its founder Mohammed Yusuf was killed in controversial circumstances by Nigerian security forces. Bamidele (2013) and Adesoji (2010) posited that Boko Haram emerged due to various factors such as, economic dislocation, party politics, religious sensitivity, and the inability of some Nigerian Islamic leaders to condemn the heinous activities of Boko Haram when it started. Onuoha (2010) surmised that unemployment, socio-political exclusion, and poverty, were at the root of Boko Haram's terror activities, considering that majority of the terror groups' members are unemployed graduates and disaffected young people. For Idowu (2013) Boko Haram arose in Nigeria due to the prevailing socio-economic and political conditions, manifested through endemic corruption, injustice, poor governance, and unemployment.

Cohen (2003) considered Boko Haram to be a franchise of al'Qeada. Cohen reasoned that al'Qeada was able to exploit the poor socio-economic and political

conditions in some sub-Saharan African countries like Somalia, Nigeria, and Mali, in attempts to foist medieval and extremist Islamic fundamentalism. According to Cohen, countries become vulnerable to manipulations from al'Qeada because of their "profound historic internal problems" (p.64) which manifests through political instability, corruption, anarchy and ethnicism. Cohen (2013) further noted that Boko Haram became entrenched only after the killing, in cold blood, of its founder Mohammed Yusuf, by Nigerian security forces. Cohen (2013) asserted that it was at this point that Boko Haram became an extremist Islamic terrorist organization.

Ababa (2013) stated that the terrorist activities of Boko Haram were "fueled by the terrorism of the Nigerian State" (p.435), though he also conceded roles played by poverty and deprivation. Hansen and Musa (2015) equally implicated poverty as being responsible for terrorism in Nigeria. They argued that the terror group (Boko Haram) is composed of elements they referred to as the "wretched of the earth" (Hansen & Musa, 2015). Alozieuwa & Oyedele (2017), in a study of how residents of Abuja and environs responded to the threats of attacks and actual attacks by Boko Haram, between the years 2011 and 2015. They concluded that Boko Haram's terrorism "is majorly linked to poverty" (p.75) since the group is comprised of "uneducated, poor and jobless young people in the streets in northern Nigeria" (p.75). Using surveys and face to face interviews, the authors found that the fear of attacks from Boko Haram by the residents of the areas surveyed subsided over the years; and the socio-economic political activities of the areas concerned were not significantly affected, especially after the change of government in Nigeria on May 29, 2015.

The violence caused in Nigeria's northeast by Boko Haram and that perpetrated by Niger Delta militants were examined by Chizea and Osumah (2015). They attributed the attendant violence to "a complex set of insecurities in Nigeria" (p.75) worsened by crime, youth militia, corruption, and income inequality which the Nigerian State has not effectively tackled. According to Chizea and Osumah (2015), the failure of the Nigerian State to provide effective security for its nationals is the reason for the formation and operation of ethnic militia groups like, 'Odua People's Congress' (OPC) in Southwest Nigeria, the 'Bakassi Boys' in the East and Boko Haram in Nigeria's northeast. According to Chizea and Osumah (2015); "the radicalization of militias in Nigeria has been partly linked to unemployed, hungry, and angry youths in the country. Militias are drawn from this pool of frustrated and neglected youth" (p.78). Chizea and Osumah further asserted that these militia groups thrived because of the frustrations of Nigerian youths, unemployment, hunger, and anger in the land. To forestall youths from engaging in terrorism, Chizea & Osumah, advocated for, the "provision of a functional infrastructure, creating opportunities for more jobs and raising the general standard of living" (p. 91)

From an ethical viewpoint, Ozoigbo (2016), contended that Boko Haram's sole aim is the Islamization of Nigeria. He contended that it is wrong for a group, or individuals for that matter, to take up arms against a duly constituted government, with the intention of dismembering the corporate existence of the state. While acknowledging that varied socio-economic conditions like poverty and illiteracy that exists in Nigeria encourages violence, Ozoigbo (2016) maintained that the driving force behind Boko

Haram is Islamic fundamentalism. According to Ozoigbo, Boko Haram is not interested in addressing or redressing the poor socio-economic conditions in the state, rather the terror group aims at “total Islamization of the country where sharia law will reign supreme”(p.61). Ozoigbo further opined that in view of the violence perpetrated by Boko Haram, “the Nigerian government is ethically empowered to militarily crush this terror group that threatens her corporate existence and at the same time address, as a matter of urgency, all the known factors that triggered all forms of agitation” (p.62).

Ozoigbo (2016) asserted that since the ‘carrot’ approach did not work, the alternative ‘stick’ approach should be employed. This extreme measure, Ozoigbo asserted, should not only be applied to the sect but against all collaborators of the terror group, both in government and elsewhere to serve as a deterrent to future troublemakers. Ozoigbo insisted that “total military crushing of the sect will lay it to rest permanently” (p.70). I take the position that Ozoigbo’s panacea for resolving the Boko Haram quagmire is fraught with a lot of dangers. Violence begets more violence! Since Boko Haram’s violent phase commenced in 2009, the Nigerian government has made attempts at repelling the attacks with military might. Though Boko Haram retreated at some point but have continued to show tremendous resilience.

Pérouse de Montclos (2014) agreed that the escalation of Boko Haram’s violence “paralleled the brutality of its repression by Nigerian security forces” (p.4). Ojeme (2015) also observed that military might had not been effective in containing Boko Haram. Ojeme noted that, the Nigerian government, though committed men and materials for almost a decade to counter Boko Haram, the terror group has still not been defeated.

(Country Reports on Terrorism 2012)

<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/210204.pdf>

As solution, Ojeme suggested the use of “an efficient financial intelligence as a veritable tool to counter terrorism in Nigeria” (p.48). Ojeme (2014) recommended the establishment of an independent financial intelligence organization which will collaborate with other organizations in different parts of the world to strangulate financially the activities of Boko Haram. Ojeme stated:

It has become imperative that the Nigerian State should rise to the challenge posed by the present state of insecurity and set-up a proactive financial intelligence agency that would facilitate earlier detection, prevention and deterrence of money laundering and financing of terrorist activities. The present financial intelligence unit has no doubt been subsumed by its parent body the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) whose focus has been on the corrupt politicians. (Ojeme, 2014, p.51)

The problem with this recommendation is that Boko Haram ordinarily did not utilize known existing financial channels in Nigeria to raise funds for the sustenance of its terror activities. Rather, they used unorthodox means like kidnapping for ransom, stealing from communities and robbing banks, among other ways. Counter terrorist financing measures, advocated by Ojeme may not be highly effective in checkmating the activities of Boko Haram.

Tonwe & Eke (2013), implicated Islamic religion as Boko Haram’s driving force. The authors identify Boko Haram as an Islamic fundamentalist group whose aim is the

imposition of Islamic religion, after overthrowing the Nigerian government and the secular status of the state. Tonwe & Eke (2013) opined that nothing had threatened Nigeria's national security interest since the Nigeria-Biafra civil war, like Boko Haram's terrorism. On the insecurity in Nigeria, Tonwe & Eke cast a blame on the Nigerian government who they accused of projecting the interest of a few over that of the majority. The framework of analysis adopted by the authors is that Nigerian State service delivery is poor while unemployment and extreme poverty are high. Tonwe & Eke (2013) argued that while state fragility was not responsible for the emergence of Boko Haram, the fragility of the Nigerian nation contributed "to create the monster in Boko Haram by making available unemployed, poor and ill-educated youths for the group's propagation of terror" (p.238). Tonwe and Eke further maintained that corruption, inequality, illiteracy, unemployment, misuse of government funds, and extreme poverty prevalent in Nigeria, especially in the Northern parts, must be addressed because, "these problems swelled the army of vulnerable people whose disillusionment and impoverishment made them easy prey to demagogues like Yusuf" (Tonwe & Eke, p. 236).

Langer et al. (2016) averred that the real intentions of Boko against the Nigerian nation are not quite known. Nonetheless, they pointed out that the following factors brought about Boko Haram: bad governance and institutional fragility; religious fundamentalism and ideology; and sustained poverty and unemployment in the northern parts of Nigeria.

Malasowe (2016) identified Boko Haram as a terror organization whose activities have been detrimental to the development of Nigeria. While agreeing with the position

taken by some writers on Boko Haram, that the socioeconomic and political conditions in Nigeria are capable of eliciting terrorism, the author critically examined two contending positions or theories used in explaining Boko Haram's terrorism. These theories are the social conflict and fundamentalism theories. Malasowe (2016) opined that

“If theories are indeed a set of related ideas which are postulated with a view to guiding constructive and positive policy making, it is imperative that those theories thrown up by the continued operations of the Boko Haram sect be subjected to thorough intellectual scrutiny. Where such scrutiny is lacking, theories would only occasion policy mislead, misguide and confusion” (p.242).

After due scrutiny of the Social-conflict theory and its corollary frustration-aggression version as applied to Boko Haram, Malasowe concluded that since Nigeria is categorized as a 'failed state' and many of the indices of a failed state are to be found in Nigeria, the arguments of theorists of this school of thought sounds compelling.

However, he equally noted that when the Social-conflict and religious fundamentalism theories are put on an “imaginary scale of judgment” (p.249), the religious fundamentalist argument will prevail because “religious fundamentalist theory, maintains that it is possible for terror to rage in a society where the state fulfils its obligations, especially if the terror is linked to religious convictions” (p.250). Malasowe's argument is premised on the fact that advocates of social conflict and frustration aggression theories are of the view that social conflicts or frustration-aggression are caused by the inadequacies of social infrastructure and facilities. Consequently, providing these things will ameliorate the discontent in society. Malasowe, therefore, argued that this does not apply to the

Nigerian situation in the case of Boko Haram, since majority of the Northern areas that are mostly affected by Boko Haram's terror do not subscribe to the terror agenda of the group. Moreover, these northern states have borne the brunt of Boko Haram's attack. Malasowe conceded that though state failures may lead to terrorism, Boko Haram's terrorism "goes beyond a cry for social reconstruction, if not absolutely away from it" (p.250). Malasowe asserted that attempts to link terrorism to socio-political and economic factors, like absence of economic opportunities and poverty remains weak. Malasowe concluded there that "it is safer and accords more with reason and intellect to see Boko Haram as an idea fueled by religious fundamentalism" (p.250). To buttress his position, Malasowe (2016) stated that in a study of 250 members of Palestinian militia group and the 19 plane hijackers of September 11, 2001, it was found that they did not engage in terrorism because of socioeconomic deprivations.

The sophistication and technology deployed by Boko Haram to carry out their terrorist activities, many times with great precision, questions the validity of the claim in some quarters that members of the group are poor and ignorant. Some known members of the group are well trained and highly educated. A good example is Aminu Sadiq Ogwuche who was alleged to have been behind one of Boko Haram's bombing in Nyanya, Abuja in Nigeria. He is said to be a British born ex-Nigerian soldier. From available evidence, it cannot be stated that poverty and other socio-economic conditions conclusively explains the Boko Haram trajectory in Nigeria. Onuoha (2014) came to the same conclusion when he noted that the professionalism exhibited by Boko Haram which poses a threat to security cannot possibly be the handwork of ignorant fellows. Pérouse

de Montclos (2014) echoed the same view, noting that though Boko Haram has some poor people as members, there was no evidence to show that Boko Haram's violence was economically driven.

Gommet & Esomchi (2017) averred that almajiris (itinerant poor beggars) in the Northern parts of the country graduate to become members of violent terrorist groups like Boko Haram, 'Yandaba' and 'Maitasine'. According to the authors Boko Haram and almajiri's are inseparable. Consequently, "the interaction of almajiri with these groups is a breeding ground for juvenile delinquency among almajiri and future terrorism, as manifested in an almajiri's attempt to kill the Emir of Kano, Alhaji Ado Bayero"(p.84).

Contrary to the claims of Gommet & Esomchi (2017), in an earlier study, Hoehner (2014) had debunked the often-cited claim that the poor Quranic students (almajiri's) that abound the streets of some Northern states constitute the "foot soldiers" of Boko Haram. Finally, while stating that the war waged against terrorism by the Nigerian nation goes beyond a physical warfare, Malasowe (2016) recommended that for the Nigerian government to defeat Boko Haram, a war of the mind must be fought from fundamentalist perspective. From the examined existing literature, the existing gap lies in the Islamic fundamentalist explanation of Boko Haram's terrorism. This study consequently attempted to fill this gap through a thorough examination of the Boko Harams terrorist activities with a view to finding out the culpability of Islamic fundamentalism in Boko Haram's terrorism.

Summary

I attempted an exhaustive examination of the different positions taken by writers on terrorism, Boko Haram, and the secular status of the Nigerian State. The disparate and conflicting positions on these issues were examined. It has been shown that the definitions of who is a terrorist depend on who is defining it. For instance, while a terrorist organization might be viewed as a criminal organization, the terrorist group might see itself as freedom fighters or rebels with a just cause. On the other hand, secularism remains a contentious issue in existing literature. It is even more so in Nigeria where many Christians have called for more secularism while some Muslim groups and some individuals have referred to Nigeria as a “multi-religious” nation, in view of the fact that the prevailing Nigerian constitution (1999 Constitution) does not expressly declare Nigeria to be a secular state. The literature review also dealt with the various perspectives of the factors propelling Boko Haram in Nigeria. The contending socio-conflict, failed state, and frustration-aggression theories were examined.

It is my contention that the poverty argument, advanced as reason for terrorism, does not quite hold considering that some rich and educated individuals have been associated with terrorism. On the other hand, the failed state arguments proffered as a cause of Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria equally does not stand to scrutiny. For instance, though Mirken & Chamie (2016) argued that Nigeria is a failed state, Rotberg (2012) suggested that there are many categories of failed states. Nigeria and Somalia, therefore, cannot be in the same category of failure. Ozoigbo (2016) noted that a basic feature of a failed state is the lack of a central government, as many contending forces or

groups usually lay claims to being the government in charge. This situation does not apply in Nigeria currently. Nigeria. As earlier indicated, Malasowe (2016) examined the theoretical arguments advanced to explain Boko Haram – social conflict/frustration-aggression theories and religious fundamentalism arguments, and concluded that Boko Haram was motivated, more by religious fundamentalism than socio-economic and political considerations.

In this study, I interrogated the religious fundamentalism arguments, advanced as being the factor that motivated Boko Haram's terrorism. It is my contention that beyond Islamic fundamentalism, there are other non-religious explanations why Boko Haram has remained resilient, despite many measures, including government policies that have been put in place to combat terrorism. A thorough exposition of some of these factors would be the beginning of finding a lasting solution to the terrorist quagmire that Nigeria is mired in.

My understanding of theories is that they are propositions, assumptions or even acceptable facts that help in the explanation(s) of causal relationships of observable phenomenon. Theories consist of concepts about what people are concerned with; and they help researchers to explain, predict or intervene. For instance, the theory that Islamic fundamentalism caused the rise of Boko Haram in Nigeria may be put to a scientific test using the qualitative method. In Chapter three of this study, I delved more deeply into the methodology of this research study. In so doing the theory can be validated or invalidated. In quantitative research, this can be deductively done while in qualitative research, it is inductive. Stanfield (2016) made us to understand that there are similar

concerns in using the qualitative and quantitative methods, because their goals of testing theory are the same, though done differently. Testing theory, using either the quantitative or qualitative methods requires that a researcher pay attention to how data is collected and analyzed, the validity and reliability of data collected, the coding of the data, cause and effect, ethics, and relevance in the lives of “human subjects and populations under investigation” (Stanfield, 2016).

Theories are therefore a set of assumptions, propositions or acceptable facts that aim at providing plausible or rational explanations of cause-and-effects (causal) relationships among a group of observed phenomena. Theories helps a researcher make predictions about behaviors. In Chapter 3, I provided in detail; the research design applied to tackle the identified gap in the literature. This includes the data collection method, the data management method and procedure. The data analysis method and issues of ethics in qualitative research and trustworthiness are dealt with.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the role of nonreligious factors in the resilience that Boko Haram has shown in the decade of its existence in Nigeria. The study was geared toward finding out whether the lack of clearly articulated and poorly executed policies against Islamic fundamentalist ideology is responsible for the resilience that Boko Haram has exhibited since its terrorist activities started in 2009. The opinions of some writers (Ababa, 2013; Campbell, 2014; Malasowe, 2016; Shuaibu et al., 2015) that Boko Haram's terror activities are hinged on Islamic fundamentalism were weighed against the views of the interview participants who are knowledgeable about matters of religion and government policies. Because Nigeria is constitutionally a secular state, I explored the Islamic fundamentalist explanations of the resilience that Boko Haram has shown in the last decade against the backdrop of the policies of the Nigerian government toward the terror group. I explored whether the resilience of Boko Haram was a factor of its Islamic fundamentalist ideology or because of other nonreligious factors including the adequacy or otherwise of Nigerian government policies to tackle the phenomenon. This was done with a view to finding an acceptable explanation of this unusual phenomenon in Nigeria. Findings may extend what is already known about the resilience of terrorism in Nigeria.

In Chapter 3, I restate the research questions, describe the research tradition, and explain my rationale for choosing it. In addition, my role as a researcher is made explicit. In the section on methodology, I present the method used for the collection of data, my

data management procedure, the method of analysis for the collected data, issues of trustworthiness, and ethics in qualitative research.

Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmais (2008) noted that the scientific approach to knowledge acquisition is set apart from other modes due to the assumption on which it is based and its methodology. Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmais viewed the scientific methodology as a system of explicit rules and procedures that provides the foundation used for the conduct of research and the evaluation of claims for knowledge. According to Frankfort-Nachmais and Nachmais, the scientific method is neither foolproof nor static. The method, they noted, is constantly evolving as scientist develops new means of observation, analysis, and logical inference.

My central research question was the following: To what extent is Islamic fundamentalism responsible for the resilience of terrorism in Nigeria, especially since Nigeria is constitutionally a secular state? This research was an attempt to investigate whether the resilience of the terrorist group Boko Haram has resulted from its Islamic fundamentalist ideology or the policies of the Nigerian government. In the literature review in Chapter 2, I examined the arguments on the resilience that Boko Haram has shown in the decade of its existence.

In the contending perspectives on the outbreak of terrorism in Nigeria and the surprising resilience that Boko Haram has shown, the following factors were said to be responsible: poverty, corruption, state failure, frustrations of Nigerian youths, and unemployment, among other socio-economic and political factors. However, some writers have looked beyond socio-economic and political issues to implicate Islamic

religious fundamentalism, as the motivating force of Boko Haram terrorism. This research examined the Islamic fundamentalist explanations against the policies of the Nigerian government which were aimed at tackling the terrorism phenomenon. Malasowe (2016) examined some of these contending views by applying the theories of social conflict and of Islamic fundamentalism. He concluded that the religious fundamentalist theory offers a better insight in understanding Boko Haram because evidence showed that improvements people's socio-economic conditions were not sufficient in deterring them from becoming terrorists. Consequently, Malasowe asserted that the social conflict theory does not fully explain or offer better insight in understanding Boko Haram. Pointing out that the September 11, 2001, terrorist attackers in the United States were of middle-class backgrounds, Malasowe averred that they could not have been motivated due to poverty. Consequently, improvements in the socio-economic condition of a people are not possibly guarantee that they would not become terrorists.

A pertinent question I attempted to answer is: What could be responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram? Against the backdrop of different socio-economic, political, and fundamentalist explanations of terrorism is Islamic fundamentalist ideology or the policies of the Nigerian government responsible for the resilience that Boko Haram has shown?

Research Design and Rationale

The central research questions of this study which I attempted to proffer an answer to, is whether the resilience of Boko Haram be due to the terror group's Islamic

fundamentalist ideology or other non-religious reasons, including the policies of government which were aimed to curb the menace of terrorism.

The research questions which this study examined were:

RQ1: What role, if any has Islamic fundamentalism played in the resilience of Boko Haram in the past decade?

RQ2: What non-religious factor(s), if any, were responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram in the past decade of its existence?

RQ3: What government policies, if any, were responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram in the past decade of its existence?

In this study, I investigated the role (s) played by Islamic fundamentalism, non-religious factors (if any) and government policies (if any), in the resilience of Boko Haram, in the decade of its existence in Nigeria.

I focused on the examination of the non-religious reasons that may be responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram, in Nigeria. Some previous studies on Boko Haram had implicated Islamic fundamentalism as the propelling force behind the resilience of the terror group, in the decade of its existence in Nigeria. In this current study, I was motivated to find out if the resilience of the terror group was a function of its Islamic fundamentalist ideology or other non-religious reasons (including the policies and actions of the Nigerian government).

In the last 7 years of the over 10-year history of Boko Haram, I resided in Nigeria and witnessed first-hand how two successive Nigerian governments handled the Boko Haram terrorist phenomenon. The governments were those of Presidents Goodluck

Jonathan and Muhammadu Buhari. The attacks by the terror group, Boko Haram, persisted despite government measures aimed at checkmating their terrorist activities. Since Boko Haram professes to be an Islamic fundamentalist group, it is understandable that some writers focus on Islamic fundamentalism. The Nigerian governments under reference may have also been influenced by some of the Islamic fundamentalist explanations of Boko Haram in the formulation of anti-terrorist policies and measures. Despite Nigerian governments' anti-terrorism measures and policies, Boko Haram has remained resilient. In this current study, my efforts were geared towards finding possible nonreligious reasons why Boko Haram has remained resilient.

It is noteworthy to point out that in the 1980's an Islamic fundamentalist group in Nigeria (Maitasine), similar in nature to Boko Haram, rose up. However, the group (even with its Islamic fundamentalist ideology) did not become as resilient as Boko Haram has been. The Maitasine group was quickly subdued by the Nigerian government in power. On the contrary, Boko Haram seems to have defied the governments' anti-terrorism measures and policies. It is, therefore, my contention in this current study that since Islamic fundamentalism explanations does not quite answer the question of the resilience of terrorism in Nigeria, it becomes imperative to investigate other possible non-religious reasons that may be responsible for the resilience.

The questions which I examined in this study were the following: What government policies, if any, were responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram in the past decade of its existence; what non-religious factor(s), if any, were responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram in the past decade of its existence and what government

policies, if any, were responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram in the past decade of its existence?

Finally, since terrorism has become a worldwide phenomenon capable of disrupting nation states, it is my intention to become a leading scholar on terrorism and related issues, especially in the sub-Saharan region. This is with a view to helping the Nigerian government, and other African governments in general understand the phenomenon and assist in policy formulations to tackle terrorism.

Research Tradition

During the design of this research study, I considered qualitative and quantitative traditions or paradigms before settling for a qualitative case study approach. The quantitative method that I considered was the survey method, using questionnaire. A researcher can choose between the qualitative and quantitative traditions to carry out research. According to Creswell (2013), qualitative research is an emergent approach that allows for data to be collected in the natural habitat or setting of the subject of study. Kielborn (2001) likened qualitative research to an umbrella which shields different forms that helps a researcher to understand and explain social phenomena, with minimal disruption to the natural setting of the phenomena being studied.

Quantitative research is said to be the method used for the testing and validation of theories that already exist or are established (Creswell, 2013). To differentiate between quantitative and qualitative approach; quantitative method is said to be suitable for the study of large samples while qualitative methods is suitable for research with smaller samples (Taylor & Sondergaard, 2017). It has been further observed that a generalization

of studies is easier to make in quantitative studies than in qualitative. This is because statistical analysis is better done in quantitative than in qualitative studies. However, when a subject is to be observed in its natural habitat and carefully documented, qualitative research is the preferred option (Creswell, 2013).

A quantitative or qualitative research will normally fall into any of the following five approaches – case study, narrative, ethnographic, phenomenological or grounded theory. However, regimenting research into the quantitative or qualitative compartmentalization may not be an easy task. This is because a rigid application of only one approach in research may not be possible. For this reason, researchers often blend or combine the approaches. It has been argued that combining approaches may result in better insights in the understanding of a research problem (Creswell, 2015).

Madrigal & McClain (2012) opined that quantitative and qualitative methods have various advantages and disadvantages but can be effective when combined. Madrigal and McClain stated that while qualitative research gives details of human behaviors, personality, and emotions, quantitative is deficient in this aspect. They adduced human behaviors were not easily reduced to numbers, as is done in quantitative research (Madrigal & McClain 2012). The strength of mixing the research approaches lies in a researcher's ability to combine numbers, pictures, words, and other forms of documents, to propose and test theories. When approaches are mixed, a researcher may be able to do a better generalization than when either qualitative or quantitative is used.

Despite the advantages attributed to blending or mixing the approaches, the mixed method is also fraught with problems. Creswell (2011) documented eleven controversies

associated with the mixed method research. According to Creswell (2011), the controversies range from “basic concerns about defining and describing mixed methods, to philosophical debates, and on into the procedures for conducting a study” (p.269). Johnson (2008) noted that the mixed method is expensive to conduct and requires more time than either the quantitative or qualitative methods. In addition, the usage of the mixed method requires a certain kind of expertise. A researcher has to be adept in knowing the right degree to mix the methods.

Even when a researcher is familiar with the quantitative, qualitative, and mixed research methodologies, Abusabha & Woelfel, (2003) stated that a researcher’s use of a methodology should not be based simply on the researcher’s familiarity with a particular methodology, but after due consideration of a suitable research design. Against this background, I considered a qualitative case study research as best suited for this current study on Boko Haram. A case study, according to Creswell (2013) makes for the study of a phenomenon, events, activities, or individuals over a period to be done with depth. The contents of a case study are further enriched by the fact that data is drawn from several sources (Taylor and Sondergaard, 2017; Creswell 2013). This position was also affirmed by Jacelon & O’Dell (2005) who asserted that a case study draws from multiple sources of data to give a comprehensive picture about the phenomenon being studied. Case studies are said to be better suited when research questions seek answers to the “how” and “what” a phenomenon is about (Yin, 2013).

Taylor & Sondergaard (2017) stated that “case study involves gathering and describing, not only the phenomenon that is of interest, but also of its context” (p.1). A

case study may involve the study of a single unit or multiple cases in their natural habitat or context (Sondergaard and Taylor, 2017; Yin, 2009, 2013). For Creswell (2013) case studies are “real-life cases that are in progress” (p.98). Creswell (2013) further noted that

“Case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time” (p.97) which involves “detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g., observations, interviews, audiovisual material, and documents and reports), and reports a case description and case-based themes.” (p.97).

There are three types of case studies identified by Creswell - single, multiple, and intrinsic. According to Creswell (2013) a case study starts with “a specific case” In this current study, the “specific case” that I examined is Boko Haram. I conducted the research in the “natural setting” or prime location of the terror organization, which is Nigeria. The case study is a suitable approach for the purpose of the exploration of my research questions: What is responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram terrorist group in Nigeria; Islamic fundamentalism or other non-religious reason, including the inadequacies of the anti-terrorist policies of the Nigerian government.

These research questions, as earlier stated, make this research study an exploratory one. The study is exploratory because the phenomenon of Boko Haram is relatively new, and theoretical postulations are still emerging. Exploratory studies are said to be preferred under certain conditions. These are where theories are not fully formulated or non-existent; when the need to get the views of participants are required; research variables are difficult to identify or when the need exist to give an account, in

more details of the research participants (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; Creswell, 1998, 2013; Trochim, 2001; Singleton & Straight, 2005). Qualitative research was considered best suited for this study despite some of the identified weaknesses inherent in the approach. These weaknesses include research results may not easily be generalized to entire populations or applied to different settings; predictions with quantitative values may not be possible; might not be possible to test hypothesis and theories; data collection and analysis are more time consuming and personal biases and idiosyncrasies of the researcher may easily taint the research. Conscious of these weaknesses, I made considerable efforts to overcome them in this current study on Boko Haram.

Patton (2015) noted that qualitative research has 12 characteristics. He categorized them under the following sub-headings: – Design strategy; Data-Collection and Fieldwork and Analysis strategies. Some of the above characteristics as enunciated by Patton (2015) are relevant to this current study.

Role of the Researcher

My role in this current research study commenced from the conception of the research to its actual execution. This involved the collection of the data, the analysis and writing of this dissertation. Being a case study on Boko Haram, the natural setting or context is Nigeria (Yin, 2009). Boko Haram has been most active in Nigeria since 2009. Data collection and field work for this research were conducted in Nigeria. Having followed keenly the terrorist activities of Boko Haram, I was able to gain access to some people knowledgeable about the activities of the group. My efforts were geared towards

recruiting them as participants in interviews. I actively recruited my interview participants through telephone calls, emails, and personal visits.

All interviews were conducted electronically, recorded, and backed up by handwritten notes. These served as part of my references for analysis. It is already settled that in qualitative research, the researcher is the research instrument (Creswell, 1998; Goulding, 2002; Stanfield, 2016). So, I personally conducted all the interviews for this research study. I adopted the face to face and some telephone/email interviews for the collection of data on this research. I opted for telephone/email where it was not possible to do face to face interview. I complemented the face-to-face interviews with telephone/email interviews following the authorization to do so from the Walden authorities, due to the outbreak of COVID 19.

As I noted earlier, face-to-face interviews have assumed the premier status among other interview types. It is said to be one of the oldest and commonly used methods when carrying out research (Marshall, 2016). Face-to-face interviews come highly recommended because of some of the intrinsic advantages associated with its usage. Some of the advantages include the ability to visualize and detect social cues and body language of the interview respondent. During face-to-face interviews, the researcher can have deeper insights through probing the respondents' answers and making deductions from the responses (Marshall, 2016). The use of face-to-face interviews helped me build the needed rapport with the interview respondents. I was able to get detailed and comprehensive responses from my respondents (Novick 2008).

There are, however, drawbacks of face-to-face interviews. They are said to be costly and time consuming because of the time needed for identifying, recruiting, traveling, and conducting the interviews. In spite of these drawbacks, the advantages of qualitative face to face interviews outweigh the disadvantages. For these reasons, I adopted face to face interview technique for data collection. Conducting the interviews, I started from less sensitive questions to the most sensitive or difficult ones, as advocated by Stanfield (2016). The questions were open ended. Face to face interviews enabled me gather, in greater depth, information about the Boko Haram phenomenon from knowledgeable experts. The interview method enabled me to control the process and the sequence of the interview. Face to face interviews gave me the flexibility to probe for more detailed answers and obtain clarifications to ambiguous answers and issues (Singleton & Straits, 2005).

This face-to-face interview used for the collection of data has attendant strengths and weaknesses. McLeod (2014) agreed with Maxwell (2005) that structured interviews are “easy to replicate” and “quick to conduct” but lacks flexibility. I made use of unstructured interviews because of its flexibility and capacity to generate more in-depth qualitative data. The internal validity of unstructured interviews is also said to be higher (McLeod, 2014). However, the inherent weaknesses include, being time consuming and expensive, particularly when multiple cases are being examined (McLeod, 2014).

I adopted the unstructured interview technique because it has the potential to yield more data for a single case study, especially since my sample size was not a very large one. The flexibility of unstructured instrumentation was best suited for this case study. It

has been affirmed that in qualitative research the researcher's eyes and ears are tools necessary to decipher what happens in the field (Maxwell, 2005; Stanfield, 2016).

Prior to interviewing my respondents, I heeded the advice that a researcher should be prepared with well composed questions (Janesick 2011). When conducting an interview, a qualitative researcher is enjoined to do the following:

Be a good listener without interrupting; avoid talking too much and not assume that the interviewer is aware of what the respondent has in mind to say; examine the interviewees ideas and remarks; encourage the respondent by asking proper questions; introduce fresh topics; assure respondents of confidentiality; ability to navigate interview to move back and forth (Wallace Foundation, n.d.).

When I conducted the interviews, I avoided the "don'ts" of face-to-face interviews. According to Wallace Foundation (n.d.), the "don'ts are; conducting interviews in distracting environments, interrupting respondents, or asking leading questions; putting interviewee's remarks in researcher's words; hopping from one subject to another and confusing respondents with words or phrase they do not understand.

I audio-taped and transcribed my interview proceedings. During the interviews, I wrote down memos and contemporaneous notes which I later used to aid my analysis and the narrative report. Finally, as the researcher, I am the primary instrument for the collection of data (Creswell, 2013).

Methodology

Background

Patton (2015) stated that the design strategy of a qualitative study should be a “naturalistic inquiry”. According to Patton (2015), this means that such research is conducted in the natural habitat of the research subject, without manipulating or controlling the study. In such research, the researcher needs to be open to whatever results that comes out from the study. Patton (2015) asserted that qualitative design is flexible and adaptable unlike the quantitative design which is considered rigid. Further, Patton (2015) noted; “purposeful sampling” of people, cultures, organizations, events, or communities are used to get insight from respondents in a qualitative study. The sample population in this research study was made up of 14 respondents drawn from Muslim and Christian Clerics, Muslim and Christian policy makers and members of civil society organizations (Muslims and Christians).

Sample

In this section, I attempted the discussion of the sample size for my study. I examined various positions canvassed on what constitute an adequate sample size for gathering qualitative data to make a study meaningful. This was done with the view to relate the sample size with my research topic; “Islamic fundamentalist terrorism in a secular state: Boko Haram as a case study”. A sample is a part of a total or an aggregate. From that part, a researcher can make inference or make conclusions about the total or the aggregate. Haque and Bharati (n.d.) noted: “It is the process of obtaining information about an entire population by examining only a part of it” (p.1). Put differently, a “sample

is any number of persons, units or objects selected to represent the population according to some rule or plan” (Haque & Bharati, n.d. p.1). Trochim (2008) was of the same view. According to him, in sampling, units are selected (e.g., people, organizations) from the whole population that a researcher is interested in studying. It is from such narrow sample that a researcher may generalize about the studied population. Miles, Huberman & Saldana (2014) noted that sampling is also about “settings, events and social processes” (p.30) and not just about the decision on whom to interview or observe. They also noted that initial sampling is required in qualitative studies even though qualitative research refocuses and redraws some parameters of study (Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014). Sampling in qualitative research has also been referred to as the selection of participants who are relevant to a study (Polkinghorne, 2005). In this case, participants and documents are selected based of their potential ability to give insights in the understanding of the phenomenon under question.

Patton (2015) differentiated qualitative sampling as follows: “typical case”; “maximum variation”; “critical case”; “snowball or chain”; “intensity”; “homogeneous”, “theory based”, “confirming/disconfirming”; “stratified purposeful”, “criterion”, “theory based”; “politically important cases”, “convenience”, “mixed purposeful sampling” and “combination methods”. Sampling is used in conducting research because it is a cheaper and more efficient technique, especially when the population under study is a large one. Since it is expensive and not practicable to study an entire population when it is large, sampling is resorted to as an approximation of the whole population. Lenth (2001) noted; “sample size is important for economic reasons: an undersized study can be a waste of

resources for not having the capability to produce useful results, while an oversized one uses more resources than are necessary” (p.187) It must be pointed out that there is an ongoing debate in social science on the size of sample ideally suited to generate meaningful qualitative data. While some writers take the position that a larger sample means more valuable and prestigious research study, it is the position taken in this study that in many studies, small samples may be more appropriate to accurately study the population. Crouch and McKenzie (2006) determined that since interview-based research seeks to probe beyond what is ordinarily made manifest, small samples enables a researcher to delve deeply into the research subject(s) and help the researcher to establish fruitful and continuing relationships which are essential in getting to the root of research problems.

There are also divergent views on what is an ideal sample size. Though some writers stated the number of samples they consider ideal sample size, others are of the view that sample sizes depend on several other factors. These factors include population size, geographical location, resources available to the researcher, access, nature of research, the social context of research and even goals the research.

Maroop (2017) argued that the size of a sample depends on the study type (e.g., case study, ground theory, biography, phenomenology, ethnography, or action research). Maroop (2017) further argues that the method of data collection, whether (in-depth interview, ethnographic surveys, focus groups) among others, also affects sample size. Stanfield (2016) argues in favor of geography and access when he stated that; “If the nature of your sample is too far away and you are unable to visit them ... you really need to find an accessible sample or alter your research question to find an accessible sample”.

I agree with Stanfield. To buttress this position; in a study of say the lifestyle of past Presidents of Nigeria after their tenures in office, the whole population of former Presidents may be considered a sample. This is because there may be a few of them who are still living. On the other hand, if a study is about the lifestyle of Nigerians, it will be impossible to use the entire population of almost 200 million Nigerians as sample. In such a situation, a sample of the whole population will suffice. The sample is then chosen by the researcher according to certain parameters specified for the research.

In Chapter 1 of this study, I explained that my sample will include a small sample of Muslim and Christian Clerics, Muslim and Christian policy makers and members of civil society organizations that cuts across the Muslim/Christian religious divide. These categories of respondents are selected because of their knowledge and insights on religious matters. From their views, the claim that Boko Haram's terrorism has become resilient due to its fundamentalist ideology may be corroborated or discarded. The policy makers who cut across the Muslim/Christian divide in Nigeria are also selected as respondents because of their knowledge of government policies which may or may not be implicated in the resilience that Boko Haram has shown in the last decade.

In a qualitative study, the total sample size cannot be definitively pre-determined. Since the type of study largely determines the sample size, a researcher cannot affix an exact number on the sample size to be used. According to Marshall (1996) the sample size is dependent on the optimum number that will enable a researcher to make inferences that are valid to the population studied. Maroop (2017) further affirmed that while there are no rigid rules about sample sizes, some of the considerations made are at what level

does the sample size reach saturation or redundancy? By this, it means that at what level does the size of a sample get to before consistent patterns are seen. Secondly, at what size does a sample get to before reflecting the variations of the research populations. Patton (2015) surmised; “the sample size can be a starting point or minimum, but it may not be the final number. The size and composition of the sample can be adjusted based on what is learned as fieldwork is conducted and the inquiry deepens” (p.313)

“Stratified Purposeful Sampling” was utilized for this study. According to Maroop (2017) stratification of a sample is based on certain characteristics. This method of sampling is said to focus on what characterizes a defined subgroup of interest and makes comparisons possible. The distinct characteristics of the samples that I denoted for this research are categorized as Islamic and Christian clerics, government officials and some members of the Nigerian public.

My interview respondents were grouped into the following categories: Islamic and Christian clerics; officials of the Nigerian government involved with policies on security matters and some informed members of the Nigerian public. There is a preponderance of Clerics (Muslims and Christians) and government officials in Abuja, Nigeria’s capital city. They constituted the interview respondents for this study. Though removed from the main theatre of Boko Haram’s battle areas (northeast), Abuja has been impacted by Boko Haram’s terrorist activities. Being the Federal Capital, Abuja is pivotal to many policy decisions of the Nigerian government concerning the terror group.

As I had earlier stated, sample size is dependent on the study approach (e.g., case study) or the method of data collection (e.g., In-depth interview). My sample size is

tentatively 14 and the breakdown is: 4 Clerics (2 Muslim Clerics and 2 Christian Clerics); 4 Policy makers (2 Muslims and 2 Christians); 4 members of Civil Society Organization (2 Muslims and 2 Christians) and 2 people (a Christian and a Muslim) chosen from the public. The respondents were interviewed by me. It should be noted that though a sample of 14 respondents were designated for interviews, provision for variations of the sample size were also made. According to Patton (2015), “the sample can grow, or if saturation is achieved sooner than expected, the size can be reduced” (p.313). Wertz (2005) also suggested that the recruitment of participants for information should be done until the information sought attains a point of “saturation” where no new information findings can be made. Miles, Huberman & Saldana (2014) stated; “within-case sampling has iterative or ‘rolling’ quality, working in progressive waves as the study progresses (p33)”. I tend to agree with the position of Miles, Huberman & Saldana (2014) in the view that “we are cerebral detectives, ferreting out answers to our research questions. We observe, talk to people, and pick up artefacts and documents. That leads us to new samples of participants and observations, new documents. At each step of the evidential trail, we are making sampling decisions to clarify the main patterns, see contrasts, identify exceptions or discrepant instances, and uncover negative instances – where the pattern does not hold (p.33)”.

Participant Selection Logic

As earlier noted, in-depth interview was the major source of data collection in this study. An interview-based qualitative study presents the attendant challenge of recruiting the right participants for the research study. A researcher needs to consider the

recruitment strategy of who and who not to include in a study. Newington and Metcalfe (2014) noted that though recruiting the required number of participants in a study is vital to the success of the study, yet many studies fall short of this standard. Newington and Metcalfe (2014) stated that overcoming this challenge requires reducing the burden on the participants, making adequate provisions for participants who may not speak English, and collaborating with institutions where participants are sourced, to identify and have access to potential participants who may be eligible. The interview sample frames that I identified for this research study are Muslim Clerics; their Christian counterparts; policy makers in Nigeria (Muslims and Christians); Civil Society Organizations (Muslims and Christians). A sample frame can be said to be how the groups of interview respondents are chosen and the number to choose.

In choosing from my identified frames, I got the prior consent of all the interview respondents as suggested by Patton (2015) and Creswell (2013). To get the full consent of the interview respondents, there was rapport building to get the trust and buy-in of the participants. Having determined the frames of respondents, I recruited participants within the distinct categories that I mapped out. I reached out to them through their various institutions or the organizations that they belong to. Many individuals in these categories were public figures whose views and opinions about Boko Haram had been previously published in various media outlets, especially newspapers. Some of these knowledgeable individuals formed part of the respondents for the face-to-face and telephone/email interviews. The face-to-face and telephone interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim. Since some of the respondents were not easily accessible, I was

able to reach out to them through individuals connected to them. These contacts, I consider to be the gatekeepers.

In Nigeria, terrorist attacks by Boko Haram have become a grave concern, not only in the country but also internationally. Due to this fact, many people knowledgeable about Boko Haram were willing to offer their views on the subject matter. For the interviews proper, I wrote letters to selected respondents in the sample frames and followed-up with visits to their institutions/organizations. In the letters (See Appendix III). I introduced myself as a scholar conducting research on the activities of Boko Haram and sought their perspectives on the terror organization. Conscious of the possibility that some selected respondents in the sample frames may either be inaccessible or unwilling to speak on the subject matter, I also had plans to replace such respondents with other participants in the categories affected.

After explaining to the respondents that the motivation for the research was the quest for solutions to the problems constituted by Boko Haram, I reassured them that their views and expert opinions would be treated with strict confidence. In the letter, I also made the respondents understand that nothing they said in the interviews would be of adverse consequences to their persons, positions, careers, or callings. I equally informed respondents that their participations were voluntary and that they could opt out of participating at any stage in the interview process, for any reason or no reason at all. It was my expectation that these measures would elicit the confidence of participants and reassure them of the little or no risks involved in taking part in the interviews.

Data Collection

Jacob & Furgersen (2012) stated that a researcher is open to use many different techniques. I collected data for this research study through qualitative interviews, observations, documents, and audiovisual materials. Creswell (2007) noted; “observations, interviews, documents, and audiovisual materials” (p. 129) are qualitative data collection tools.

Janesick (2011) defined interview as “a meeting of two persons to exchange information and ideas through questions and responses, resulting in communication and joint construction of meaning about a particular topic” (p.100). Sturkley (2013) viewed interviews as a way to determine the inner thought process of someone for the purpose of interpreting their behavior. Janesick (2011) further asserted that interviewing is the most rewarding component of qualitative research, and it is not likely to fade away soon.

An interviewer must be prepared with many thoughtful questions ahead of an interview instead of going without prepared questions (Janesick, 2011). A researcher’s purpose in an interview, according to Stanfield (2016) is an attempt to get subjective and intersubjective meaning of individual and collective (e.g., group, institution, community, system) behaviors. Jacob & Furgerson (2012) stated that interviews are the primary ways by which qualitative researchers collect the life stories and the human experiences of their research subjects.

Patton (2015) noted three categories of interviews: -” the informational conversation interview”, “the Interview guide” and “the standardized open-ended interview”. Sturkley (2013) referred to these three interview forms as “Narrative,” “Semi

structured” and “structured interviews”. Patton (2015) gave reasons why interviews are so useful in qualitative research. According to Patton (2015) since intentions, feelings, past events, and how people organize their world and attach meanings to it cannot be directly observed, interviews are conducted to uncover those things that cannot be directly observed; or to understand what is observed. Patton (2015) therefore, asserted that interviewing allows the interviewer to enter the perspective of the person being interviewed. Since interviews are critical to the success of qualitative research, it has been stated that apart from getting the procedural parts of the interview right, a researcher must make good connections or rapport with the interviewee (Jacob & Furgenson 2012).

To strike the rapport with the interviewee, a researcher can adopt different methods to conduct the interview(s). These are face-to-face, telephone, video, or internet interviews. These interview methods have their strengths and weaknesses. The face-to-face interview in qualitative research has been referred as the “gold standard” in qualitative research (Novick, 2008 last para). Professor Stanfield asserted that face to face interview is crucial in the initial stages of a research. According to him, if a study does not require at least one face-to-face interview with the interviewees, the researcher should change the plan to test the research question(s) (Stanfield, 2016). He further posited that if a researcher is initially unable to meet his subjects for a face-to-face interview, the researcher should find an alternative research sample or change the research question (Stanfield, 2016).

Face to face interviews is seen as being particularly effective in building rapport, considered crucial to the success of qualitative research. They are useful in helping a

researcher probe deeper and follow up on responses that are not very clear. However, they come with their own challenges which include the inability of respondents to disclose certain information to a researcher “face-to-face” due to the sensitive nature of the issue concerned.

Though Stanfield (2016) argued that in qualitative research, face-to-face interviews is to be preferred to telephone, Skype or email, a strong case has also been made for the effectiveness of telephone interview in qualitative research. Novick (2008) dismissed the argument that in qualitative research face-to-face interviews are superior to telephone interviews because the latter is lacking in visual cues and could lead to distortion and loss of data. Novick (2008) further contends that there is scant evidence of data loss, distortion, interpretation, or poor quality of findings when telephones are used to gather interview data. On the contrary, Novick (2008) asserted that telephones may allow interviewees to disclose information that are sensitive, which they could not ordinarily disclose in a face-to-face interview.

Other means of conducting qualitative interviews are emails or the internet. Patton (2015) observed that Internet and social media platforms have brought about new opportunities for focus group interviews. According to Patton (2015), in comparative studies on the reactions of Internet-based versus face-to-face focus groups that discussed academic dishonesty, it was found that the internet interviews seem to reduce participants’ anxiety and made it easier for them to disclose information which may be embarrassing to reveal in a face-to-face interview (p.479).

Bennett (2016) noted that the advent of Skype and other internet video tools have led to a situation where video interviewing is supplementing and even replacing traditional interview methods like face-to-face interviews. This new interview technique is said to have various strengths and weaknesses. According to Bennett (2016), the merits include saves the cost of traveling to conduct interviews; speeds up the interview process; convenient for interviewer; access to international talent; video interviews can be recorded and viewed later. The demerits include respondent must have access to the Internet and a Web camera; technical problems; possibility of disqualifying a person on the ground of a protected class (race, disability, etc.) and respondent(s) may be nervous in front of a camera.

Observation was a key data collection method that I utilized in this research study. Kawulich (2005) referred to observation as a means of using one of the five senses to obtain “written photograph” of the research study. Creswell (1998, 2013) and Merriam (1998) noted that observation forms a credible source of data collection. A researcher may be a participant or non-participant observer. In this current research, I was a non-participant observer of the Boko Haram phenomenon. The advantages of observation in research, according to Kawulich (2005) include the following: helps to check non-verbal expressions; different interaction levels may be determined through observation; a researcher is able to check the definition of terms that respondents use during interviews. Observation also enables a researcher to observe what interviews may not have uncovered. Patton (2015) noted that the advantages of observation are in its naturalistic and interpretive nature. By this, he meant that during observation, not too obvious things

are seen and interpreted. Patton described observation as “inductive, empathic, and exploratory”.

Observation complimented the interviews conducted for this current study. Since I lived in Nigeria for some years, I observed firsthand some the terror activities of Boko Haram. The interviews were all conducted in Nigeria, and I was able to corroborate what my interview respondents said through observations.

In addition to interviews and observation, I made use of documents and audio-visual materials for data collection. The five main sources of data, according to Singleton & Straits (2005) are: mass media, documents (public, personal, and private), non-verbal and archival sources. Marshall (2006) noted that using documents requires content analysis. The materials for such content analysis may be written materials like textbooks, novels, newspapers, and e-mail messages. Other forms of communication may include—music, pictures, or political speeches. Some of these were used as documents in this current research study. From the policy makers and government officials, I sought for non-classified documents on Boko Haram. I also asked the Clerics and other respondents for relevant documents to back up some of their statements. In addition, I examined relevant audio-visual materials, some of which were in the public domain, put out by the terror group, Boko Haram.

The instrumentation for this current study were interviews questions developed by me. The interviews were conducted in Nigeria through face to face and a few telephone interviews of selected respondents. It has been stated that interviews in social research is valuable because, “it builds a holistic snapshot, analyses words (and) report detailed

views of informants” (Alshenqeeti, 2014, p.39). According to Berg (2007), Interview enables interviewees “to speak in their own voices and express their own thoughts and feelings” (p. 96).

The questionnaire for the interviews was equally developed me. To obtain the content validity, the questionnaire was compared to those of comparable studies that had been conducted. Further, I solicited and received feedback on the questionnaire, from a group of experts on Islam and Boko Haram, who are resident in Nigeria. Thereafter, I incorporated their observations into the revised questionnaire.

Data Analysis

My analysis of the data collected through interviews, documents and audio-visual materials include the mode of data management, analysis, and representation. Goulding (2002) stated that the analysis of data begins during the process of collection. The different procedures for data analysis in a case study suggested by Creswell (1998) and Stake (1995) were adopted for this current research study. The steps include management of data; “reading and memoing”; “description”, “classification” and “interpretation”; and “representation”.

To conform to these procedures as outlined above, the data collected were listed and organized into files under different subjects and folders. This was followed using codes which were in numbers and letters, representing the subjects, to make for easy retrieval and analysis (Creswell, 1998). The second step is said to be “reading and memoing” (Creswell 1998, p.143). This involved reading, several times, all my interview manuscripts, documents and notes until I internalized fully and made meaning of the

whole data. During this process, I marked the edges of the documents with what had been referred to as “short phrases, ideas, or key concepts that occur to the reader” (Creswell, 1998, p.144). The codes that I developed, and my preliminary findings were revealed to some of my interview respondents to know their views. The constant comparative approach where all my research data is read many times to the point of saturation was adopted. The codes developed were compared to form more codes. Creswell (2013) noted that “the process of coding involves aggregating the text or visual data into small categories of information” (p. 184). Saldana (2009) agreed that coding is “a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data” (p.3). Saldana (2009) noted that coded data comes from interview transcript, official documents, photographs, field notes, artefacts, literature, websites, and email correspondence.

The data coded for this research study were derived from transcripts of interviews, documents, and audio-visual materials. It has been suggested that exercising ethical caution is necessary during the process of coding collected data. Gert (2011) asserted that ethics involves moral principles or values. In conducting this research study, I did not use pre-codes but rather allowed the codes to emanate from the data collected. Stanfield (2016) advised qualitative researchers to restrain their potential bias, in order that the collected data can speak for itself.

The data analysis stage involves data classification, and interpretation (Creswell, 1998, 2013). During this stage, the qualitative researcher describes the data, comes up with themes and categories and subjects the themes to interpretation. Finally, assertions

and conclusions are made from the data, taking into consideration the researchers' insights, intuitions and even hunches. It had been noted that the procedures for analysis of data might differ in qualitative research; however, the outlined analysis procedures for the first and second stages are similar in qualitative methods (Creswell, 1998). Creswell (1998) and Stake (1995) agreed that data analysis entails the following: "detailed description"; "categorical aggregation"—findings from multiple sources; "direct interpretation"—findings from single instances; "correspondence and patterns"—matching categories to establish patterns or a trend; and development of "naturalistic generalization"—assertions and conclusions based on the researcher's encounter with the data. I provided "detailed description" and presentation of my findings from the data in this current research study. "Categorical aggregation" involved getting ideas from various sources and categorizing them into themes. In some instances, I made direct interpretations from a single source or what a single respondent had to say, or even from a single document or an observation that I made. I also matched categories to reflect emergent patterns.

Finally, in analyzing the collected data, hand coding and extracting themes from the data collected, I began the process of doing the content analysis. It has been noted that, "content analysis is about the categorization of verbal or behavioral data in order to classify, summarize and/or tabulate them" (Libweb, n.d.). The analysis of data was conducted on the "basic and higher" levels (Libweb, n.d.). The generated data was analyzed descriptively on the basic level; at the higher level, it was interpretatively done.

At the higher level, I subjected collected data to interpretations and inferences (Libweb, n.d).

Trustworthiness

A major criticism of qualitative research is that it is not as scientific and as quantitative research. Despite this criticism, trustworthiness, quality and credibility are attainable in qualitative research. It must be pointed out, however, that trustworthiness in qualitative research is not viewed in the same light. According to Richardson (cited in Leisner, 2005) “validity is not the triangle - a rigid, fixed, two-dimensional object” rather it is said to be a process which resembles crystallization (p.60).

In qualitative research, Guba’s construct is said to have “won considerable favor”(Shenton, 2003.p.63). Guba’s constructs maintains that the criteria that qualitative research must meet are: Credibility/trustworthiness, Transferability, Dependability and Confirmability. Lincoln and Guba, cited in Trochim (2001), used these terms, instead of “validity” and “reliability” used in quantitative research.

Credibility denotes that in qualitative research, findings must be in tune with the views and stated beliefs of the participants. Transferability means that researcher should state in detail the characteristics of the phenomenon under study from the viewpoint of the respondents. The essence of this is to give room for the external assessment of the findings, to determine if the findings can be transferred elsewhere. Dependability indicates that the researcher reports the changes in the study and the effects of the changes on the research findings. Finally, confirmability denotes a researcher write down

the procedures that are used to collaborate and confirm the research findings (Trochim, 2001).

To attain qualitative equivalent of “validity” and “reliability” in research, some of the measures are sourcing data from multiple sources, using memos and field notes, keen observation, being conscious of researcher’s bias, member checking, external audit, peer review, using multiple researcher (Creswell 1998; McReynolds et al. 2001). Creswell (1998) noted that quality in qualitative research could be ascertained using any two of the outlined strategies. Creswell further noted the essence of “searching for convergence of information” (p.213). My research study on Boko Haram ensured quality by using multiple sources of data, member checking, peer review and documentation. It was my expectation that using multiple data sources would bring to light corroboration from different participants.

To ensure that the quality of this research was not compromised, my research findings were made available to some of the participants for possible feedbacks, to determine if the findings tallied with their experiences. I offered detailed descriptions of the Boko Haram phenomenon to see if my findings could be generalized in other areas. I also sought for comments and feedback of my research findings from a knowledgeable expert. I applied these outlined measures to ensure that this current study on Boko Haram is of an acceptable standard and quality (Creswell, 1998; Hall & Rist 1999; McReynolds et al., 2001).

Ethical Procedures

I maintained high ethical standards in order that the validity and reliability of the research is sustained. Research that is lacking in proper ethical procedures would undoubtedly make negative impact on the lives of the study population, especially if the results from the research form the basis of government policies. When research involves human subjects (like my research on Boko Haram), ethical considerations must come into play. Velasquez et al (2010) stated that ethics involves right or wrong matters. When it comes to issues of what is right, fairness, benefits to society and obligations, ethics plays significant roles to determine human behavior. It has also been stated that ethics and morality are closely related (Gert, 2011). It can thus be affirmed that the rule of human behavior is guided by ethics while the actual behavior is morality which concerns the discernment of good from evil conduct. According to Resnik (2011) ethical codes separate acceptable from the unacceptable behavior. It is also a method, perspective, or procedure for determining how to act and analyze problems that are considered complex.

Maintaining high ethical standards in social research is very important. Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, (2008, p.271) noted the consequences of the failures of ethical considerations on the lives of the demographics being studied. For instance, it is good to understand the culture of the demographics being studied, if the outcome of the research is to be successful.

Since my research involved interviewing and observing people of faith – Muslim and Christians, possible ethical challenges had to do with understanding and respecting the cultural and religious sensibilities of the respondents. I was ethically conscious

relating with my interview respondents. Walden University's IRB also clearly enunciated and outlined some ethical codes. These served to guide the study in my dealings with selected respondents. Though this current research was designed to bring about benefits and possibly social change to society, there were also some attendant risks involved. However, I expected that the benefits of my study far outweighed the risk. Nevertheless, I put some measures in place to protect my respondents.

Such measures were: I obtained the needed approval from the University's IRB prior to collection of data. Section III of Walden University IRB categorized risks involved in research as either "minimal" or "substantial" (Walden University, 2015). The University views research risks seriously and tailor them after federal regulations. Both regulations (university and federal) are made to protect the researcher, respondents and even the university authority from possible lawsuits that may come from approved research which does not adhere to strict ethics of research.

The risks to the respondents, researcher, and the university authority from my research study on Boko Haram were minimal, though the research is a case study of a terror organization. The respondents in the research were Muslim and Christian clerics, policy makers and some knowledgeable individuals on the subject matter. These individuals were far removed from the areas prone to terror attacks, and their views were confidentially treated. While conducting this study, I obtained the consent of my respondents without coercion of any sort (See Appendix II). This was done in strict adherence to Walden University's ethical codes enshrined for carrying out research of this nature. After obtaining IRB approval, I adopted the following ethical measures to

protect my research participants: participants were free to opt out if, mid-way, they no longer wished to continue with the process; I maintained strict confidentiality of my respondents and the respondents' identities were well protected. 'Anonymity' or 'confidentiality' of interview participants or respondents, as desirable as it is, has always posed a challenge to qualitative researchers. Ideally, 'anonymity' or 'confidentiality' means that a respondent will not be known or traced from the data extracted from them during interviews. Kaiser (2010) noted the dilemma that researcher face in striking the right balance between reporting the rich data gathered and protecting the confidentiality of their sources. In their paper on this subject, Saunders et al (2015) stated that guaranteeing absolute anonymity or confidentiality of sources is not attainable. They attributed this to the fact that at least a member of the research team must know or must have interfaced with the respondent(s). To resolve the quandary of anonymity or confidentiality of sources, Saunders et al (2015) adopted a narrower definition of anonymity or confidentiality, stating that anonymity of respondents "applies to other persons other than the primary researchers" (p 617). Since anonymity is important in qualitative research that involves divulging sensitive or personal information about the respondents or a third party, I protected my sources by adopting these measures outlined below: all interviews were digitally recorded, transcribed and respondents were made anonymous by assigning tags such as 'Respondent 1,' 'Respondent 2,' instead of their actual names. The transcripts were also carefully stored away. During the process of getting informed consent, I assured respondents of the confidentiality of their responses, and I assiduously maintained that confidentiality (See Appendix I).

Resnik (2011) noted some ethical measures that should be promoted in research: Research should advance knowledge; avoid making errors; and promote truth and collaborative work. There should also be accountability to both the public and IRB; promote human rights; social responsibility, comply with safety and health procedures and extant law. It has also been stated that the benefits of research must weigh higher than the risk involved in carrying it out. Additionally, the researcher must get informed consent of respondents and the data must be carefully monitored for respondents' protection. Finally, the selection of respondents must be fairly done, and their privacy guaranteed (O'Sullivan et al. 2008).

The way a researcher deals with the issue of possible bias in a research study has been one that has agitated the minds of social researchers. Some writers are of the view that bias is what makes qualitative research less scientific than quantitative research. It has also been argued that all research is affected by observer's bias (Rajendran, 2001). According to Rajendran, "Questions and questionnaires for example reflect the interests of those who construct them, as do experimental studies" (p.1). In particular, the charge of subjectivity is made against qualitative researchers because the researcher is the research instrument. Consequently, data is processed through the researchers' mind before it is put down on paper. This is said to be the basis of subjectivity or bias in qualitative research. Critics of the qualitative tradition argue that subjectivity is inevitable in qualitative research since the researcher is the research instrument to collect data, interpret the data and have close contacts with respondents. This makes subjectivity to become inevitable.

While bias in qualitative research is a common charge against qualitative research, my position is that qualitative research, like quantitative, does not mean that research is completely free of bias. As earlier indicated, research is prone to bias. Since research cannot be completely free of bias, it is acceptable if a researcher makes his or her bias known, as a conscious way of reducing it. When this disclosure is made, someone reading the findings from the study may be better placed to put the research results in its proper perspective. Stanfield (2016) was of the view that a researcher should disclose autobiographical attributes that may inject bias into a study since bias may hinder impartial analysis. Maxwell (2005) agreed that a researcher should make known possible bias in the study and how it is dealt with.

Throughout this research study, I was conscious that my ‘autobiography matters’ (Stanfield, 2016). By this, since I have a Nigerian background, I was upfront in stating this so that a reader of my research findings will be aware of this. This is because the background of a researcher is a potential source of bias. I reported discrepancies that I came across in the course of data collection. My findings were put through ‘member checking’ and peer review and these enhanced the study’s credibility. I also shared my preliminary findings with some of the participants. This was done to ensure that what was reported reflected the position of the respondents and not the researchers. The participant’s views were incorporated in the final report.

Another way that I used to check possible bias in this study was through using multiple data sources, prior to making conclusions. The multiple data sources include interviews of respondents, observation, and documents. As a result, there was

corroboration of my research findings. This study only used participants that consented to the study. My respondents were duly notified that they could back out of the study at will. I assured my interview respondents of confidentiality and respected their religious sensibilities. Since religion is a rather sensitive issue in Nigeria, I also made conscious efforts to protect the identities of my respondents. The convenience of my respondents was taken into consideration when I arranged the time and place to conduct the interviews. With these measures that I put in place, bias in this current study was significantly reduced. (Creswell, 1998, 2013; Goulding, 2002 and Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008).

Summary

In Chapter 3, I explained the theoretical method and my research design for the study, “Nonreligious Explanations of Boko Haram’s Resilience in Nigeria”. Since 2009 when the terror group, Boko Haram began its terrorist activities in Nigeria and in some of Nigeria’s neighboring countries, attempts had been made by writers to explain the phenomenon. Consequently, different interpretations had been given as the *raison d’être* for the resilience of Boko Haram. These include socio-economic, political, and religious reasons. I adopted the case study approach as the most suited method to interrogate whether the Islamic fundamentalist explanation of the phenomenon of Boko Haram or the policies of the Nigerian government are responsible for the surprising resilience of the terror group. I considered a case study as best suited to offer very in-depth contextual approach in the examination of the subject in question. The study adopted face-to-face interviews, audio-visual materials, and documents for the collection of data. The

interview respondents were a sample of 14 individuals that cut across the Muslim and Christian religious persuasions. The respondents were selected purposefully for the research; and the data collected were coded and analyzed through direct interpretation, naturalistic generalizations, categorical aggregation, and establishment of patterns. The findings of this study were validated through member checking, peer review and multiple sources of data collection. The respondents were guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity and their privacy was also respected, with the assurance that they could withdraw from participating if they choose to, even during the interviews.

In Chapter 4, the process of data collection and analysis will be elaborated on. The number of participants in the interviews, location and frequency of interviews would be made explicit. In analyzing the data collected, the themes that emerge from the data would be made clear and discrepancies (if any) would be reported. The evidence of the trustworthiness of the research would also be shown. Finally, the research question(s) would be addressed, and the result of the study presented.

Chapter 4: Results

In Chapter 4, the findings of this study are presented. I set out to explore the possible role of nonreligious factors in the resilience that Boko Haram has shown in the past decade of its existence. I attempted to determine whether the lack of clearly defined and well-executed government policies, rather than Islamic fundamentalism, is responsible for the resilience of the terror group. This study was guided by three research questions:

RQ1: What role, if any, has Islamic fundamentalism played in the resilience of Boko Haram in the past decade?

RQ2: What nonreligious factors, if any, are responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram in the past decade of its existence?

RQ3: What government policies, if any, are responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram in the past decade of its existence?

This chapter addresses how the data were collected and managed. The chapter also includes a description of the data analysis techniques. In addition, the findings to the three research questions are presented.

Setting

I considered the case study method as the best approach for in-depth investigation of the research subject. The findings of the study emerged from the analysis of qualitative interviews, documents, and my field notes generated from observations and interactions with interview respondents. The research was conducted primarily in Abuja, the capital

of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Abuja is located at the Center of Nigeria and is easily accessed from all parts of the country (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Map of Nigeria



Note. Source: CIA, World Bank.

Abuja was conceived in the late 1970s by the military regime of General Murtala Mohammed following the congestions and population explosion of the former capital city of Lagos. The construction of the city commenced in the 1980s, but it was not until December 12, 1991 (Cybriwsky, 2013) that the military regime of General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida relocated the capital to Abuja (BBC, 2007). As of 2016, the metropolitan area of Abuja was populated by 6 million people, making it the most populated metro area in Nigeria after the former capital, Lagos (Jaiyeola, 2017).

Abuja, therefore, was the choice city for data collection for various strategic reasons. First, it is the federal capital and epicenter of Nigeria's political life. Though the hot bed of the terrorist activities of Boko Haram is in the northeast of Nigeria, particularly Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states (See map – Figure 1), Abuja had also been

attacked by Boko Haram. Cook (2011) noted that the first suicide bombing by Boko Haram was on June 16, 2011, at the Police Headquarters in Abuja. Another Boko Haram attack in Abuja was carried out at the UN headquarters, about two months later, on August 26, 2011. These bombings sensitized the inhabitants of the Abuja. Therefore, the interview respondents, selected from this city, were quite informed and knowledgeable about Boko Haram's activities and could speak to the subject.

Secondly, Abuja was considered a relatively safe place to conduct this research. Since the unfortunate terrorists' attacks at some parts of Abuja, the city has not come under fresh attacks. In addition to being safe and far removed from the hotbed of Boko Haram's acts in Nigeria's northeast, all the interview respondents were in resident in Abuja. This meant that the cost of the research, in terms of time and resources was not too astronomical. Finally, I assumed that the interview respondents, being residents of the city, may likely have experienced Boko Haram's terrorist acts and would be informed about Boko Haram.

Following the IRB approval to proceed with the final research study, on January 28, 2020, Approval #: 01-28-20-0520129, I immediately began the process of reaching out to the interview respondents, categorized as follows: clerics; policy makers; civil society organizers and members of the public. The number of respondents expected to participate was 14. However, I, made provisions to contact two extra respondents in each category, thereby making the total persons contacted to be 22. This strategy worked because some respondent declined to participate when I contacted them. At the end, I was able to get 14 participants.

The respondents consisted of 4 clerics (equally divided among Muslim and Christian clerics); 4 policy makers (Muslims and Christians); 4 members of civil society organizations (Muslims and Christians) and 2 members of the Nigerian public (Muslim and Christian). A common criterion in choosing the respondents was that they were drawn from the two main religions in Nigeria – Christians and Muslims, in equal numbers. The stratified random sampling method was adopted.

That the two major religions in Nigeria was used as the criteria for selecting the respondents was due to the nature of the current study and the dominance of these religions in Nigeria. I did not include adherents of the African Traditional religion for two reasons. First, the percentage of the dwindling adherents of African traditional Religion had been put 1.4% (Pew Research Center Report, 2012). Second, due to this low percentage, it would have been an arduous task seeking out adherents of African traditional religion in Abuja, to participate in the interview. Finally, the Pew Research Center report also noted that many, who identified as Muslims or Christians equally practice the African traditional religion. This made me assume that the views of the selected interview respondents may reflect the position(s) of the African traditional religion adherents not included in the current study.

Nigeria is one of the nine countries of the world with no clear religious majority. The country is said to be evenly divided between Muslims and Christians (Pew Research Forum on Religion and Public Life, 2010). Accordingly, “the vast majority of people in many sub-Saharan African nations are deeply committed to the practices and major tenets of one or the other of the world’s two largest religions, Christianity and Islam” (Pew

Research Forum on Religion and Public Life, 2010, p.1). In a Pew Research Forum report on Nigeria, 70% of the Christians surveyed were in favor of making the Bible the official law of Nigeria. Among Muslims, 71% favor Sharia as the official law in the country. The report noted the existence of “tension” as well as “tolerance” between Muslims and Christians in Nigeria. Adherents of both faiths also expressed different levels of concern about Muslim extremism.

On the one hand, Christians were less positive about their views of Muslims. 38% of the Christians see Muslims as violent. On the other hand, 13% of Muslims see Christians as violent. In the study, Muslims expressed more concerns about Muslim extremism than about Christian extremism (Pew Research Forum on Religion and Public Life, 2010). Further findings in the Pew Center report noted that 6 out of 10 or 58% of those surveyed said religious conflict is a big problem in Nigeria. 87% of Nigerians said that religion is very important in their lives (Pew Research Forum on Religion and Public Life, 2010). For these reasons I envisaged that interviewing a cross section of Muslim and Christian respondents as outlined above, may bring to light the reason(s) for the resilience of Boko Haram’s terrorism in Nigeria.

In another report by Pew Research Center, Pew Research Forum on Religion and Public Life (2012), the total religious composition of Nigeria was put at 158,420,000. Of this number, 78,050,000 or 49.3% are Christians while 77,300,000 or 48.8% are Muslims. The percentage of African traditional religion worshipper is put at 1.4%. Nigeria was consequently ranked number 6 out of 10 countries with the largest number of Christians in the world. Among the world’s 10 countries with the largest Muslim

population, Nigeria was ranked number 5. For this reason, the Pew Research Centre report noted the existence of constant “tension” and “tolerance,” between the Christian and Muslim religions in Nigeria

As earlier stated, the interview respondents are in four categories – clerics, public officers, civil society organizers, and ordinary Nigerian citizens. This, I did with a view to obtaining a spectrum of perspectives for this current research study. The demographics of the respondents are presented below in the Table 1.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Participant	Profession	Education	Gender
Muslim cleric (MC1)	Imam	Islamic law	Male
Muslim cleric (MC2)	Imam	Arabic scholar	Male
Christian cleric (CC1)	Bishop	PhD	Male
Christian cleric (CC2)	Pastor	Master’s	Male
Public officer Muslim (POM1)	Police officer	Master’s	Male
Public officer Muslim (POM2)	Retired director civil service	Master’s	Male
Public officer Christian (POC1)	Soldier	Master’s	Male
Public officer Christian (POC2)	Retired permanent secretary	Master’s	Female
Civil society organizer Muslim (CSOM1)	Lawyer	Master’s	Male
Civil society organizer Muslim (CSOM2)	Lawyer	Master’s	Male
Civil society organizer Christian (CSOC1)	Academia political scientist	PhD	Male
Civil society organizer Christian (CSOC2)	Economist	Bachelor’s	Female
Citizen Muslim (C1)	Politician	Bachelor’s	Female
Citizen Christian (C2)	Accountant	Bachelor’s	Female

The above table represents the 14 participants, out of a total number of 22 potential participants who were contacted for the interviews. As earlier noted, the data collection was originally designed to be through face-to-face interviews. However, the outbreak of the COVID19 pandemic made the conduct of face-to-face interviews impossible for all the interviews. As a result, I also utilized telephone and emails for some of the interviews. I incorporated these interview methods following the approval granted by Walden authorities through an email dated 3/12/2020. The four distinct categories of participants are: clerics, public officers, civil society organizers and ordinary Nigerian citizens. There were 10 males and 4 females, all university educated professionals, in varying leadership positions in their areas of calling. All the interviews were conducted in Abuja and each lasted about an hour.

The same interview questions (See Appendix II) were posed to all the participants, with some variations, as follow-up questions, during the face-to-face and telephone interviews. Prior to the commencement of the interviews, the researcher went over the consent forms with the respondents and got them to sign. For the participants that were interviewed over the phone or via emails; after the researcher made the initial contacts with them and got their consents to participate, the introductory letter, consent forms and interview questions were sent through emails. Some returned the signed consent forms through the same channel, while others made other arrangements to return them to the researcher.

A challenge that came up during data collection was the refusal of some serving public officers to be interviewed. This was despite assurances of privacy/anonymity and

convenience. Almost all serving public servants contacted by the researcher refused to be tape recorded or even participate. The researcher later got to know that these serving public officers were apprehensive of losing their jobs. One such policy maker contacted me said, “as government officials, we are supposed to be seen and not heard”. A few who were willing to talk preferred to give information off-record. In such cases, I listened with intent and took copious notes. In situation where notes could not be immediately taken, I later typed out from memory the salient points of my discussions with the participants. These served mainly as background information which proved useful. Due to the interest that some public officers had in the research topic, they graciously referred me to some of their retired colleagues. These categories of public servants turned out to be very resourceful. It must be mentioned also that no female Muslim in all the categories agreed to either a face-to-face or even a telephone interview. Their decision not to participate in this current study may have been predicated on cultural and religious reasons.

Data Collection

In the selection of my interview respondents, representativeness of different strata of the Nigerian society was not the criteria, rather importance was attached to experience (Polkinghorne, 2005) and knowledge of the subject. Knowledge and experience are said to be ideal criteria in matters such as this (Pechlaner & Volgger, 2012).

The categories of the respondents are four – clerics (2 Muslim Clerics and 2 Christian clerics); public officials (2 Muslims and 2 Christians) civil society organization (2 Muslims and 2 Christians); the public (1 Muslim and 1 Christian). The clerics interviewed were selected from among the membership of the leading Muslim and

Christian organizations in Nigeria. The organizations are the Nigerian Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs (NSCIA) and the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN). Members of these bodies were selected because the organizations they belonged to aggregate the corporate views of Muslims and Christians respectively in Nigeria. These bodies are frontline organizations that speak for their respective religions on matters affecting their members. The organizations also interacted regularly with the government on behalf of their respective religions. However, that the clerics interviewed stated that the views expressed were personal and did not represent the official position of the religious bodies they were affiliated with.

The second category of respondents were the public officials. My original intention was to interview serving public officials, knowledgeable about the policies of government, especially concerning Boko Haram. There were to be 4 public servants, drawn from the civil service or the security services – Police, the military or other security agencies, like the Department of State Security. The interview respondents were of Muslim and Christian religious persuasions.

The challenge I encountered in recruiting this set of respondents was their hesitation to grant interviews. They expressed concerns about signing the consent forms and being electronically recorded. Even with assurances and guarantee of anonymity, many refused to participate, opting instead to give information off-record. I agreed and took contemporaneous notes instead. To fill this void, I sought and obtained the consent of some retired public officials who agreed to be tape-recorded. This category of retired

policy makers was truly very knowledgeable about various government policies during the decade in question (2009-2019).

The third category of interview respondents was the members of civil society organizations. Like the other categories, the respondents selected were an equal number of Muslims and Christians (2 each). These respondents were leaders of various civil society organizations in Nigeria. They were readily accessible, knowledgeable, and passionate about the subject matter. Some of the respondents were activists who campaigned and are still campaigning for the release of some of the victims of Boko Haram terrorism, like the kidnapped Chibok school girls.

Finally, two members of the public (1 Muslim, 1 Christian) were randomly selected for interviews. Part of the criteria for their selection was whether they had lived in Abuja for at least 10 years. The researcher set this criterion because the focus of the research was 2009-2019. I assumed that those who lived in Abuja during this period were in better positions to offer deeper insights on Boko Haram and the reasons for its resilience. I initially thought that the residential criterion was an easy one to meet, however, many of the potential respondents could not meet this criterion. Through persistence, I surmounted this challenge through persistence and eventually recruited the respondents that participated in this current study.

Table 2*Category/Religion/Codes for Respondents*

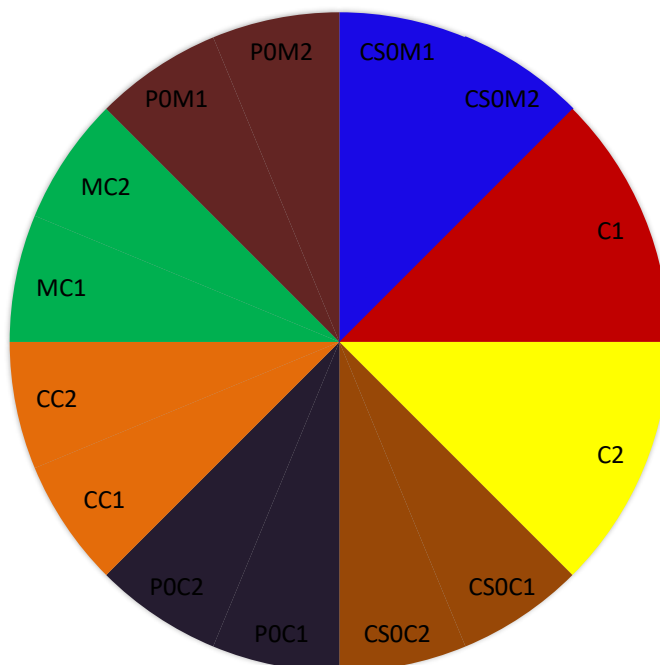
Category	Cleric	Public officer	Civil society	Citizen
Muslim	MC1	POM1	CSOM1	C1
	MC2	POM2	CSOM2	
Christian	CC1	POC1	CSOC1	C2
	CC2	POC2	CSOC2	

Beyond these descriptions already given, a more detailed description that may include identifying the various positions occupied by different strata of the interview respondents would not be given in order not to give away their identities, in view of the guarantee to respect the participants' privacy and ensure their anonymity.

To recruit the interview respondents, I used the snowballing strategy. This is a strategy of asking the first set of respondents to give possible names of those who might fit the bill as interview respondents (Polkinghorne, 2005). To recruit participants for each of the categories, I approached possible participant and requested to be introduced to others who might fit the interview criteria.

To avoid the identification of participants, I introduced codes. The participants were coded in these letters and numbers: Muslim clerics – MC1 and MC2; Christian clerics – CC1 and CC2; public officers (Muslims) – POM1 and POM2; public officers (Christians) – POC1 and POC2; civil society (Muslim) – CSOM1 and CSOM2; civil society (Christian) - CSOC1 and CSOC2; Citizens – C1 (Muslim) and C2 (Christian).

Table 2 shows the category of respondents:

Figure 2*Visual Presentation of Participants***FIG 2: VISUAL PRESENTATION OF PARTICIPANTS**

- CS0M1
- CS0M2
- C1
- C2
- CS0C1
- CS0C2
- POC1
- POC2
- CC1
- CC2
- MC1
- MC2
- POM1
- POM2

Following the categorization of the interview respondents, I began the process of contacting the respondents, to introduce the study, and obtain their consents. My initial contacts were made through phone calls and in some instances, through walk-in visit to the offices of the potential participants. Some of the initial visits were facilitated by some individuals who equally introduced me to other contacts. This was very helpful because the introductions elicited the positive receptions that I received.

Another challenge that I had to contend with during the data collection phase of the research has to do with the outbreak of the Corona virus pandemic across the globe. When the virus was detected in the Wuhan region of China, around December 2019, little did I know that the outbreak of the virus was going to be of an epidemic proportion. Nigeria was affected, like about 212 countries and territories around the world (Worldometer, 2020)

On January 30, 2020, just two days after the IRB approval for this current research, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak to be a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. By March 11, 2020, about three weeks into this current research, WHO declared the Corona virus outbreak as a pandemic (WHO, 2020a; WHO, 2020b). On April 2, 2020, it was reported that more than 1,000,000 cases of COVID-19 were confirmed in over 180 countries and 200 territories. The number of deaths from the pandemic was put at 51,400 deaths (JHU, 2020).

Nigeria is one of the countries affected by the global Corona virus pandemic. The first confirmed case was on February 27, 2020. An Italian who worked in Lagos, Nigeria returned on February 25, 2020, from Milan, Italy and fell ill on 26 February 2020. He

was subsequently transferred to Lagos State Biosecurity Facilities for isolation and testing where tested positive (Ugbodaga, 2020). As of May 16, 2020, Nigeria had recorded about 5621 cases and 176 deaths (NCDC, 2020). A total of 1,472 recovered. To stem the tide of the pandemic, the Federal Government of Nigeria imposed lockdowns on Abuja, Lagos, and Ogun. The lockdowns which saw the closure of all businesses, except essential services, affected the conduct of the interviews I had scheduled. Thankfully, a notice from Walden University IRB gave approval to substitute face-to-face interviews with phone, email, internet, or Skype interviews. The email from IRB, dated March 12, 2020, stated as follows:

“All researchers who currently have IRB approval to collect data are hereby approved to replace face-to-face contact with email, phone, video conference, or online format if they wish. (Video conferencing includes Facetime, Zoom, Skype, and other similar applications.) Since this is a universal procedural option, the IRB is adding to all Walden studies as of today, researchers do not need to submit anything to the IRB to request this change” (para 1).

This correspondence from IRB authorized me to conduct some interviews over the phone and through email.

The clerics were the first set of interview respondents. They did not object to being recorded, and readily signed the consent forms. The clerics spoke freely and passionately, apportioning blames where they felt were appropriate.

The public officers were more reticent. The serving public officers that I initially approached refused to give their consent or grant recorded interviews. The few that

granted me audience suggested that I interview their retired colleagues who were equally knowledgeable about the subject matter. The retired public servants agreed to sit-down for face-to-face interviews. They were quite eager to offer their perspectives on Boko Haram. However, the lockdown of Abuja due to the outbreak of the Corona virus posed the challenge of getting access to some of these individuals. Consequently, I had to conduct some of the scheduled interviews by telephone and email.

The civil society organizers were more disposed to granting interviews. The face-to-face interviews of this category of respondents was smoothly conducted. This category of interviewees was very passionate in espousing their views. They readily consented to the interviews and equally did not mind to be recorded.

Recruiting two members of the public as interview participants proved to be somewhat of a challenge. This was because I set up a residence criterion of at least 10 years, as precondition to participate in the interviews. Since experience is a main criterion for interview respondents, I needed participants who had resided in Abuja metropolis or its environs for at least ten years. I set up this criterion in the belief that long term residents of the city would be better placed to give reason(s) why Boko Haram has remained resilient in Nigeria in the last decade of its existence.

The dates and times of the actual interviews were set up at the convenience of the interviewees. I also made it a point of duty to send reminders, at least a day before the interview dates. One problem that occurred frequently was the inability of some of the participants to keep to the dates and sometimes the scheduled time for the appointments. Many appointments were rescheduled either because the participants forgot, or their busy

schedules did not permit them to keep to the dates. In such cases, the interviews were rescheduled. In almost all the cases, those that kept the interview dates were notoriously late. I had to wait sometimes for hours on end to interview some respondents. This inability to keep strictly to time is known as “Nigerian time”.

This lack of respect for scheduled time of appointment is a factor that a researcher must contend with in Nigeria. I succeeded in earning the trust of the participants. This was obvious from the way they spoke and the interest they showed in the research study. The interviews, both face-to-face, and telephone lasted about an hour. The participants showed keen interests in proffering solutions to the problems of terrorism in Nigeria. As a result, these respondents were willing to share their knowledge and experiences with me.

As earlier indicated, during the interviews, I observed closely my interview participants while they shared their knowledge and narrated their experiences. I maintained field notes and jotted down my observations as I conducted the interviews. I observed that the clergyman and members of the civil society who were interviewed were quite passionate in espousing their views. On the contrary, the same could not be said of the public officers. Their responses were quite measured and they were somewhat more careful about being too critical of some policy measures of the government. The two members of the public interviewed spoke freely and candidly. Their candor and emotions were quite discernible (Researcher’s Field Notes, March 2020).

The interview questions were open-ended, semi-structured questions (see Appendix II). The prepared questions served to guide my interviews. However, the

interview questions were adapted to fit the four different categories of participants. I asked follow-up questions, where necessary, depending on the responses from the interviewees. It must be pointed out that a few respondents were interviewed through emails. While their responses were detailed, follow-up. I tape recorded face-to-face interviews and painstakingly did all the transcribing. During the interviews, I equally took contemporaneous notes which I typed out after each interview. I kept reflective journals for the duration of the research study. This helped me take note of meanings.

The process of analysis of the interviews, documents, audio visuals, journal articles and reports began after the interviews. All my interview data were stored away in a safe that could only be accessed by me. As required by the Walden authority, I will hold these materials for at least 5 years, post this research study. The materials stored in my computer are password-protected and can only be accessed by me. I would equally hold onto this material be held for 5 years minimum.

As earlier noted, to ensure ethical protection of the interview respondents, a Walden University approved Consent form was signed by all participants (see Appendix D). The pre-authorized Consent forms details the rights of respondents to participate, examples of sample questions, the voluntary nature of participating, privacy rights and the risks and benefits of participating. The final 14 respondents willingly gave their consent to participate by signing the Consent forms. I equally countersigned and gave the interviewees signed copies of the Consent forms. I was able to obtain from my interview respondents some documents, and reports. These documents served to backup certain positions taken by the respondents.

Data Analysis

Goulding (2002) opined that data analysis begins during the process of data collection. The analysis of the data collected was done systematically and in stages. The data for this current research study was collected in Abuja, Nigeria, through face-to-face, emails and telephone interviews. My other sources of data include documents, library research and audio-visual materials. The data analysis involved the management of data collected, and representation. As noted in chapter 3, the procedures suggested by Creswell (1998) and Stake (1995) for data analysis in a case study were adopted for this research study. These steps are management of data; “reading and memoing,” “description,” “classification” and “interpretation,” and “representation”.

The data collected was organized by me into files under different subjects and folders. I developed codes, in numbers and letters, to represent the interview participants. This I did to ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of the subjects and to make for easy retrieval and analysis (Creswell, 1998). The codes that I assigned to the 14 participants were: MC1, MC2, CC1, CC2, POM1, POM2, POC1, POC2, CSOm1, CSOm2, CSOC1, CSOC2, C1 and C2. In coding the participants, the method used in this current study is disclosed, thereby ensuring legitimacy of the results.

The second step was “reading and memoing” the collected data (Creswell 1998, p.143). I read all the transcribed manuscripts, documents, journal articles and field note several times to internalize and get full grasp of the gathered data. In the process I extracted relevant materials, referred to as “short phrases, ideas, or key concepts that occur to the reader” (Creswell, 1998, p.144). I utilized the constant comparative approach

which entailed reading all my research data to the point of saturation. I accomplished by reading collected data several times and compared the codes developed to form more codes. Saldana (2009) noted that, coding is “a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data” (p.3). Gert (2011) asserted that ethical caution is essential when coding collected data. I allowed the codes to emanate from the data collected. In so doing, I took Stanfield’s (2016) advice to restrain from possible bias and let the collected data speak for itself.

In the data analysis, I classified the data and began the process of interpretation as suggested by Creswell (1998, 2013). At this stage, I described the data and came up with themes and categories which were subjected to interpretations. Finally, I made some assertions and arrived at conclusions from the data collected, taking into consideration my insights, intuitions and even hunches.

In analyzing the collected data, I followed the recommendations of Creswell (1998) and Stake (1995) and engaged in the following: “detailed description” of collected data; “categorical aggregation” — which is getting research findings from multiple sources; “direct interpretation”—findings from single instances; “correspondence and patterns”— matching categories to establish patterns or a trend; and development of “naturalistic generalization”— assertions and conclusions based on the researcher’s encounter with the data.

The analysis of collected data involved “detailed description” and presentation of findings from the data. “Categorical aggregation” involved getting ideas from multiple

sources and categorizing them into themes. In some instances, I made direct interpretations from a single source. In others, the interpretation was made from the response of what a single participant had to say. Sometimes, my interpretation came from a single document, or an observation that I made during the interviews. I equally did some category matching to reflect emergent patterns.

Finally, I subjected the data collected to hand coding and extracted themes from therein. The analysis of the content of collected data was also done from the data collected. Further, I did the content analysis of the data collected. It has been noted that “content analysis is about the categorization of verbal or behavioral data in order to classify, summarize and/or tabulate them” (Libweb, n.d.). The analysis on the “basic and higher” levels (Libweb, n.d.) means that the generated data was analyzed descriptively on the basic level and interpretatively at the higher level (Libweb, n.d.).

The validation of the research findings involved the use of multiple data sources, member checking, peer review and rich thick description. The research respondents were given assurances of confidentiality, privacy and anonymity concerning the information volunteered. The narration of the report subsequently followed the realist approach.

The general themes that emerged from the research study as extracted from the interview respondents are below. The themes were further related to the overarching story in the analysis of the research study.

- Incoherent policies of the federal government
- Mishandling of religious issues
- Dabbling into sectarian matters despite secular constitution.

- Excessive use of military force
- Lack of political commitment, transparency, and coordination
- Slow international response
- Conflicting policies of successive governments.
- Inadequate cooperation from Lake Chad Basin countries.
- False claims of victory against Boko Haram.
- Ineffective counter terrorism measures
- Politicization of the crisis
- Effectiveness of the Nigerian Criminal Justice system
- Divisive policies of the federal government
- Military and civilian authorities working at cross purposes.
- Lack of seriousness on the governments' part
- Lack of coordination between the Federal and northeast states in handling of Boko Haram
- Federal governments equating Terrorism with Insurgency/militancy
- Mishandled negotiations with Boko Haram
- Pervasive corruption at several levels of government.
- Factionalization of Boko Haram
- Infiltration of the Nigerian military
- High poverty and unemployment rate in northeast.
- Failure of government to learn from past mistakes.
- Loss of confidence in the Police and security services.

- A slow and poorly coordinated Response by the government.
- Governance failures in the Northeast.
- International support for the government.
- Distrust of government by northeast communities.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

In Chapter 3 of this research study, I stated that the issue of trustworthiness in qualitative research, according to “Guba’s construct” have “won considerable favor” (Shenton 2003, p.63). The criteria of qualitative research under Guba’s constructs are Credibility/trustworthiness, Transferability, Dependability and Confirmability.

Credibility

By Credibility in qualitative research, it denotes that the research findings must align with the stated beliefs and views espoused by the participants. In this research study, to ensure Credibility, I recorded the participants’ views using an audio tape recorder. After the completion of the interviews, I summarized the discussion and shared with some of the participants, to ascertain (from the participants’) if the summary adequately reflected their opinions.

Transferability

In this research study, I stated in details, the non-religious reasons for the resilience of Boko Haram, from the perspectives of the interview participants. The participants were purposefully selected due to their knowledge and experiences. The interviews were audio recorded. I did this to make provision for the possibility of the research findings being transferable to another environment.

Dependability

Dependability connotes that a researcher reports notable changes in the study and the possible effects of such changes on the findings. To ensure dependability, I kept field notes for recording the participants' views, observations, times, places of interviews, and other necessary details that emanated during the research study. My field notes complemented the audio recordings. At the end of the research, I kept my field notes, audio recordings and other relevant research materials under lock and password. I am the only person that has access to these research materials.

Confirmability

Trochim (2001) noted that confirmability means that a researcher needs to write down the procedures used to collaborate and confirm the research findings. The procedures that I used to collaborate and confirm my findings was by interacting informally with the participants at different times. This amounted to member checking, to ensure the accuracy of the collected data during various interviews.

In summary, I audio-taped the interviews to ensure credibility of the research and the research findings were availed to some of the participants to confirm that my findings were in line with their stated positions. I gave detailed description of the Boko Haram phenomenon for the possibility of a generalization of the study. Finally, I made available the findings of the study to the research Chairman and second Committee member for their knowledgeable comments and feedbacks.

Results

After I extracted the themes from the interview respondents, I extricated the most compelling themes, to compare the research questions with the data that emerged from the themes. The final analysis of the themes' extract involved relating the themes to the main research questions, objectives, and the literature review in Chapter 2 (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

In analyzing the data, the responses from the 14 participants made it possible to categorize the responses into two major phases – President Goodluck Jonathan's government's handling of Boko Haram (2009 – 2015) and President Muhammadu Buhari handling of Boko Haram (2015-present). These two categories were juxtaposed against the main research questions. The three main research questions are analyzed below:

Research Question 1

What role, if any, has Islamic fundamentalism played in the resilience of Boko Haram in the past decade? This question established the basis of the study. I attempted to find out the actual role (if any) played by Islamic fundamentalism in the resilience of Boko Haram. After the analysis of the interviews, my field notes, documents, audio visuals and other research materials, I found a divergence of opinions of the respondents.

“Terrorism has no place in Islam.”

The responses to this question were highly contentious. For instance, MC1 vehemently rejected the proposition that the Boko Haram terrorism is propelled by Islamic fundamentalism. According to MC1, “Boko Haram terrorists are not Muslims because Islam does not justify violence”. This view was re-echoed by MC2 who stated

that the Qu'ran says: "there is no compulsion in religion". This position is also supported by Kpughe who noted that though "Boko Haram Islamist insurgents use Qur'anic verses calling for violence as a theological justification for their terrorist acts, many orthodox Muslims do not agree with this way of interpreting the Qur'an" (Kpughe, 2017).

MC2 stated that associating Islam with terrorism was western nations' conspiracy to hinge terrorism on Islam, though terrorism is not in conformity with the tenets of Islam. MC2 averred that most Muslims abhor terrorism. MC2 blamed 'fringe elements' who claim to be Muslims, but were not as being those behind the "dastardly" acts of terrorism. MC2 noted that Boko Haram could not be said to be championing the course of Islam since the terror group had equally killed and maimed many Muslims, and even attacked mosques.

The views canvassed by MC1 and MC2 were in tandem with the position of an Islamic scholar, a lecturer at Bayero University Kano, Malam Abdullahi Abubakar. In a workshop on, "De-radicalization, Counter-Terrorism and Migration" in Maiduguri, the Borno State capital in northeast Nigeria, he declared that Boko Haram must embrace peace and bring violence to an end, if truly they believe in Islam. According to the cleric, the killing of innocent people and destruction of property was un-Islamic. He condemned the ideology of Islamization of Nigeria and opined that "the Boko Haram group should re-consider its thought and revisit its methodology by following the right teachings of Islam". Malam Abdullahi Abubakar further noted that since Islam is based on four fundamentals — justice, mercy, wellbeing and wisdom, ideals contrary to these were un-Islamic. According to Mallam Abubakar, Boko Haram's position that Muslims who do

not identify with them were non-Muslims, was evidence that Boko Haram is un-Islamic. Boko Haram's ideology, Mallam Abubakar noted is contrary to the concept of justice in Islam, since there should be no compulsion to convert to Islam.

The views of MC1 and MC2 echoed the position of the leader of Muslims in Nigeria, Muhammad Sa'ad Abubakar III (Sultan of Sokoto), who is also the President of Nigeria's Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA). According to the Sultan, "terrorism has no place in Islam" (News 24, 2014). The Sultan enjoined Muslims to "rise up, as always, with one voice to condemn all acts of terrorism, condemn those terrorists wherever they are and try our possible best as Muslims to ensure peace reigns in our community" (News 24, 2014). The views of MC1 and MC2 can be summed up to be those arguments that relate Islam and Boko Haram were weak and insignificant.

The Amir (President) of The Muslim Congress (TMC), Dr Lukman AbdurRaheem, while condemning the gruesome murder of Pastor Lawan Andimi, a Christian cleric killed by Boko Haram stated, "the sect (Boko Haram) may hold the Noble Qur'an and shout 'Allahu Akbar!' That doesn't make their actions right. This is the phenomenon of Muslim Identity Theft (MIT). They have stolen our physical appearance and pretend to be Muslims but have satanic and cultic ideologies which are antithetical to Islam" (Salawu, 2020). Dr. AbdurRaheem cited the Qur'an to support his position: "...If anyone slew a person — unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land — it would be as if he slew the whole people: and if anyone saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole people" (Salawu, 2020).

MC1 blamed the government of President Goodluck Jonathan for the radicalization of Boko Haram. MC1 stated that prior to 2009, the group that later metamorphosed into Boko Haram was a little-known Salafist organization in Borno State. The group, MC1 noted, went underground due to the governments' high handedness which led to the killing of the groups' charismatic leader, Mohammed Yusuf and several other members. When Boko Haram re-emerged in 2010, it had metamorphosed into Boko Haram, a terrorist organization. MC2 agreed to the government's culpability mishandling of Boko Haram during its early days. According to MC2, the government's failure to respect and implement its own Court judgement ruling that favored Boko Haram contributed to the resilience of the terror group.

CC1 and CC2 were unequivocal in stating that the Islamization of Nigeria or fundamentalist Islam is the reason for the resilience of terrorism in Nigeria. CC1 noted that the avowed mission of Boko Haram was not only to Islamize Nigeria but also extend Islam and Sharia laws to other Lake Chad countries like Niger, Chad, and Cameroun. CC1 chronicled some widely reported attacks against Christians and churches in several parts of Northern Nigeria and the Middle belt states as being indicative of the strong linkage between fundamentalist Islam and Boko Haram. Some of the examples cited by CC1 as attacks by Boko Haram on Christians include the bombing of St. Theresa's Catholic Church in Madalla, a satellite town of Abuja, on Christmas day. That attack left over 50 people dead. Other attacks against Christians and Christian churches by Boko Haram include the St. Finbarr's' Catholic Church in Jos, with over 21 students of Bayero University Kano and 20 others injured; Attack on Christian Fellowship Centre in Suleija

in 2011; Mountain of Fire and Miracles Church in Jos; Deeper Life Bible Church, Okene, where more than twenty Christians were killed. In Zaria and Kaduna, churches like St. Rita's Catholic Church, Malali; St. George's Catholic Church, Wusasa, Zaria and St. Andrew's Protestant Church, Jaji Military Cantonment were also attacked at various times. Several churches in Jos, in middle belt of Nigeria suffered various attacks from 2010-2015.

CC1 observed that every time the Boko Haram leader, Abubakar Shekau, issued his trademark warnings or justification for attacks; he always cited Qur'anic verses. CC1 queried; "why would anyone doubt these often-declared Islamic justifications of Boko Haram?"

CC2 agreed with CC1 that Boko Haram was inextricably tied to Islamic fundamentalism. He noted that Boko Haram's targets were often Christians, and the mission of the terror group is to annihilate Christians and Islamize Nigeria. Beyond the destruction of the lives and properties of Christians, especially in the Northern parts of the country and the middle belt, CC2 noted that the high incidences of Boko Haram attacks were calculated to cow and traumatize Christians. CC2 further noted that Boko Haram gleefully post on social media, the killings, kidnapping and the destruction of Christian homes and places of worship. According to CC2, in the face of all these atrocities, the government seemed incapable of bringing Boko Haram to book for their acts of terrorism. CC2 cited the case of Reverend Lawan Andimi, Chairman of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) in Michika Local Government Area of Adamawa

State. The Reverend gentleman was kidnapped and killed by Boko Haram, ostensibly in part, for not denouncing his Christian faith (Olatunji, K. et al 2020).

The Public Officer Muslim 1 (POM1) posited that even though Boko Haram rhetoric were clearly laden with references from the Qu’ran, and the known leaders of the terrorist organization claim to be adherents of the Muslim faith, Boko Haram’s resilience is not due to their “perverted ideology” of Islam. POM1 observed the intention of Boko Haram terrorists is the Islamization of Nigeria, their primary mission would first have been to forcibly Islamize the entire northern Nigeria before extending the jihad to other parts of the country. POM1 stated that on the contrary, the terror acts of Boko Haram have been equally devastating against the Muslims in the northern parts of Nigeria.

POM2 adduced that though Boko Haram began as a small Salafist movement in Maiduguri, Borno State, in Northeast Nigeria, it deviated from “true Islam” when it went underground in 2009 only to emerge as a terrorist organization. According to POM2, that Boko Haram has continued in existence, a decade after was because the terror group is driven and sustained by factors other than Islamic fundamentalism. POM2 was also of the opinion that there are other internal factors behind the resilience of Boko Haram that are yet to be adequately addressed by Nigerian governments, at the federal and state levels. POM2 noted that Islamization was just a façade by Boko Haram to mask the frustration that their burgeoning members feel about the failures of the Nigerian State.

The Christian Political Officer, POC1 took a position contrary to POM1 and POM2. POC1 was of the view that Boko Haram’s resilience is hinged on their extremist Muslim ideology. POC1 stated that during his time in Nigerian public service, the

government “foot dragged” in implementing policy decisions against Boko Haram until it became too late. POC1 noted that successive governments in Nigeria were often unduly politically sensitive when dealing with matters concerning Boko Haram. For instance, according to POC1, the government of President Goodluck Jonathan (a Christian President) was hesitant in dealing with Boko Haram in its early days because of the fear of being accused of taking actions against Muslims. The government may have been sensitivity in dealing with this looming religious matter because elections were pending then in 2015. POC1 also maintained that the President Buhari’s government that eventually took over from President Jonathan in 2015 equally “foot dragged” on matters concerning Boko Haram. This he said may have been because the President’s political base was in the northern parts of the country where Boko Haram held sway. Therefore, POC1 concluded that the governments’ slow response and implementation of policy decisions against Boko Haram were responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram. “If certain decisions against Boko Haram had been implemented with the sense of urgency required, the terror group would have long been defeated”, POC1 surmised.

POC2 contended that Boko Haram’s resilience is due to the extremist ideology they profess. According to POC2, extremism accounts for why Boko Haram has not been subdued by successive Nigerian governments since 2009. POC2 pointed out that the extremist Islamic fundamentalist ideology of Boko Haram is the reason why they are still in existence despite devastating losses suffered in the hands of the Nigerian military. POC1 opined that it is more difficult to defeat an ideologically oriented group than one

that does not hold on to a fundamentalist ideology. According to POC2, members of Boko Haram have shown great resilience because of their ideological convictions.

CSOM1 acknowledged that though Boko Haram has roots in Islamic teachings, however their teachings and understanding of Islam were deviations from the true tenets of Islam. For that reason, Boko Haram and its members cannot claim to be true Muslims. Therefore, Boko Haram's resilience has nothing to do with true Islam. CSOM1 rhetorically asked; "if they are indeed Muslims, why still persist in attacking other Muslims, even in places where Sharia laws were already being implemented?"

CSOM2 was of the view that members of Boko Haram were completely ignorant of the religious teachings of Prophet Mohammed which emphasized "peace and not war". Since Islam is a religion of peace with a basic greeting such as "Assalam Ailekum" (peace be unto you), Boko Haram could not be said to profess true virtues of the Islamic religion. Consequently, Boko Haram's resilience, in the views of CSOM2, cannot be tied to the Islamic religion.

CSOC1 and CSOC2 canvassed the views that the Islamic fundamentalist ideology of Boko Haram, to a large extent, is responsible for the resilience of the group since the past decade. They claimed that the Islamic fundamentalist ideology fueled Boko Haram's actions. According to CSOC1 and CSOC2, Boko Haram does not hide their mission which is the imposition of an Islamic State and the institution of Sharia laws in Nigeria. According to CSOC1 and CSOC2, these were clear signs that Boko Haram is propelled by Islamic fundamentalism.

C1, a Muslim, was of the view that Islamic fundamentalism of Boko Haram was a significant reason for the group's resilience. "Boko Haram is an ideologically motivated group," C1 stated. However, Boko Haram's knowledge of Islam is "rudimentary and fragmented". The group's public pronouncements and the actions of their leader, Abubakar Shekau, pointed to its Islamic fundamentalist leaning which are clear distortions of Islam. C1 cited Boko Haram's quest to establish an Islamic caliphate where Sharia law would prevail, as an example of the fundamentalist ideology driving the group. C1 further noted that victims of Boko Haram's kidnapping were often forced to renounce their religious beliefs and embrace Islam, as a condition for setting them free. These, according to C1 were indicative of the Islamic fundamentalist ideology that guided Boko Haram.

C2 stated that Boko Haram's Islamic fundamentalist ideology is the staying power of the group. The extremist version of Islam that they preached had been pivotal to the justification of their heinous crimes. For instance, when Christians were killed, the justification was that "infidels" deserved to be killed. On the other hand, when they attacked and killed fellow Muslims or bomb mosques, the justification was that such Muslims had gone contrary to the tenets of Islam, as commanded by Prophet Mohammed (SAW). C2 therefore, held on to the view that Islamic fundamentalism cannot be divorced from Boko Haram's terrorism.

Several video recordings of Abubakar Shekau that I viewed seem to attest to the Islamic fundamentalist leaning of Boko Haram. In one of the videos released in July 2018, Shekau railed against Christians, who he referred to as 'infidels', declaring; 'Fight

the infidels ... and take their souls to purify the land'. In another video recording by Abubakar Shekau, after the Chadian army's routing of the group in the Lake Chad region, Shekau warned the Chadian President, Idris Derby, Shekau saying:

Our aim is to follow the tenets of the Qu'ran; our aim is to follow the tenets of the Prophet; our aim is to practice Islam the way the Prophet of Allah left instructions before dying and handing over to knowledgeable scholars, who have passed it down to me.

Adibe (2019) chronicled "how Boko Haram went from a peaceful Islamic sect to one of the world's deadliest terrorists in a decade". Ibrahim (2020) noted that "attacks on Christian targets are planned and carried out by Boko Haram, its splinter groups and other jihadi groups as boundary-creating operations to build unity within the Muslim community and divide the said community of outsiders – Christians, Jews, Yazidis and so on". Kpughe (2017) affirmed that: "It is very difficult not to accept that one of the motivations of the Boko Haram insurgents in Cameroon was and is theological". It has also been stated that the Salafist religious inclinations and commitment of Boko Haram leaders is real (Reeve 2014, p. 3).

However, Mathew Hassan Kukah, the fiery Catholic Bishop of Sokoto, a state in the northern part of Nigeria, made the point that though the Islamic fundamentalist nature of Boko Haram was not in doubt, the government of President Buhari was responsible for giving Boko Haram the "confidence boost" to carry on with their nefarious activities (Crux, 2020). According to Bishop Kukah, President Buhari is to be blamed for "pursuing a policy that is divisive in the area of power sharing." Bishop Kukah noted that

all the heads of Nigeria's security; the National Security Adviser and Minister of Defense were all Muslims. In addition, 80-90% of federal government parastatals in Nigeria were headed by Muslims. Kukah added that "if Boko Haram is killing us and trying to take over Nigeria to establish an Islamic State, if it is killing Christians, if the federal government is so seriously and deliberately marginalizing power, I believe — willy-nilly — it is providing Boko Haram a confidence boost" (Crux, 2020).

Kukah further noted that President Buhari's policies were based on religious discrimination which had reduced Christians "to a secondary layer in the scheme of things" (Crux, 2020). Kukah rationalized that "by loading the dice of power so outrageously in favor of Muslims, whether inadvertently or not, he (Buhari) leaves room for Boko Haram to exploit the situation" (Crux, 2020). In the literature reviewed (Chapter 2) Ababa (2013) had referred to the extreme fundamentalist ideology as "rabid religious identity".

Basuchoudhary and Shughart II (2010) noted that though it is hard to make the claim that Boko Haram is related to Islamic fundamentalism, some studies had established a positive relationship between religious tensions and terrorism. However, it has also been found in a study that it is not religion per se that is responsible for violence, rather, "ignorance of religious teaching is the leading factor influencing the adoption of extreme religious views, especially among youths" (Onuoha, 2014)

Summary of Findings for Research Question 1

Question one dealt with the role Islamic fundamentalism played in the resilience of Boko Haram in the past decade. The respondents to this question were: 2 Muslim

clerics (MC1 & MC2), 2 Christian Clerics (CC1 & CC2), 2 Muslim Public Officers (POM1 & POM2), 2 Christian Public Officers (POC1 & POC2), 2 Muslim Civil Society Organizers (CSOM1 & CSOM2), 2 Christian Civil Society organizers (CSOC1 & CSOC2) and two citizens (C1 and C2). Interestingly, the responses reflected diametrically opposing views. All the Muslim respondents (MC1, MC2, POM1, POM2, CSOM1 and CSOM2) in all the categories, except C1 absolved “true” Islam from the resilience of Boko Haram. These categories of respondents believed that the claim by Boko Haram to be propagating Islam was simply a deviation from the true tenets of Islam. According to these respondents, Islam is a peaceful religion and there is no room for violence in Islam.

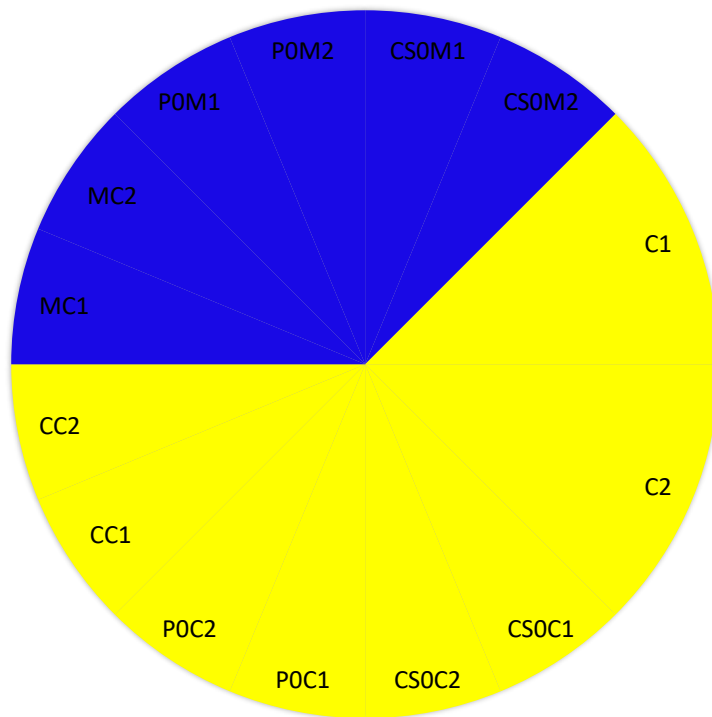
On the other hand, all the Christian respondents (CC1, CC2, POC1, POC2, CSOC1, CSOC2, C2) and C1 (a Muslim) stated that Islamic fundamentalist ideology was a factor in the resilience of Boko Haram. In summary, the respondents’ views were sharply divided along religious lines. Eight (8) respondents (all Christians), including C1 (a Muslim) took the position that Islamic fundamentalism is implicated in Boko Haram’s terrorism. The views of the other 6 Muslim respondents (MC1, MC2, POM1, POM2, CSOM1 and CSOM2) were that Islam is a peaceful religion and was not responsible for Boko Haram’s resilience. These respondents implicated government’s poor handling of Boko Haram as being the factor responsible for the resilience. Figure 2 is a visual representation of the interview respondents, while figure 3 shows the near even division, along religious lines, of the views of the respondents on the role of Islamic fundamentalism in the resilience of Boko Haram. The yellow coded areas are the

respondents who stated that Islamic fundamentalism is responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram. The blue coded areas are the respondents that said Islamic fundamentalism is not a factor in the resilience of Boko Haram.

Figure 3

Participants' Views on Islamic Fundamentalism

FIG. 2: PARTICIPANTS VIEWS ON ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISM



- CSOM1
- CSOM2
- C1
- C2
- CSOC1
- CSOC2
- POC1
- POC2
- CC1
- CC2
- MC1
- MC2
- POM1
- POM2

Research Question 2

What non-religious factor(s), if any, are responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram in the past decade of its existence? This question was posed to determine if there were non-religious factors that may account for the resilience of Boko Haram in Nigeria. The question was crucial to this research study. In the literature reviewed (Chapter 2), the prevalent views were that Islamic fundamentalism and other socio-economic factors were responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram. In the literature reviewed, apart from Islamic fundamentalist ideology, many other socio-economic factors were implicated in the resilience of Boko Haram. These range from lack of economic opportunities (Ahmed, 2015); injustice, corruption, poor governance, and unemployment (Idowu, 2013); corruption, anarchy, poverty (Cohen, 2013); failure of some Islamic leaders in condemning the evil of terrorism when it first reared its head in Nigeria and “fragility of the Nigerian State” (Tonwe and Eke, 2013). Hogendoorn (2018) noted that

“Although Boko Haram has links to the Islamic State and other extremist groups in Africa, the main drivers of its insurgency are internal and should be addressed by the country’s federal and state-level governments. Nigeria is a middle-income country, with a large if sometimes dysfunctional government”

The United Nations Development Program’s 2017 report cited human rights abuses, social, political, and economic marginalization, unemployment, and religious ideology to be among the top reasons for people joining groups such as Boko Haram and ISWAP (Van Zyl, 2019).

“Since the early years of the crisis, Nigeria’s international partners have cautioned that Boko Haram is unlikely to be defeated on the battlefield alone. They have stressed the need for a multidimensional response that tackles the drivers of insecurity in the region, including chronic weaknesses in service delivery, corrupt governance, and environmental degradation” (Brechenmacher, 2019).

Against this backdrop a thorough analysis of the interviews, field notes, documents, audio visuals and other research materials revealed that a multiplicity of non-religious factors are implicated in the resilience of Boko Haram.

Socioeconomic Deprivations

MC1 and MC2 attributed the resilience of Boko Haram to the social and economic deprivations that significant numbers of the people of northeast faced over the years. These factors, according to MC1 and MC2 were responsible for the seething frustration and anger that a sizeable segment of the youths felt. Consequently, the youths tapped into the prevailing religious preaching’s to justify their resort to violence.

According to MC1 and MC2, social inequality, youth unemployment, wage disparities, among other factors were reasons for the violence which later metamorphosed into Boko Haram’s terrorism.

MC2 stated that the abject poverty felt by significant numbers of the populace in the northeast was a reason why the terrorist group grew resilient. According to MC2, Boko Haram took advantage of the poverty in the region to convince an army of idle youths of better lives that awaited them if they joined Boko Haram. MC2 predicted that if

the current youth unemployment remained unchecked, in the northeast, Boko Haram may become more resilient.

C1 and C2 agreed that high poverty and unemployment rates in Nigeria, especially in the northeast of Nigeria, were major factors in the resilience of Boko Haram. C1 and C2 averred that many captured Boko Haram fighters turned out to be unemployed and wretched youths, brainwashed to believe that joining Boko Haram was a way out of their hopelessness. These views resonated in a 2017 report by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The report cited unemployment, human rights abuses, and other forms of socio-economic and political malaise as being among the principal reasons why some people join Boko Haram (Van Zyl, 2019).

C2, female, Christian respondent stated that majority of Boko Haram members were largely unemployed before joining Boko Haram. According to her, “Poverty, unemployment, illiteracy and weak family structures contributed to youth vulnerability to radicalization”. This position is corroborated by the results of a study by Adelaja and others. In the study, they found that pervasive poverty and unemployment in Nigeria’s northeast were responsible for people joining Boko Haram and were major drivers of terrorism (Adelaja et al, 2018).

POC2 canvassed an interesting dimension to the resilience of Boko Haram. According to POC2, the increasing consumption of illicit drugs by Nigerian youths in the northeast and elsewhere contributed immensely to Boko Haram’s resilience. POC2 stated that many captured Boko Haram terrorists were discovered, during interrogation, to have acted under the influence of narcotic drugs.

The unstructured network of Boko Haram was another factor in the terror organizations' resilience, according to CSOC2. The lack of a clear-cut organizational structure made it difficult for the Nigerian government to decapitate the terror group. To compound the problem, the terror group split into factions such as Boko Haram and Ansaru. These groups operated in cells thereby making it difficult for the Nigerian government to effectively contain their terrorist activities.

C1, a Muslim citizen, opined that one of the non-religious reasons why Boko Haram remained resilient was that the people of the northeast and other area of Nigeria do not trust the government's handling of the fight against Boko Haram. As a result, some natives preferred to collaborate more with Boko Haram terrorists than Nigerian government forces. C1 pointed out that between 2011 and 2015, Boko Haram captured some local government areas in the northeast, and during those periods, provided certain economic and social palliatives to the natives, thereby winning their confidence.

Failures of Government

MC1 stated that successive Nigerian governments were reactionary instead of being proactive in dealing with Boko Haram. This, according to MC1 was responsible for Boko Haram's resilience. MC1 stated that successive Nigerian government usually waited for Boko Haram to attack before reacting, instead of forestalling the attacks using actionable intelligence and applying other counter terrorism measures.

CC1, a Bishop in an orthodox church and CC2, a Minister in a Pentecostal church spoke in similar light concerning factors responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram. The two Christian clerics, like their Muslim counterparts squarely put the blame on the

government. CC1 observed that the government mishandled the Boko Haram problem by not tackling the menace effectively when it first started, until it got out of hand.

According to CC1, the failure of government to effectively tackle the Boko Haram menace when it started made it the “monster” that it later became. During the early stages when Boko Haram commenced their terrorist activities, President Goodluck Jonathan did not treat the matter with the seriousness that it required. CC1 noted that a case in point was when 276 Chibok girls were kidnapped. After the kidnap, the government did not respond on time until it became an international issue. CC2 also pointed out that the government of President Buhari hastily declared, that Boko Haram had been “technically defeated”. That declaration, CC2 observed, was again another example of government’s poor handling of the Boko Haram crisis. CC2 noted that poor handling, by government, was a factor in the resilience of the terror group.

CSOC1 observed that the Nigerian governments’ failure to release the reports of previous investigations or inquiries about certain terrorist acts was a factor in Boko Haram’s resilience. This, according to CSOC1 was due to corruption in governance. CSOC1 further stated that the government’s policy of maintaining secrecy on matters concerning Boko Haram contributed to the resilience of the terror. A case in point, according to CSOC1, was the northeast report of a twelve-man committee set up to investigate the kidnapping of 113 students in Dapchi, in Nigeria’s northeast by Boko Haram. Neither the report nor that of the abduction of 276 Chibok school girls were released. This policy of secrecy on matters concerning Boko Haram, CSOC1 stated, gave the terror group an air of invisibility and consequently contributed to their resilience.

Politicization of War Against Terrorism

POC1 noted that a factor responsible for Boko Haram's resilience was the politicization of the fight against the terrorist group. POC1 was of the view that during the early stages of Boko Haram's terrorist activities, it could have been nipped in the bud. Instead, Boko Haram was considered by some to be an invention of the Muslim north, to undermine a Christian President (Goodluck Jonathan). POC1 also pointed out that the resilience of Boko Haram could also be traced to the arming of youths by some politicians during elections. Top government officials and politicians patronized and supported different shadowy groups during periods of elections only to abandon them after elections. Some of these youths later joined Boko Haram when the politicians no longer had use for them. This view appears to align with the findings of a study which stated that "when factions of political elites compete for political power at the national level on the basis of identity, groups emerge at the subnational level in defense of these identities" Iyekekpola (2018).

POC2 stated that there were two reasons why Boko Haram has remained resilient over the years. According to POC2, the government had not uncovered and blocked the funding sources that sustain the terror organization. POC2 proffered the opinion that Boko Haram may remain a permanent feature of the Nigerian nation unless the government cuts off its sources of funds. POC2 asserted that the cell-structure maintained by Boko Haram played significant roles towards its resilience. According to POC2, despite successive Nigerian governments' attempts to decapitate Boko Haram, the terror

organization remained resilient due to the cell structure it maintained. This decentralized form made it difficult for successive Nigerian governments to defeat Boko Haram.

For CSOC2, injustices and human rights abuses meted out by the Nigerian military, in the name of fighting terrorism, was another major factor responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram. Over the years, Boko Haram used the alleged human rights abuses of their members by the Nigerian Army as a recruitment tool. CSOC2 was also of the view that the introduction of Sharia laws in some parts of the country by the government of President Olusegun Obasanjo in 1999, a decade before the violent phase of Boko Haram, had served to embolden the terrorists' organization. CSOM1 pointed at intelligence failures due to complicity on the part of some highly placed military, security and police officers charged with prosecuting the war against terrorism. In many instances, these forms of intelligence failures and sabotage gave Boko Haram undue advantage over government forces.

CSOM2 also stated that the highhandedness of the Nigerian military in dealing with Boko Haram was a major factor in the hardening of the position of the terror group. Consequently, the terror group used that factor as propaganda to recruit young people into their fold. CSOM2 recalled how the Nigerian military used excessive force against a "little-known" Salafist movement in killing many of their members and their leader, Mohammed Yusuf. It was these killings that drove Boko Haram underground. When Boko Haram resurfaced under the new leadership of Shekau, it had metamorphosed into a brutal terror organization.

C2, female, a Christian citizen, stated that Boko Haram remains defeated because of some “questionable roles” played by top security Chiefs – military and police. According to C2, some senior military and police officers allegedly diverted monies meant for prosecuting the war against Boko Haram for personal uses. C2 noted that a case of a top security leader diverting funds meant to fight Boko Haram played out when Colonel Sambo Dasuki, the National Security Adviser, under President Jonathan, got arrested and prosecuted for the embezzlement of \$2.1 billion (US Dollars) funds earmarked for the fight against Boko Haram.

Slow Response from the International Community

CSOC1 said another factor why Boko has remained resilient in Nigeria was due to the slow response of the international community when the crisis began. According to CSOC1, if the international community had rallied round the Nigerian government when the crisis first started, it may have been nipped in the bud. However, in the early stages of the crisis other countries that could have helped the Nigerian government stayed away because the Nigerian government gave the impression that the crisis was something within their control. By the time some foreign countries got involved, Boko Haram had already become entrenched. Even after some countries offered to help, several bottlenecks at different levels of government and the military made it difficult for the interventions to be meaningful.

Corruption

Finally, a common theme that came through, from all the respondents (MC1, MC2, CC1, CC2, POM1, POM2, POC1, POC2, CSOM1, CSOM2, CSOC1, CSOC2, C1

and C2) as being a major factor of Boko Haram's resilience, was the issue of corruption in virtually all levels of the Nigerian society — the civil service, the military and the entire government apparatus, especially the institutions charged with conducting the battle against Boko Haram. One respondent asked rhetorically,

“How do we explain that despite the huge allocation of almost \$20Billion US Dollars to the Defense sector alone, between 2009 and 2018, complaints still abound about underfunding, poor military intelligence performance, gadgets, cases of battlefield shortages of arms/ammunition, obsolete and over refurbished armored tanks/lorries that are of inferior quality to the ones used by Boko Haram terrorists. The consequences of these have been the demoralization of and desertion by some Nigerian soldiers. This has further bolstered Boko Haram's confidence and their increased resilience”.

POM1 stated that Boko Haram remained resilient because of certain entrenched interests in government that were benefitting from the status quo. POM1 noted that these entrenched interests include top public servants and military officers who fleeced the system through inflated contracts and other surreptitious means. POM1 stated that the terrorist activities of Boko Haram will prevail as long as the entrenched interests remain in power.

POM2 pointed out that reports of corrupt practices in government and in the military only served to embolden Boko Haram terrorists. POM2 observed that some of those that benefitted were government contractors and collaborators charged with supplying essential materials needed to combat Boko Haram. According to POM2, Boko

Haram remained resilient in Nigeria because these sets of contractors and collaborators benefited majorly from certain government policies that kept them in the business. Consequently, the strong economic interests of some military contractors and their internal collaborators were major factors in the resilience of terrorism in Nigeria.

POC1 was of the view that corruption was not only prevalent in the military but also at various levels of government and institution. This, according to POM2 was a major reason why Boko Haram remained resilient in Nigeria. POM2 highlighted reports of “fifth columnists” in the Nigerian military who he said may have aided the terrorist group, directly or indirectly. According to POM2, some saboteurs or “fifth columnist” among the military and security agencies may have been responsible, in many instances, in tipping-off Boko Haram ahead of planned counterinsurgency operations of the Nigerian military. These acts gave the air of invincibility to the terror group. POC1 stated with regret that when he was in service, despite the state of emergency imposed in the northeast, Boko Haram still managed to successfully attack military installations. He attributed this to corrupt elements within the military and other security services.

POC2 noted that even among high-ranking officers of different military formations, cases of large-scale corruption were uncovered. Obasi (2015) writes that “corruption in procurement and administration, poor maintenance of acquired assets “among others, were factors that contributed to the resilience of Boko Haram. This is given credence to in a report by Transparency International. Solomon (2017) noted that Transparency International, a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) based in Germany reported that the Nigerian military could not defeat Boko Haram because of large scale

corruption in Defense procurement, leading to the supply of inadequate military hardware and materials to fight Boko Haram. According to Solomon (2017) Transparency International found that corruption also helped Boko Haram's to recruit followers. Transparency International (2017) indicated that corruption manifested in military purchases of inferior equipment, shortages of ammunition and fuel.

CC1, CC2, CSOM1, CSOM2, CSOC1 and CSOC2 all agreed that corruption and mismanagement of government resources, at the highest levels of government and among the top echelons of the military, was a fact in the resilience of Boko Haram. The following respondents, CC1, CC2, CSOM1, CSOM2, CSOC1 and CSOC2 recounted different allegations of military and government officials that defrauded the system through fake military contracts, over-invoiced purchases, procurement of obsolete military equipment and hardware. These acts of corruption, they claimed had the immediate consequence of demoralizing the ordinary Nigerian soldiers who were in the forefront of the battle against terrorism. These respondents claimed that at some point, Boko Haram terrorists had superior arms than the Nigerian forces. Consequently, the defeat suffered in the hands of the terrorist led to the entrenchment of the terror group and its attendant resilience. This view is corroborated. In 2014, the United States Department of Defense revealed that funds for the prosecution of the battle against Boko haram were being "skimmed off the top," and troops were "showing signs of real fear" and were "afraid to even engage"(Blanchard, 2016). Katherine Dixon, Transparency International's program director, stated; "Corruption is worsening the (Boko Haram) conflict, and it's a big driver of insecurity in Nigeria," She also stated that "over the last 10 years, corrupt

elites have profited from the conflict in the northeast and driven Nigeria to a crisis point” (Solomon, 2017).

Summary of Findings for Research Question 2

Question 2 dealt with the non-religious factor(s), if any, said to be responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram in the past decade of its existence. The respondents to this question were: 2 Muslim clerics (MC1 & MC2), 2 Christian Clerics (CC1 & CC2), 2 Muslim Public Officers (POM1 & POM2), 2 Christian Public Officers (POC1 & POC2), 2 Muslim Civil Society members (CSOM1 & CSOM2), 2 Christian Civil Society organizers (CSOC1 & CSOC2) and two citizens (C1 and C2).

The responses of the participants indicated that many non-religious factors account for the resilience of Boko Haram. These factors include social and economic deprivations among a significant segment of the population which consequently gave rise to frustration and aggression (MC1 and MC2). Social inequality, Youth unemployment, wage disparities and the reactionary attitude of the Nigeria government. The mishandling of the crisis by the Nigerian government, when it first started, were also mentioned (CC1 and CC2) as a possible cause of the resilience of Boko Haram.

POM1 and POM2 noted that Boko Haram’s resilience is due to some entrenched government interests, corruption among public officials and conniving contractors. For POC1 and POC2, politicization and unknown funding sources of Boko Haram were reasons for the resilience of the terror group. CSOM1 and CSOM2 stated that intelligence failures of security agencies, high handedness, and human rights abuses by the government and its securities forces were responsible for Boko Haram’s resilience.

CSOC1 and CSOC2 took the position that the slow response by the international community to help Nigeria tackle the problem of Boko Haram contributed to the resilience of Boko Haram. However, Blanchard, a US Congressional Specialist in African Affairs noted that though US governments' Boko Haram-related counterterrorism assistance to Nigeria totaled over \$400 million to date, "Nigeria's military has been constrained due to human rights and policy concerns" (Blanchard, 2016). C1 and C2 noted that people's lack of trust in the government, due to government's questionable handling of matters concerning Boko Haram, played a significant role in the resilience of Boko Haram.

Finally, it is worthy of note that all respondents (MC1, MC2, CC1, CC2, POM1, POM2, POC1, POC2, CSOM1, CSOM2, CSOC1, CSOC2, C1, C2) pointed to corruption as a major reason why Boko Haram has remained resilient in Nigeria. The pervasiveness of corruption in virtually all sectors of the Nigerian government, the interview respondents all agree, has been a major reason for the resilience of Boko Haram.

Research Question 3

What government policies, if any, are responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram in the past decade of its existence? In the literature review, Ozdamar (2008) noted that terrorism occurs in "response to external stimuli like governments policies" (p.91). This question, therefore sought to find out if the Nigerian government's policies formulated to tackle terrorism had the desired impacts or rather exacerbated the problem.

Policy of State of Emergency: Military Action Versus Negotiation

MC1 was of the view that some of government's policies, formulated to tackle terrorism, equally contributed to the resilience of Boko Haram. MC1 blamed the government's "lacklustre" responses to Boko Haram's terrorism as having contributed to the resilience of the terror group. According to MC1, when Boko Haram began its violent phase in 2009, the Nigerian government responded with a state of emergency, as a policy measure to contain the violence. That policy measure only served to embolden Boko Haram and made them more daring.

POM1 and POM2 equally blamed government's policies for Boko Haram's resilience. For instance, they noted that President Goodluck Jonathan's policy decision to impose a State of Emergency in 2013, in the northeast area of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe States, only served to harden the stance of Boko Haram and contributed in making the terror group more resilient. The State of emergency imposed on May 14, 2013, authorized the military to do all that was necessary to crush Boko Haram. Consequently, the security forces of the Nigerian government applied excessive force and, in some cases, engaged in extra-judicial killings of captured members of Boko Haram. POM2 further noted that such unwholesome conduct by the Nigeria's security forces may have contributed to embolden Boko Haram to carry on with their terrorist activities. Some of the publicized extra-judicial killings may have attracted some local sympathy for Boko Haram which enabled it to spread its tentacles to the Lake Chad region – Niger, Cameroun, and Chad. POM1 also observed that such local support and sympathy garnered by Boko Haram was possibly why, in August 2014, the terror group was able to

boldly declare Gworza, a town in Borno State, a Caliphate. POM1 further noted that in March of 2015, Boko Haram pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the Islamic State's leader, during a period when the northeast was still under a state of emergency. The Nigerian military's high handedness, after the declaration of a state of emergency was referred to as "the terrorism of the Nigerian State" Agbiboa (2013, p.435).

POC1 and POC2 agreed that the resilience of Boko Haram had its roots in the use of excessive force by the military in their battle against Boko Haram. According to POC1 and POC2, the combined military actions of the Nigerian government, the Joint task force which comprised of other Lake Chad Basin Commission countries – Niger, Chad, and Cameroun, known as the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), the Police and the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) all contributed to the resilience of Boko Haram. POC1 and POC2 noted that attacks by these forces, were often followed by the release of video recordings from the Boko Haram leader. These videos became recruitment tools used by the terror group. The views of POC1 and POC2 aligns with the findings in another study. In the study, it was stated that about 60% of former Boko Haram members joined the terror group to take revenge against the repressive acts of the Nigerian military. The authors of the study concluded that the excesses of the Nigerian MNJTF and the CJTF, as major factors that influenced the decision of some individuals to join Boko Haram (Botha & Abdile, 2016).

CSOC1 and CSOC2 also agreed that excessive force, extra-judicial killings, and ill-treatment of captured members of the terrorist group by the Nigerian military, contributed in great measures to the resilience of Boko Haram. The terror group,

consequently, used the repression suffered by some of its member in the hands of Nigerian military, as a rallying point to recruit new converts. CSOC1 and CSOC2 further observed that when Boko Haram began its activities in Borno, in the northeast, the government's reaction was initially slow and uncoordinated. As a result of government's mishandling of the problem, Boko Haram went underground. When it re-emerged under the leadership of Abubakar Shekau, the government's policy (or the lack of it) which entailed the use of excessive force, contributed to the escalation of violence by Boko Haram.

C1 and C2 also opined that the policy failures of the government of President Goodluck Jonathan include not taking Boko Haram seriously when they resurfaced after the initial clampdown by the government. At that time, Boko Haram, under Shekau, publicly demanded among other things: compensation for their losses, prosecution of the killers of Mohammed Yusuf (their pioneer leader) and the release of their members arrested by the authorities. The government did not accede to these demands, but instead intensified military actions against the terror organization. The outcome was that rather than being cowed, Boko Haram grew in strength. By 2013, Boko Haram had taken control of some areas in Borno State, in the northeast. C1 and C2 surmised that policy ambivalence on the part of Nigerian government contributed significantly to Boko Haram's resilience.

Incoherent and Inconsistent Policies

MC1 stated that when Boko Haram commenced its violent phase, there were really no laws in Nigeria to deal with the terrorism phenomenon. As a result, the

government's policy responses to the terrorist acts of Boko Haram appeared incoherent and inconsistent. According to MC1, in the early days, captured terrorists were simply tried under the criminal laws of the country. POM1 and POM2, agreed but noted that this may have been why the Nigerian government enacted its early laws to deal with terrorism. According to the Muslim public officials, it was not until 2011 that a law was enacted – Terrorism Prevention Act (TPA 2011). The policy defined terrorist acts and framework for investigation, prosecution, and interdiction of terrorists. This law, they noted marked the beginning of actual legislations against terrorism. The Terrorism Prevention Act (2011) was amended in 2013 and it became Terrorism Prevention Act (TPA 2013). The amended law put the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA) in charge of coordinating all matters of counterterrorism in Nigeria. Captured Boko Haram members were subsequently tried under this law.

POC1 and POC2 noted the government of President Goodluck Jonathan set up a body known as the Presidential Initiative for Northeast (PINE), as a policy initiative to alleviate poverty and bring about development in the northeast region. This was said to be a purposely designed policy measure to discourage the locals from supporting Boko Haram. Unfortunately, this Presidential initiative did not stem the tide of terrorism in the region. POC1 and POC2 stated that despite the failure of this policy measure, the government of President Muhammadu Buhari replaced the Presidential Initiative for Northeast (PINE) with a similar body, re-named - Presidential Committee on Northeast Initiative (PNCI). According to POC1 and POC2, PNCI, though charged with developing

the strategy and implementing the framework of rebuilding the northeast, did not perform any better than its predecessor.

MC2 observed that when it appeared that military force was not effective in containing Boko Haram, the administration of President Goodluck Jonathan, opted for a *policy of negotiation*. This policy of negotiation with the terror organization, according to MC2, was shrouded in secrecy and yielded “questionable dividend”. According to MC2, the government of President Jonathan, at a point set up an administrative panel to negotiate with Boko Haram. The terror group refused the offer to come to the negotiation table. In a video recording that I viewed for this study, Abubakar Shekau, leader of Boko Haram, taunted President Jonathan and rejected the Amnesty offer, which was aimed at getting members of Boko Haram to renounce violence. In the video recording, Shekau rebuffed government’s gesture of negotiation, stating instead, that his members had done nothing wrong and would neither negotiate with government nor accept the offer of amnesty. Shekau derided President Jonathan and members of his government, stating that they (the government) were the ones that needed amnesty.

The Christian Clerics, CC1 and CC2, were equally unequivocal in blaming the government for Boko Haram’s resilience. Speaking along the same lines as their Muslim counterparts, CC1 and CC2 opined that Boko Haram remained resilient because the governments of Presidents Goodluck Jonathan and Muhammadu Buhari applied the same “worn-out policies” formulated to contend with Niger Delta militants. These policies were described to be raw military action and hazy negotiation policy. CC1 and CC2 noted that both the government of Presidents Goodluck Jonathan and Muhammadu

Buhari first used military action and negotiations/offer of Amnesty to repentant Boko Haram members as policies to contain terrorism. These policies, according to CC1 and CC2 were marginally successful. “As long as the government continues to use the same worn-out policies or methods used in Niger Delta, so long will Boko Haram remain resilient” CC1 surmised.

Lack of Clarity, Poor Articulation, and Implementation of Government Policies

POC1 believed the resilience of Boko Haram is to a large extent, due to the ambivalence of the Nigerian government in properly categorizing Boko Haram, either as a terrorist group, insurgents, or freedom fighters. POC1 observed that the Nigerian government did not have a clear policy defining Boko Haram. The government did not clearly define whether it was dealing with an insurgency, freedom fighters or terrorists. At a point in the battle against Boko Haram, the government of President Goodluck Jonathan engaged a South African private military contractor, to assist the government fight against Boko Haram. This was just before the 2015 Nigerian general elections. This policy initiative was referred to as Specialized Tasks, Training, Equipment and Protection (STTEP). It was not until the US State Department designated Boko Haram as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO), in November 2013, that the Nigerian government classified Boko Haram as a terrorist group. Prior to this time, the Nigerian government did not come out clearly to categorize Boko Haram, either as the terrorist group, an insurgency or even freedom fighters. Consequently, this lack of clarity in the policy positions of the government contributed to the resilience of Boko Haram. POC1 further noted that in 2014, the government of President Goodluck Jonathan adopted the National

Counter Terrorism Strategy (NACTEST), but the implementation of this policy did not quite yield the desired result. According to POC1, the National Counter Terrorism Strategy (NACTEST) was revised by the government of President Muhammadu Buhari in 2016 and in August 2017. The revised policy provided the policy framework and National Action Plan for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE). NACTEST institutionalized the Counter Terrorism Centre (CTC) and charged the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA) with the coordination and the implementation of the national Counter Terrorism strategy.

POC2 was of the view that various “policy missteps” of the governments of Presidents Goodluck Jonathan and Muhammadu Buhari equally played significant roles in the resilience of Boko Haram. For instance, according to POC2, when in April 2014, 276 Chibok girls were kidnapped by the terror group; the initial reaction of President Jonathan’s government was that it was a rouse. That act of kidnapping school girls that brought global attention to Boko Haram, was not acknowledged by the government till about 18 days after the incident. POC2 further noted that another government misstep that contributed to Boko Haram’s resilience was the hasty declaration by President Buhari’s government, shortly after assuming power, that Boko Haram had been “technically defeated”.

CSOM1 and CSOM2 noted that the Nigerian government antagonistic policies towards humanitarian organizations working in the northeast did not help to curb the activities of Boko Haram. He wondered why the military authorities would war against humanitarian bodies working in the northeast, instead of Boko Haram. CSOM1 mentioned

cases of the Nigerian military battle against international NGO's working in the northeast to help victims of Boko Haram. CSOM1 pointed out that the Nigerian Army closed the offices of Action Against Hunger, an international NGO that gave food aid to victims of Boko Haram, accusing the international body of helping terrorists. The office of Mercy Corps, another international NGO, in the Northeast was also closed by the Nigerian military. In the same area, the office of UNICEF came under military ban. These organizations were all accused of spying for Boko Haram. Since these organizations had worked with locals for a long time, the government's policy of curtailing their legitimate activities only served to make Boko Haram more resilient.

C1 and C2 believed poor implementation of government policies, such as the policies of negotiation and amnesty, were instrumental to the resilience of Boko Haram. C1 and C2, noted that the poor implementation of some well-thought-out policies of government was behind the resilience of Boko Haram. C2 further stated that when President Buhari's government assumed office in May 2015, some policy changes, like the establishment of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) and the infusion of western partners in the prosecution of the war against terrorism, led to marked successes in the prosecution of the war against terrorism. However, poor implementation of some of such policies, C2 noted, led to significant loses some grounds gained against Boko Haram terrorists by the Nigerian government.

Another policy of the Nigerian government aimed at containing Boko Haram's terrorist activities was the Operation Safe Corridor. According to C2, this policy was designed to categorize captured Boko Haram combatants into "low-risk"/"high-risk" and

de-radicalize them before releasing them back to their communities. The implementation of this policy and the results therefrom, C2 noted, were shrouded in secrecy. According to C2, the criteria used to adjudge who constituted “low” and “high” risk, among captured Boko Haram combatants was hazy. Some released and rehabilitated combatants returned to Boko Haram camps and resumed their terrorist activities no sooner were they released.

Summary of Findings for Research Question 3

In Question 3, I attempted to find out if there were policies of the Nigerian government that may have aided the resilience of Boko Haram, in the past decade of its existence. The respondents to this question were: 2 Muslim clerics (MC1 & MC2), 2 Christian Clerics (CC1 & CC2), 2 Muslim Public Officers (POM1 & POM2), 2 Christian Public Officers (POC1 & POC2), 2 Muslim Civil Society Organizers (CSOM1 & CSOM2), 2 Christian Civil Society organizers (CSOC1 & CSOC2) and two citizens (C1 and C2). The respondents identified various policies of the Nigerian government formulated to tackle Boko Haram. These policies include “State of Emergency”, “Negotiation”, “Amnesty”, “Military action”, the “National Counter Terrorism Strategy” (NACTEST), the “Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF)”, the “Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF)”, Legislation (Terrorism Prevention Act, 2011 and 2013), and “Specialized Tasks, Training, Equipment and Protection (STTEP)”. Others were institutional mechanisms like the Presidential Initiative on northeast (PINE), Presidential Committee on Northeast Initiative (PCNI). The respondents unanimously agreed that many of the policies of government, instead of mitigating the impact of Boko Haram on the Nigerian

polity, unfortunately exacerbated the problem. These policies are represented in Appendix D.

Summary

In chapter 4, I described the process of the research and presented the findings or the results from the analysis of the data collected through interviews, documents, audio-visuals, observations, and my field notes. Question 1 was an attempt to find out the role (if any) that Islamic fundamentalism played in the resilience of Boko Haram in the decade of its existence in Nigeria. The responses to this question showed a sharp division along religious lines. Eight Christian and a Muslim respondent were of the opinion that Islamic fundamentalism is responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram (see Figure 3). On the other hand, 6 respondents (all Muslims) believed a peaceful religion such as Islam was not responsible for Boko Haram's resilience. Instead, these respondents blamed the Nigerian government's poor handling of affairs concerning Boko Haram as being responsible for the resilience of terrorism in Nigeria.

Question 2 sought to uncover the non-religious factor(s), if any, that may have contributed to the resilience of Boko Haram in the past decade of its existence. The opinions of the participants were diversified. The identified factors include social and economic deprivations, social inequality, youth unemployment, wage disparities, the reactionary attitude of the Nigeria government and the mishandling of the crisis, entrenched government interest, corruption among public officials and conniving contractors, intelligence failure and high handedness of the government. Human rights abuses, slow response from the international community and the lack of trust that

Nigerian people have in their government were also implicated. As in the responses to Question 1, the overall responses to question 2 placed the larger blame on the government for the resilience of terrorism in Nigeria.

In question 3, I probed to know if there were policies of the Nigerian government responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram's terrorism. My finding revealed that indeed, various policies of the Nigerian government which were formulated to tackle Boko Haram may have aided the resilience of the terror group, instead. Some of these policies were; the State of Emergency, Negotiation, Amnesty, Military action, The National Counter Terrorism Strategy (NACTEST), the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF), Legislation (Terrorism Prevention Act, 2011 and 2013), Specialized Tasks, Training, Equipment and Protection (STTEP). Some other policies that I identified policies were the Presidential Initiative on northeast (PINE) and Presidential Committee on Northeast Initiative (PCNI). The respondents were in agreement that that the Nigerian government policies did not sufficiently mitigate the impact of Boko Haram, hence the resilience of terrorism. In the concluding chapter of this research study (Chapter 5), I will attempt to interpret my research findings. The limitation of the study would be spelt out. I will conclude chapter 5 with my recommendations for further studies and further actions that could be taken by Nigerian government policy makers to deal with the challenges of terrorism.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this qualitative study was the examination of the role of nonreligious factors that may be responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram in the past decade of its existence. The study was an attempt at finding out whether the lack of clearly defined and well-executed policies of the Nigerian government, rather than Islamic fundamentalism, has been responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram since it emerged in 2009. The results of this study indicated faulty, conflicting, unclear government policies and their improper implementation, rather than Islamic fundamentalism, as being responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram's terrorism in Nigeria. The findings also indicated that other nonreligious factors contributed to Boko Haram's resilience. Some of these factors were corruption and mismanagement of resources meant for prosecuting the fight against terrorism, lack of pro-activeness of the government, politics instead of policies, intelligence failures, injustices/human right abuses, failure to identify Boko Haram's sources of funding, slow response from the international community, Nigerians' lack of trust of Nigerians in their government, and social and economic deprivations (youth unemployment). The research questions that facilitated the inquiry were the following:

RQ1: What role, if any, has Islamic fundamentalism played in the resilience of Boko Haram in the past decade?

RQ2: What nonreligious factors, if any, are responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram in the past decade of its existence?

RQ3: What government policies, if any, are responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram in the past decade of its existence?

I employed the qualitative case study approach to guide the research, in line with the purpose of the study and the data required to accomplish this objective. The qualitative case study method ensured multiple sources of data from individuals with knowledge and experiences about the activities of Boko Haram. These individuals were able to provide answers to the interview questions, and analysis of participants' responses provided answers to the research questions. The data used for this study were from face-to-face interviews, documents and audio-visual materials, and my field notes. The 14 participants included clerics, public officials, members of civil society organizations, and ordinary citizens of Nigeria, equally divided between Muslims and Christians.

Participant selection was not done to represent different strata in Nigeria. The criteria were experience (see Polkinghorne, 2005) and knowledge of the subject (Pechlaner & Volgger, 2012). The interviews were a mixture of face-to-face and telephone interviews following the authorization by the Walden University IRB due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The face-to-face and telephone interviews lasted no more than 1 hour. My field notes and observations from the interviews were integral parts of the data analysis. The documents that also formed part of the analysis included personal papers and notes of some of the respondents, which they voluntarily brought to my attention, documents and audio-visuals in the public domain, media publications (both electronic and print), and journal articles.

As I stated in chapter 3, the analysis of the collected data was done in line with the prescription of Stake (1995) and Creswell (1998) following: “detailed description”, “categorical aggregation” (findings from multiple sources), “direct interpretation” (findings from single instances); “correspondence and patterns” – matching categories to establish patterns or a trend and “development of “naturalistic generalization” – assertions and conclusions based on the researchers encounter with data”.

This final chapter (Chapter 5) of the study is sub-divided into the following parts: introduction, interpretation of the findings, Limitation of the study, Recommendation, the implication for social change, and the conclusion.

The theoretical framework that underpins this study is hinged on the position of Ozdamar (2008) which stated that in “reviewing the literature on terrorism, one concludes that it has yet to develop a grand theory of terrorism” (p.99). Consequently, the theoretical frameworks considered relevant for this research study are the Rational Choice Theory, Instrumental theory, Economic theory, and theory of fundamentalism. These interconnected theories were useful prisms in understanding the nonreligious factors (including government policies) responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram.

The research questions for this study (see Appendix II) were open-ended questions. From the responses of the 14 participants in the study, the non-religious factors responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram in Nigeria were teased out. The findings from this case study of Boko Haram in Nigeria, significantly contribute to the knowledge base of factors responsible for the resilience of terrorism, particularly in Nigeria. The case study is about a terrorist organization (Boko Haram) in Nigeria. The respondents

spoke about their Nigerian experiences and knowledge of the policies of the governments of Nigeria towards Boko Haram. However, the knowledge from the Nigerian situation can only serve as a guide or blueprint to other Lake Chad Basin countries (Chad, Cameroun, and Niger) or any other nation that comes under the throes of terrorism. Such countries may learn from the Nigerian experience.

Interpretation of the Findings

Discussion of Research Question 1

The first research question I posed was: what role, (if any) has Islamic fundamentalism played in the resilience of Boko Haram in the past decade? The findings show a sharp, almost latitudinal division of opinion among the respondents. All the Christian respondents, in all the categories, and a Muslim respondent (C1) blamed Islamic fundamentalism for the resilience of Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria. On the other hand, all the Muslim respondents, except (C1) took the position that Islamic fundamentalism, is a corruption of true Islam, a peaceful religion. They were of the view that true Islam abhors violence and further opined that the resilience of Boko Haram cannot be attributed to Islam. Of interest, however, is the position of all (100%) the respondent (Muslims and Christians). They were in agreement that the Nigerian government and its ineffective policies were responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram terrorism. Consequently, they, ‘blamed (the Nigerian) government, not Islam’.

The answers to question 1 reveal a sharp division of opinions between Muslims and Christians. Across board, the Muslim respondents admitted that Boko Haram terrorists profess to be Muslims. However, these categories of Muslim respondents,

except one (C1) took the position that Boko Haram terrorists held perverted views of Islam and could, therefore, not be said to be Muslims, in the true sense of the word. They reasoned that the resilience of Boko Haram could, therefore, not be attributed to Islam but to other factors. The Christian respondents, on their part, noted that Boko Haram is on a 'jihad' to forcefully Islamize Nigeria. Therefore, they opined that the resilience of Boko Haram has a direct correlation with the Islamic fundamentalist ideology of the terror group.

Indeed, the polarized positions of Muslim and Christian participants in the study are indicative of the palpable tension and suspicion between adherents of both religions in Nigeria. Though Muslim respondents admitted that Boko Haram terrorists indeed profess the Islamic faith, they were quick to point out that Boko Haram terrorists are not true adherents of the Muslim faith. On the contrary, Boko Haram terrorists' pervert Islamic teachings to serve their ends. The only Muslim respondent who took a contrary position from other Muslim's participants was C1. This may be explained by the fact that C1, though a Muslim, is from the Southern part of Nigeria. This finding is in conformity with the view that; "Boko Haram Islamist insurgents use Qur'anic verses calling for violence as a theological justification for their terrorist acts, many orthodox Muslims do not agree with this way of interpreting the Qur'an" (Kpughe, 2017). Salawu (2020) referred to the associating the Muslim religion with terrorism as being 'Muslim Identity Theft' (MIT). Salawu expressed regret that terrorist have stolen the Muslim identity, pretending to be Muslims when in fact they have cultic and satanic ideologies which have nothing to do with the Islamic religion.

Though Muslim respondents flatly denounced Boko Haram's terrorism as being un-Islamic, an interesting finding of this study is that the views espoused by the Muslim respondents were somewhat in alignment with the core message of Boko Haram. For instance, the name Boko Haram literally means that western education is a sin to be abhorred. On their part, the Muslim respondents agreed with Boko Haram's position that attempts to surreptitiously foist western values on countries like Nigeria were responsible for the existence of Boko Haram. The Muslim respondents were also of the view that linking Boko Haram with the Islamic religion is a western conspiracy orchestrated to tarnish the name of a great religion as Islam. They opined that only a few fringe elements who are not truly Muslims are engaged in terrorism.

The study finds, therefore, that among Nigerian Muslims, there is a strong disavowal that terrorism is directly correlated with the Muslim religion. On the other hand, Christian respondents link the resilience of Boko Haram to Islamic fundamentalism. Unlike their Muslim counterparts, Christian respondents did not quite draw a line of differentiation between 'true' Islam and Islamic fundamentalism.

While this was a point of divergence of opinions between Muslims and Christian respondents, the point of convergence between both categories of respondents appears to be that Nigerian governments that ruled the country from 2009 till date are to be blamed for Boko Haram's resilience. All the respondents (100%) agreed that Boko Haram's resilience is largely due to governments (mis)handling of the terror group during in their early days. This mishandling, due to inadequate policy measures, continued even after Boko Haram had metamorphosed into a deadly terror organization. The respondents

emphasized that governments' inconsistent policies and actions may have contributed to the resilience of the terror group. For instance, in the study, I find that in 2011, barely 2 years into the violent phase of Boko Haram, an election into the office of the President of Nigeria took place. The election was won by President Goodluck Jonathan (a Christian). In order not to appear to be anti-Muslim in his policies, he (President Jonathan) was constrained to take decisive actions against Boko Haram. Again, in 2015, a new government, headed by a Muslim President (Muhammadu Buhari) won the election and was sworn in. Part of his campaign promises was that the new administration would improve the security situation in the country and bring an end to Boko Haram's terrorism. Three months into President Buhari's administration, the government declared that Boko Haram had been "technically defeated" (Blueprint, 2020). This declaration appeared to have been a hasty policy declaration, as Boko Haram later re-emerged, even more vicious, and deadlier than before. Castigating the government for its role in the resilience of Boko Haram, an interview respondent had this to say: "If certain decisions against Boko Haram had been implemented with the sense of urgency required, the terror group would have long been defeated".

To sum up the findings from Question 1, my findings show that it is true that members of Boko Haram terrorist organization claim to be Muslims. However, it is also true that "ignorance of religious teaching is the leading factor influencing the adoption of extreme religious views, especially among youths" (Onuoha, 2014). Consequently, respondents took divergent positions that Islamic fundamentalism is responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram. While Muslim respondents stated that the resilience of Boko

Haram has no direct correlation with the Islamic religion, Christian respondents, on the other hand, hinge Boko Haram's resilience on Islamic fundamentalism. Muslim respondents differentiated between "true" Islam and its perversion (Islamic Fundamentalism). On the other hand, Christian respondents did not see any line of differentiation between Islam and Islamic fundamentalism. While Muslim and Christian respondents were sharply divided on what constituted Islam and its fundamentalist's variant, they were, however, in agreement that Boko Haram would have been checkmated, if successive Nigerian governments had enacted and properly implemented adequate counterterrorist policies to that effect.

Discussion of Research Question 2

The second question which this study attempted to answer is: what non-religious factor(s), (if any) are responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram in the past decade of its existence? My findings in this study, indeed reflect the position of Hogendoorn who noted;

“Although Boko Haram has links with the Islamic State and other extremist groups in Africa, the main drivers of its insurgency are internal and should be addressed by the country's federal and state-level governments. Nigeria is a middle-income country, with a large if sometimes dysfunctional government” (Hogendoorn, 2018).

Indeed, the study finds that many factors, other than Islamic fundamentalism, contributed to the resilience of Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria. These factors include: corruption and mismanagement of resources meant for prosecuting the fight against

terrorism, lack of pro-activeness of the government, politics instead of policies, intelligence failures, injustices/human right abuses, failure to identify Boko Haram's sources of funding, slow response from the international community, Nigerians' lack of trust in their government, social and economic deprivations (youth unemployment), among others.

Corruption and Mismanagement of Resources

Corruption in various sectors of Nigeria and the mismanagement of resources meant for the prosecution of the war against terrorism were factors identified by all interview respondents, as being contributory factors to the resilience of terrorism in Nigeria. This was one category that 100% of the respondents, irrespective of their religious and professional affiliations, agree to. All the interview respondents (MC1, MC2, CC1, CC2, POM1, POM2, POC1, POC2, CSOM1, CSOM2, CSOC1, CSOC2, C1, and C2) agreed that corruption is a major reason why Boko Haram has remained resilient in Nigeria. This finding is in consonance with the positions taken in many existing literatures, that Boko Haram's resilience has been made possible because of widespread corruption in Nigeria. Omenma et al (2020) noted that corruption in Nigeria's security sector and the mismanagement of Nigeria's resources contributed immensely in undermining the fight against terrorism. According to Omenma et al (2020); in a 2017 report by Transparency International, Nigeria's corrupt military officers looted money meant to prosecute the war against Boko Haram through fake Defense contracts. The monies siphoned from the governments' coffers were then laundered in western European countries, the United States and elsewhere. For instance, Nigeria's National

Security Adviser under President Goodluck Jonathan, Colonel Sambo Dasuki, was indicted for extra-budgetary spending of about \$2.2 billion. This money was said to have been used to procure arms to fight Boko Haram. Allegedly, the money was not spent for the purpose for which it was meant. This matter came to be known as “Dasukigate” (Ekumaoko & Ezemenaka, 2020).

Colonel Sambo Dasuki and some persons associated with the deal were later detained and charged to court. Corruption in the security sector, it has been found, robs the military of the ability to purchase military hardware, such as Counter-Improvised Explosive Devices (C-IED) equipment, ground and air lift assets, among other modern warfare equipment needed to fight terrorism. It has also been stated that at a stage in the fight against Boko Haram, the morale of Nigerian soldiers were affected and complaints of being equipped with inferior arms to fight Boko Haram with inferior arms was rife (Omenma et al, 2020). The findings from this study confirm that corruption in Nigeria was indeed pervasive and hindered many developmental efforts of the successive Nigerian government. Consequently, corruption may have played consequential roles in the resilience of Boko Haram in Nigeria.

Omenma et al (2020) emphasized that despite the official position of President Buhari’s administration, the repeated incidents of Boko Haram successful attacks were as a result of corruption and mismanagement in the security sector. When President Muhammadu Buhari got elected as the President and Commander-in-Chief of Nigeria’s Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in 2015, one of the cardinal principles of his campaign was that his government would tackle corruption. Corruption was

viewed as one of the reasons why remarkable progress had not been made in defeating Boko Haram. Corruption in military procurement and in the system, has therefore, played a major part in the resilience of Boko Haram. It was due to corruption that resources of the state that should ordinarily be used to combat Boko Haram terrorist activities ended up in private pockets (Ekumaoko & Ezemenaka, 2020).

The interview respondents identified corruption as a factor in the resilience of Boko Haram. In this current research study, I, therefore, find that corruption indeed undermined Nigeria's governments' decade-long efforts to defeat Boko Haram. This finding confirms the position in some of the literature reviewed. For instance, Cohen (2003) noted that countries become vulnerable to manipulations from al'Qeada due to "profound historic internal problems" (p.64) manifested through corruption, political instability, anarchy and ethnicism. Ahmed (2015), Idowu (2013), Tonwe and Eke (2013) all identify corruption and "misuse of government funds" as factors that aided Boko Haram's resilience.

Government's Lack of Proactiveness

This current study also finds that the reactionary responses of the Nigerian government to Boko Haram's attacks was a factor that contributed to the terror group's resilience. All the interview respondents shared this viewpoint. The Muslim and Christian clerics, civil society members, public servants and the ordinary citizens, all cast blames on successive Nigerian governments in power since 2009, for mishandling the counterterrorism efforts of the government. All the respondents, (MC1, MC2, CC1, CC2, POM1, POM2, POC1, POC2, CSOM1, CSOM2, CSOC1, CSOC2, C1 and C2) stated

that the lack of pro-activeness on the part of the Nigerian government goes way back to the formative stages of Boko Haram, even before the start of the terror organizations violent phase in 2009. This was before the Nigerian government's first military onslaught against Boko Haram, during which its leader, Mohammed Yusuf was killed. Then, Boko Haram was a little-known movement. As a result of the killing of its leader, Boko Haram went underground. During that period, referred to as its "quietist phase", (Cook, 2011) the Nigerian government could have proactively checkmated the group and brought its violent activities to an end. However, the terror group was allowed to go underground, only to re-emerge as a more violent group. Ever since, the government only reacts after each Boko Haram's attacks. The study finds that the inability to be proactive has only served to enable Boko Haram. For instance, in the case of the kidnapping of 276 Chibok schoolgirls from their school's' hostel, President Goodluck Jonathan who was then in power did not treat the matter with the needed urgency. Many days passed before the government turned its attention to the matter of the kidnap of Chibok girls'. President Buhari, on assumption of power in 2015, was more proactive. However, after the initial successes recorded by the administration, the government declared that Boko Haram had been "technically defeated" (blueprint, 2020). This hasty declaration may have led the government to relax its counterterrorism efforts. Consequently, when Boko Haram resumed its acts of terrorism, the government was seemingly caught unawares. This may explain why Boko Haram was able to replicate the kidnapping of Chibok girls. This time, it was the kidnapping of 113 schoolgirls in Dapchi! The government only reacted after the kidnap. One would have expected that a more proactive government would have put

in place adequate security measures to forestall a reoccurrence. Instead, after the kidnap had taken place, the government opted to negotiate for the release of the kidnapped students. Adedokun (2020) poignantly captures the governments' reactivity, following another similar abduction of the schoolboys in Katsina state. Adedokun stated that;

“It is doubtful that any other country, where over 200 female pupils were abducted in 2014 and 110 in 2018, would allow that happen again. But Nigeria is unlike countries where lives have value and vulnerable members of society get the protection that enables them live life to the fullest. Here in Nigeria, life is cheap, short and brutish” (Adedokun, 2020).

Commenting further on the reactive nature of the Nigeria government, Adedokun (2020) also noted that; “these things (terror attacks) no longer make any meaning, they happen, we raise our voices in mourning for a day or two and then, move on, awaiting the next misfortune”.

Politics Instead of Policies

This current study finds that the respondents (Muslims and Christians) shared the view that Boko Haram's resilience has been because successive Nigerian governments, during the period under focus, played politics instead of fashioning out the right policies to tackle Boko Haram. Rather than tackling the phenomenon (terrorism) with decisive policies that could have nipped Boko Haram's terrorist activities in the bud, the governments of the day choose to treat the budding terrorist group like an ordinary insurgent group that would fizzle away with time. The interview respondents blamed the governments of Presidents Goodluck Jonathan and Muhammadu Buhari for poor policy

responses to Boko Haram. For instance, when Boko Haram started its violent phase, initially engaging in sporadic bombings of some parts of the country, the government of President Jonathan at first regarded these acts as attempts by opposition elements from the northern part of the country to destabilize his government. Some of the interview respondents were of the opinion that President Jonathan treated the kidnap of the Chibok schoolgirls with less seriousness than required, due to political reasons. Consequently, the interview respondents attributed the successful kidnap of the Chibok girls, the seeming helplessness of the government and the international notoriety of Boko Haram, as factors that may have contributed to the resilience of Boko Haram.

The respondents further observed that rather than initiate decisive policies against Boko Haram, President Jonathan's government, preferred to weigh the political implications of his government's actions due to the fact of a looming election. The respondents also noted that President Muhammadu Buhari defeated President Jonathan in the Presidential election, partly because he (President Buhari) promised to take decisive action to defeat Boko Haram. However, the respondents pointed out that after President Buhari's initial successes against the terror group, (partly due to the policy that led to the relocation of the military high command to the terrorist enclave in Borno State), the government also played politics over policy when it declared that Boko Haram had been "technically defeated" (Blueprint, 2020). The respondents noted that not too long after that declaration, Boko Haram re-emerged, more resilient and more violent than before. This is confirmed by many fresh attacks launched in different parts of Nigeria's northeast and elsewhere in Nigeria by Boko Haram, even after it was declared defeated. In a news

report by Blueprint newspaper, Dr Amaechi Nwaokolo, a security expert described the declaration by government as “a mere political statement” (Blueprint, 2020, p6).

Nwaokolo advised;

“Let us not be carried away by the innuendo that has been bandied by our politicians that Boko Haram has been technically defeated. You cannot claim a total defeat of a terrorist group that is driven by religious ideology...technical defeat is just a political statement” (Blueprint, 2020, p6).

Intelligence Failures

The study also finds that Intelligence failures, injustices and outright human right abuses were some non-religious reasons why Boko Haram has remained resilient in Nigeria. All the interview respondents (except C1 and C2) blamed intelligence failures or lack of actionable intelligence for the resilience of Boko Haram. While C1 and C2 (ordinary citizens) claimed no knowledge of the government’s intelligence operations, MC1, MC2 (Muslim Clerics), CC1, CC2 (Christian Clerics), CSOC1, CSOC2 (Christian Civil Society members), CSOM1, CSOM2 (Muslim Civil Society members), POC1, POC2 (Public Officers Christians) and POM1, POM2 (Public Officers Muslim), all blamed intelligence failures for repeated Boko Haram attacks, and the kidnappings of Chibok girls and Dapchi girls. The Public Officers stated that frequent feuds among intelligence and security agencies in Nigeria led to ‘turf wars and battles for supremacy. As a result, efficiency was negatively impacted. The interview respondents, except C1 and C2 pointed at inadequate intelligence or failure of intelligence as being contributory to the resilience of Boko Haram. Many attacks carried out by Boko Haram, they stated,

could have been prevented if there were proper intelligence. A security expert, Dr. Nwaokolo agrees. He stated;

“We have not done the needful as a country, in the sense that intelligence instrument that is needed to combat this type of criminality has not been utilized properly. There is no credible intelligence-gathering process” (Blueprint, 2020, p6).

Dr Nwaokolo further, noted thus;

“If our intelligence is not robust, if there is no synergy, which we know is a big issue among the security services; it will be difficult for us to make progress (against terrorism). In this era of technology, we don’t have the technology, like a drone, that can help tackle these insurgents from afar” (Blueprint, 2020, p6).

Another study identified inter-agency rivalries among various security agencies saddled with Nigeria’s counterterrorism efforts as being a reason why Boko Haram has not been defeated. (Eme 2018), noted that security agencies in Nigeria have become liabilities due to inter-agencies rivalries, occasioned by their overlapping duties. And as a result of this, many citizens become confused on which security agency to turn to, in the event of emergencies.

Injustices and Human Right Abuses

In this study, I find that many of Boko Haram attacks were carried out against the Police headquarters and Police stations, military and military installations, Churches and Christians, Mosques and Muslims, media houses, bus garages, the United Nations

building in Abuja among other places. These attacks, carried out through suicide bombings, gun attacks and car bombs inflicted great casualties and fatalities on Nigerians. Consequently, according to Human Rights Watch,

“Nigeria’s government has responded with a heavy hand to Boko Haram’s violence. In the name of ending the group’s threat to citizens, security forces comprising military, police, and intelligence personnel, known as the Joint Military Task Force (JTF), have killed hundreds of Boko Haram suspects and random members of communities where attacks have occurred...the JTF has engaged in excessive use of force, physical abuse, secret detentions, extortion, burning of houses, stealing money during raids, and extrajudicial killings of suspects” (Human Rights Watch, 2012).

C1 and C2 (ordinary citizens) and members of Civil Society organizations, both the Christians and Muslims (CSOC1, CSOC2, CSOM1, CSOM2) criticized the government’s responses after major Boko Haram attacks, as being highhanded. According to these respondents, the rights of many innocent citizens were violated in the aftermath of Boko Haram attacks. These took the form of arbitrary arrests without trials and military cordons of entire areas. Acts such as these prevented innocent citizens from engaging in their normal daily business activities. The Muslim and Christian clerics (MC1, MC2, CC1, and CC2) expressed similar concerns. However, all the public officers, (POC1, POC2, POM1, and POM2) though admitted that there were times when government’s responses were “heavy handed,” they nevertheless stated that some of the actions of government were justified. In this current study, I therefore, found that the

Nigerian government's high handedness in dealing with Boko Haram and the human rights abuses that followed were capitalized upon by Boko Haram to recruit members. I viewed some audio-visual recordings of men in Nigerian military uniforms maltreating captured terrorists and, in some cases, carrying out extra-judicial killings. It must be pointed out that the Nigerian military had denied some of these allegations (You Tube, 2017). However, the Nigerian military admitted such atrocities while reiterating its stand to apprehend and sanction officers or men involved in the extra-judicial killings (You Tube, 2019). The denials by the military, notwithstanding, I find in this current study that injustices and human rights abuses perpetrated by Nigeria's security forces may have contributed to the resilience of the terror group in Nigeria.

Failure to Identify Boko Haram Sources of Funding

Another reason why Boko Haram has remained resilient in Nigeria was attributed by the respondents to the inability of the Nigerian government ascertain and cripple the funding source(s) of Boko Haram. The findings confirm that terrorism has remained resilient because successive Nigerian governments, during the period under review, could not find ways to stop the funding sources of Boko Haram. The respondents were in agreement that the resilience of Boko Haram is also due to the inability of the Nigerian government to uncover the funding sources of the terror group with a view to blocking it. There was, however, a divergence of views on the funding sources of Boko Haram. For instance, the Muslim and Christian clerics (MC1, MC2, CC1, CC2), Civil Society members (CSOC1, CSOC2, CSOM1, CSOM2), Public Officers (POC1, POC2, POM1,

POM2) believe that Boko Haram is funded by other terrorists' organizations like al-Qaeda, al-shabaab. C1 and C2 (members of the public) on the other hand believe that Boko Haram is funded by "black market money" (ransom from kidnappings and bank robberies and other unknown sources). Campbell (2020) has noted that Boko Haram is funded through kidnappings, bank robberies, protection rackets, imposition of taxes in areas they control and sometimes even from legitimate trading. McCoy, however, (2014) stated; "the actual source of funding is as elusive as the militants themselves". According to McCoy (2014) Boko Haram's funding apparatus which is "intricate and opaque", comes from different sources. These include funds from other terrorists 'organizations like al-Qaeda, al-shabaab, and "black market money" (from kidnappings and bank robberies). My findings in this current study aligns with McCoy (2014) who stated that, "experts agree that one of the best ways to stall Boko Haram is to cut off its funding, but how to do that isn't clear". Consequently, the inability of Nigerian government to clearly identify and cut off Boko Haram's sources of funding may have contributed in large measures to the resilience of terrorism in Nigeria. Campbell (2020) came to the same conclusion when he noted that;

"Claims that Nigerian government officials are conniving with Boko Haram are common and should not be taken at face value. On the other hand, after more than a decade and often murderous splits, Boko Haram is still far from defeated, implying that it still enjoys support"

Slow Response from the International Community

My research findings indicate that the resilience of Boko Haram may also be due to the initial slow response that the Nigerian government got from the international community, in the government's efforts to thwart Boko Haram's terrorism. All the interview respondents (MC1, MC2, CC1, CC2, CSOC1, CSOC2, CSOM1, CSOM2, C1 and C2), were of the view that this slow response from many world powers to Boko Haram's attacks in Nigeria gave the terror group the needed impetus to get more firmly rooted in the Nigeria. An interesting aspect of this finding is that all the respondents, except the public officers (POC1, POC2, POM1, and POM2), blame the Nigerian government, instead of the western powers for the slow response. The respondent stated that the Nigerian government was initially in denial of the emergence of Boko Haram as a terror organization, but instead preferred to treat the terror group as an insurgency that would fizzle out. According to the interview respondents, this may have been the reason why some western powers initially stayed aloof and considered Boko Haram as Nigeria's internal affairs. The views of the public officers (POC1, POC2, POM1, and POM2) were more measured. They noted that considerations of the sovereignty of the Nigerian nation by western powers accounted for the "slow" response.

In the study, I find that when the violent phase of Boko Haram started, many western powers did not quickly respond against Boko Haram. This was either due to their deference to Nigeria's sovereignty or because they were not expressly invited by the Nigerian government to intervene. The government of President Goodluck Jonathan, at that time the ruling government, gave the impression that the matter was purely a

domestic affair that it could handle without international interference. And not wanting to be seen to violate Nigeria's sovereignty, many nations that could have assisted, stayed away. This may have contributed to the resilience of Boko Haram. It is noteworthy to point out that it was only after the election of President Buhari in May 2015, that major western nations like the United States and the United Kingdom showed more active interest in assisting the Nigerian government to tackle Boko Haram. The initial assistance from these countries were through the deployment of military advisers and the sale of arms to the Nigerian government.

Lack of Trust in the Government

The study further finds that the resilience of Boko Haram may also be due to the loss of trust by many Nigerians in their government at all levels – federal, State and local government levels. All the respondents, (MC1, MC2, CC1, CC2, POM1, POM2, POC1, POC2, CSOM1, CSOM2, CSOC1, CSOC2, C1, and C2) identified the lack of trust by Nigerian citizens of their government, and particularly the security forces, as a factor that may have aided Boko Haram's resilience. The Muslim clerics (MC1 and MC2) cited instances when some members of the public volunteered information about Boko Haram to the authorities, only to suffer reprisal attacks from the terror group. This, they said led to the erosion of trust of citizens on the government's ability to protect them. This lack of trust made local nationals unwilling to cooperate with security agencies through giving out relevant information that could aid the counterterrorism efforts of the government. The study finds, therefore, that the long-drawn-out fights

between the Boko Haram terrorists and various arms of the Nigerian security agencies may have contributed to the people's loss of confidence in the ability of the government to win the battle against the terror group. Consequently, the steady erosion of the people's trust in the Nigerian government's ability to protect them may have inadvertently contributed to the resilience of Boko Haram.

Social and Economic Deprivations (Youth Unemployment)

In the study, I find that social and economic deprivations may have given rise to the Nigeria's poor state of development. This manifests in high levels of unemployment, especially among the youth population. The respondents blamed this state of affair of the Nigerian nation for the resilience of Boko Haram. All the respondents, (MC1, MC2, CC1, CC2, POM1, POM2, POC1, POC2, CSOM1, CSOM2, CSOC1, CSOC2, C1 and C2) agreed that the poor state of the Nigerian economy which led to a high level of unemployment, especially among the youths, may have contributed significantly to the resilience of Boko Haram. The respondents blame the government for not directly addressing this socio-economic problem. According to CC1, a Bishop in an orthodox church, the government's failure to provide for its youths "have put the churches under a lot of pressures as the youths now look up to their churches for the provision of social welfare that normally should be done by the government". Unemployed youths, especially in the northern parts of Nigeria, have been ready recruits of Boko Haram terrorists. Opukri and Etekpe (2013) noted that social and economic deprivations, especially among youths in the northern part of Nigeria "have made terrorism fashionable" (p.385).

The study, therefore, finds a direct correlation between socio-economic deprivations of Nigerian youths and the resilience of Boko Haram. As a result of a preponderance of unemployed youths that Boko Haram could readily recruit, the terror organization has continued to reinvent itself.

Discussion of Research Question 3

The final question which this study probed was: what government policies, if any, are responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram in the past decade of its existence? The study finds that the two successive governments that governed Nigeria during the period under review (Presidents Jonathan and Buhari) applied many policies, in attempts to curb the terrorist acts of Boko Haram. However, some of these policy measures have been dismissed as being mere “reactions to symptoms of terrorism” (Umar, 2013).

Prior to the implementation of counterterrorism policies, the Nigerian government relied largely on Section 11 of the 1999 Constitution which stated that the National Assembly shall formulate laws for the safety and security of the federation. As a result, acts of terrorism were then treated under the country’s criminal justice system. Since no laws focused specifically on terrorism, the Nigerian government, during the period under review, had to formulate policies to address the budding terrorism phenomenon.

Following the security challenges posed by Boko Haram, the Nigerian government first enacted the Terrorism Prevention Act (2011). The Act was later amended to become Terrorism Prevention Act (2013). Some other policy measures enacted by the Nigeria government with a view to checkmating Boko Haram were the Money Laundry Prevention Act (MLPA) 2011 and 2012. These Acts (MLPA, 2011 and

2012) were against terrorism financing, and how terrorist offenders are arrested and prosecuted in the Courts. (FGN, 2011b; FGN, 2012). Though TPA 2011 and the TPA 2013 contain provisions on the arrest and prosecution of terrorist suspects, other issues covered in these Acts include terrorism financing, international terrorism and measures designed to dissuade foreign terrorists influence in Nigeria (FGN, 2011a; FGN, 2013).

The inadequacies of these Acts led to the formulation of the National Counterterrorism Strategy (NACTEST) document. As the core document for the implementation of the National Counterterrorism Strategy, NACTEST brought together in a single document what all the previous Acts attempted to achieve. NACTEST stipulated the roles to be played by different security agencies and consolidated them under the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA) (Amy, 2014: 26).

The five core objectives which NACTEST sets out to achieve are: Forestall, Secure, Identify, Prepare, and Implement (NACTEST, 2014; Eme, 2018). While NACTEST is the overarching document for countering terrorism in Nigeria, the fact that Boko Haram has remained resilient, a decade after the governments' formulation of its first counterterrorism policy, is a reflection of the efficacy of the policies.

Eme (2018) highlighted many gaps that abound in Nigeria's counterterrorism NACTEST policy. According to Eme (2018) the policy shows ambiguity and lack of understanding of the government's "overall strategic approach". Eme (2018) further stated that due to the lack of overall strategic approach, hard traditional military approach to fighting terrorism had been emphasized over negotiation, as was the case during the negotiations for the release of the kidnapped Chibok girls. Identified gaps in government

policies have been blamed for conflicts between the National Security Adviser and the Service Chiefs over who should be leading the counter-insurgency fight.

Inter-Agency feuds was also identified as a factor militating against the success of the policy measures of the Nigerian government against terrorism (Eme, 2018). It has been stated that

“From the NACTEST policy document, paucity of information about the rank disposition and organizational structure of the respective security agencies have been found out as one of the major sources of inter-agency squabbles in Nigeria’s war against terror” (Eme, 2018).

Additionally, operational and communication gaps in the NACTEST document have equally been said to be among the factors that militated against the successful implementation of the policy (Eme, 2018) further observed that,

“The management of the myriad security challenges and sundry crimes becomes virtually elusive as these agencies that are saddled with this responsibility are embroiled in a feud and acrimonious rancor that give impetus to persistent breach of the peace and escalating threats to national security” (Eme, 2018)

Eji (2016) also identified many gaps in the premier NACTEST policy document for the fight against terrorism. These gaps he stated, are: the Terrorist Acts (2011 & 2013) lack a national definition of terrorism; placed it’s driving organ, the Counter Terrorism Center (CTC), under the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA); tends to lay sole emphasis on the Boko Haram sect; government’s disposition to negotiation with terrorists not stated; silent on the protection of Nigeria’s interests abroad

and on responses to state-sponsored terrorism; discrepancies and lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities assigned to the ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs) for implementation; no designated lead ministry or agency; ambiguity on government's overall strategic approach.

From the findings in the study, all the respondents, (MC1, MC2, CC1, CC2, POM1, POM2, POC1, POC2, CSOM1, CSOM2, CSOC1, CSOC2, C1 and C2) believe that the shoddy implementation of many of the Nigerian government policies may be accountable to why Boko Haram has remained resilient in Nigeria. Some of the policy measures of the Nigerian government are discussed below and may be categorized as follows: the use of hard military approach prior to the formulation of the National Counterterrorism Strategy (NACTEST), Disengagement, De-Radicalization and Rehabilitation (DDR) or Operation Safe Corridor, Proscription of Boko Haram, State of Emergency, Negotiation with Boko Haram, Amnesty for the terrorists and the formulation of the National Counterterrorism Strategy (NACTEST).

This research finds that all the respondents, (MC1, MC2, CC1, CC2, POM1, POM2, POC1, POC2, CSOM1, CSOM2, CSOC1, CSOC2, C1, and C2) blame the resilience of Boko Haram on the inconsistencies and improper implementation of government policies. This is consistent with the view that Nigerian "government policy towards engaging with Boko Haram is at best confusing" (Zenn & Barkindo, 2013). According to the authors, the Nigerian government's policies range from the formation of a Presidential Amnesty Committee, proscription of Boko Haram, and the declaration of a

State of Emergency in Nigeria's northeast, the region that Boko Haram has concentrated majority of its deadly terrorist acts.

Zenn and Barkindo (2013) wondered "how the government intends to pursue three, often conflicting, agendas at the same time in the midst of an ongoing conflict". Eji (2016) and Eme (2018) examined the various policy measures of the Nigerian governments' during the period under review and came to the conclusion that the policy measures were fraught with many flaws and consequently were not effective. According to Eji (2016), "the government's strategy to counter the threat appears ineffective". Eme (2018) therefore concluded that the Nigerian governments' counterterrorism policy prior to 2014 was "unsuccessful".

Prior to 2014, the Nigerian government's counterterrorism efforts were said to be "mainly military-centric, and was not guided by a strategy document until the release of NACTEST in 2014 (Eji, 2016). Since the Nigerian government did not have a clear policy direction for dealing with terrorism, the government-formulated National Counter Terrorism Strategy (NACTEST) document was, therefore a welcome development. However, there were also noticeable flaws in the document and its implementation. Eji (2016) noted that Nigeria's NACTEST is "fraught with gaps that question its suitability as a policy document for countering terrorism in Nigeria". Some of the policy gaps as earlier stated "include the animosity between and among Nigeria's security agencies and their unwillingness to share intelligence, hampering effort at effectively combating the Boko Haram insurgency in the country's northeast" (Eme, 2018)

As well-intended as the various policies of the Nigerian government were, all the respondents in this current study, (MC1, MC2, CC1, CC2, POM1, POM2, POC1, POC2, CSOM1, CSOM2, CSOC1, CSOC2, C1, and C2) observed that their actual implementations were largely problematic. The effectiveness of many of these policies was hindered by inadequate funding, corruption, religious and ethnic factors, otherwise often referred to as the “Nigerian factor”. This accounts for why terrorism has continued to fester, and Boko Haram has remained resilient. Some of the policy measures applied by the Nigerian government in dealing with Boko Haram are examined below:

Hard Military Approach Policy

The interview respondents called for caution in the use of hard military approach to tackle Boko Haram. While (MC1, MC2, CC1, CC2, POM1, POM2, POC1, POC2, C1, C2, CSOM1, CSOM2 and CSOC2) did not completely condemn the use of military power, they nevertheless called for caution in the ways military power is deployed against Boko Haram. They advocated that the Nigerian military should comply with international standards in the use of force. Arbitrary use of force and extra judicial killings perpetrated by security forces were noted as factors that may have led to the resilience of Boko Haram. Respondents stated that absolute reliance on hard military power, as used by the Nigerian government, prior to the formulation of the National counterterrorism Strategy (NACTEST) in 2014, marked the beginning of several policy missteps in the handling Boko Haram. Prior to the first military onslaught against the group and the killing of its leader, Yusuf Mohammed, Boko Haram, was a little-known organization. The interview respondents noted that the killing of Yusuf made the group

retreat underground, and consequently became resilient. During its “quietist phase” (Cook, 2011), the government’s hard military approach failed to checkmate the terrorist activities of Boko Haram. The Muslim Clerics (MC1 and MC2) were emphatic in stating that the killing of Mohammed Yusuf, the founding charismatic leader of Boko Haram was a factor in making Boko Haram resilient. The Civil Society members (CSOC1, CSOC2, CSOM1, and CSOM2) noted that the government of President Muhammadu Buhari also relied heavily on hard military approach in tackling Boko Haram using the military, civilian vigilante groups, the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) and the Police. These massive military deployments against Boko Haram, respondents stated, contributed in making the terror group resilient. The respondents viewed the deployment of hard military might against Boko Harm as overly aggressive. While the respondents agreed that the use of military force helped in stemming the tide of Boko Haram, they nevertheless were of the view that raw military force have not succeeded in stopping Boko Haram.

The civil society organization respondents (CSOC1, CSOC2, CSOM1, and CSOM2) also stated that Boko Haram exploited the hard military approach of the Nigerian military to recruit more followers. According to the respondents drawn from the civil society organizations, the “fire for fire” approach adopted by the Nigerian governments, in the fight against Boko Haram, helped in oiling the propaganda machinery of Boko Haram. The terror group exploited the attacks to brainwash their followers and recruits into believing that the Nigerian government was at war against Islam, instead of against terrorism. This earned the terror group easy converts who felt

convinced that the war against Boko Haram was indeed war against Islam. This may have contributed to making the terror group more resilient. These views are corroborated by Osakwe & Umoh (2013). They noted that hard military approach against Boko Haram has been counterproductive. The finding of this study is also in consonance with the position of the International Crisis Group (2020). According to the group, the Lake Chad countries (Cameroun, Chad, Niger and Nigeria) that form the MNJTF

“Have made welcome efforts to coordinate against Boko Haram militants through a Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF). But their inconsistent commitment to the force, funding problems and disjointed planning have hindered its effectiveness. Jihadist so often regroup when troops withdraw” (International Crisis Group, 2020)

Policy of State of Emergency

The Nigerian government, under President Goodluck Jonathan, used the policy of State of Emergency (SOE) first in 2013, as a policy measure designed to contend with the ravaging terrorist activities of Boko Haram. As a policy, SOE was first introduced into Nigeria's political lexicon in 1962 “when large-scale irregularities in the country's first real census led to a crisis in the Action Group (AG)-controlled Western Nigeria” (Udo, 2013). This policy, used to contend with the political crisis during Nigeria's first republic had doubtful efficacy. When Boko Haram's terrorists' activities started getting out of hand, President Goodluck Jonathan declared a state of emergency in the three worse hit States in Nigeria's Northeast - Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states. With the declaration of emergencies in these states, the Nigerian military intensified attacks against Boko Haram,

with a view to degrade the terrorist group. However, the efforts of the military only deepened the violence in those states.

Applied as a panacea to Boko Haram's terrorist activities, the policy of State of Emergency, seem to have been an unmitigated disaster. A year after the introduction of the policy, an assessment of its efficacy was rather poor. Walker (2014) noted; "exactly a year after Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan declared a state of emergency in northeastern Nigeria, it seems to have had little effect in curbing the Islamist insurgency". The report further declared, rather grimly; "Now, after 12 months of state of emergency powers being in force, in the past few weeks Boko Haram has attacked several military bases, bombed a busy bus terminal in the capital, Abuja - twice - and launched an audacious kidnapping of more than 200 schoolgirls from Chibok which asset the world on edge" (Walker, 2014).

The study finds that policy failures is one category that all the respondents say contributed significantly to the resilience of Boko Haram. While different respondents lauded different policies due to their degrees of success, the actual implementation of some of the policies were condemned. For instance, the Muslim Clerics (MC1 and MC2) observed that in 2013 when the policy of the State of Emergency was introduced, it was thought that the security situation would improve in the northeast. However, Boko Haram was still able to carry out their terrorist attacks despite the prevailing State of Emergency policy in place at that time.

Policy of Negotiation

The study also found that the Nigeria governments' during the period under review used the policy of negotiation in dealings with the Boko Haram. The Clerics and Civil Society Organizers, Muslims, and Christians (MC1, MC2, CC1, CC2, CSOC1, CSOC2, CSOM1 and CSOM2) gave measured support to the policy of negotiation. Accordingly, they observed that this policy yielded some measured success. For instance, the Nigerian government used some form of negotiation to free about 103 of the captured Chibok girls, and 104 of the Dapchi schoolgirls. The release of the 344 Kankara boys kidnapped by Boko Haram in December 2020 was said to have been made possible through the "policy of negotiation" adopted by the government to get the boys released (Bello, 2020). However, negotiations conducted with Boko Haram, was viewed by these interview respondents as a factor that may have given Boko Haram the impetus for resilience. They noted that the way and manner the negotiations were conducted were shrouded in secrecy and were often inconclusive. For the Public Officers (POC1, POC2, POM1 and POM2) the government's negotiations with Boko Haram seem to have advanced the cause of Boko Haram more than the governments. Negotiating with Boko Haram, they stated, helped to elevate the status of the terror group. Some interview respondents (C1 and C2) viewed negotiations with Boko Haram to be signs of weakness on the part the government. They agreed that negotiating with the terror group contributed to the group's resilience.

Policy of Disengagement, De-Radicalization, and Rehabilitation or Operation Safe Corridor

A policy measure that has been applied by the Nigerian Government in attempts to contain Boko Haram terrorism is the policy of Disengagement, De-radicalization, and Rehabilitation (DDR) of captured Boko Haram fighters. While DDR has been described as “an excellent post-conflict initiative, often taken to restore peace into conflict-broken societies” (Ogunleye, undated), its application in the Nigerian context has been criticized as a ‘means to an end’ (Ogunleye, undated). While the key to DDR is said to be repentance on the part of the terrorists, the application and implementation of the policy by the military has been said to be self-defeatist. Captured Boko Haram terrorists are screened and categorized as either low-risk (repentant) and high-risk (unrepentant and hardcore). According to Ogunleye (undated)

“It is unclear what criteria the Nigeria military uses to determine who is cleared for rehabilitation, who is kept in detention, or who is informally released. If the criteria are unclear, how can we be sure that the surrendered “terrorists” or militants are truly repentant?”

All the respondents, including the Public Officers (POC1, POC2, POM1 and POM2) stated that they were not sure of the criteria used in releasing captured Boko Haram fighters and who they were released to. The study, therefore, finds that the resilience of Boko Haram in Nigeria may have been due, in part, to this release policy. Many otherwise “repentant” and captured Boko Haram fighters have been known to slip back into battle after their release. This is corroborated by Febab-Brown (2018) who

noted that the “Operation Safe Corridor” is not very clear on who constitutes “low-risk” and “high-risk” since intending Boko Haram defectors may not know the category they will fall under when they surrender. Consequently, it has been stated that some ex-Boko Haram fighters who surrender, no sooner go back to their previous ways, due to improper re-integration into society (Febab-Brown, 2018). The resilience of Boko Haram may therefore be attributed to faulty articulation/implementation of this policy.

Amnesty as Policy

Closely related to the Disengagement, De-radicalization and Rehabilitation (DDR) policy is the policy of Amnesty offered to repentant terrorists. The policy had its origin during the administration of the late President Yar’Adua who ruled Nigeria from 2007 till 2010. During this period the Niger-Delta militants engaged in militancy activities which resulted in killings, kidnappings and blowing up of oil pipe installations in the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria. Following his consultations with the National Council of States, President Yar’Adua came up with an Amnesty policy to pacify the restive youths who were engaged in militancy activities. The program encouraged repentant militants to denounce and renounce militancy activities in exchange for career opportunities, within and outside Nigeria, in various trades and vocations. Economic Confidential (2009), noted that Amnesty would bring about an end to arms conflicts and destruction of lives and other criminality in the Niger Delta area and consequently an improvement in the economic sector in the area. And to a large extent, Amnesty program calmed the restive youths and brought relative calm in the Niger Delta. It was against this backdrop that calls were made to apply a similar Amnesty program to contain the terrorist

activities of members of Boko Haram. The Sultan of Sokoto, seen as the leader of Muslims in Nigeria, called for an Amnesty for Boko Haram members on September 5, 2013, in Kaduna (McGregor, 2017). The Sultan advised the government of President Goodluck Jonathan to offer Amnesty to Boko Haram members, as a panacea to the on-going violence. The Sultan reasoned that Amnesty for Boko Haram was in line with similar Amnesty granted, in 2009, to Niger-Delta militants. The militants were offered cash, study, and job opportunities in Nigeria and overseas.

Among the interview respondents, the Civil Society Organizers, Muslim Clerics and Public Officers (CSOC1, CSOC2, CSOM1 CSOM2, MC1, MC2, POM1 and POM2) made the most strident calls for Amnesty for repentant terrorists. However, they called for a clear-cut policy on this and proper implementation for Amnesty to be effective. However, other respondents (CC1, CC2, POC1, POC2, C1 and C2) noted that a wholesome replication of the type of Amnesty offered to Niger Delta militants which brought some semblance of security in that area may not work in the northeast. They were of the view that the agitations of the Niger Delta militants were quite different from that of Boko Haram. These categories of respondents were of the view that instead of bringing an end to Boko Haram terrorism, the hazy Amnesty offer to Boko Haram may have contributed to the resilience of the terror group. It is instructive that President Goodluck Jonathan's offer of Amnesty to Boko Haram was flatly rejected by Abubakar Shekau, the leader of Boko Haram. His response to the offer was that it was the government that needed Amnesty and not members of Boko Haram. In a news report by British Broadcasting Corporation, Shekau was quoted as saying: "Surprisingly, the

Nigerian government is talking about granting us amnesty. What wrong have we done?

On the contrary, it is we that should grant you [a] pardon." (BBC, 2013)

National Counterterrorism Strategy

Prior to 2014, there was no single document to coordinate Nigeria's counterterrorism measures. However, "the fight against Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria recorded a major feat in 2014 when the federal government formally established a multi-layer communication structure for implementing National Counter-Terrorism Strategy (NACTEST)". The policy which was further reviewed in 2016 and coordinated by Nigeria's National Security Adviser (NSA) is said to be "a service-wide collection of counter-terrorism efforts bordering on the deployment of carrot-and-stick approach in fighting terrorism". Under the policy different Ministries, Departments and Agencies of government were assigned roles to enhance the implementation of the policy. Even at that, the policy which was the first clear policy direction to counter the activities of Boko Haram has been said to be fraught with significant flaws that militates against its success (Eji, 2016; Eme, 2018). The Public Officers and Civil Society Organizer (POM1, POM2, POC1, POC2, CSOM1, CSOM2, CSOC1, and CSOC2) noted that the policy of NACTEST complicated further the fight against Boko Haram. The policy injected new problems in the fight against terrorism. These problems were said to include the battle for supremacy, lack of trust among the security organizations and inadequate communication among them. According to these respondents, Boko Haram may have exploited these policy gaps to become more resilient.

Limitations of the Study

This study, like all other studies has limitations. The matter of limitation of research studies has been noted and addressed by previous researchers. Wilson-Genderson and Pruchno (2015) emphasized this fact. In the case of this current qualitative case study, a perceived limitation stems from the fact that the sample size is small, and all the respondents were drawn from Abuja, Nigeria's federal capital for purpose of convenience. However, this limitation does not impact on the quality of the study. This is because it had been stated earlier that the respondents were chosen, not due to their representativeness but rather due to their knowledge of the subject (Pechlaner and Volgger, (2012) and experience (Polkinghorne, 2005). From what is gleaned from the selected interview respondents, the findings can be generalized to a larger population.

This study is further limited by the fact of the sensitivity of the study. There was no attempt to make incursions into the hotbed areas of Boko Haram activities (Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states), either to observe the activities of the terrorists or seek out interview respondents from these areas. While this has the potential of enriching the study, it would have exposed the researcher to obvious danger and would not have received IRB approval.

Another limitation of qualitative studies of this nature is; the researcher served as a primary instrument to collect, analyze, and interpret data (Creswell, 2013). This has the potential of infusing bias in the study. Imbued with this knowledge as a researcher, I conducted the process of the entire research painstakingly, conscious of the admonition that a researcher must endeavor to remain neutral throughout the research work.

Finally, another limitation to this study is the sensitivity of certain matters which were alluded to by some of the respondents. Particularly on some policy issues, some respondents alluded to certain policy documents or matters which the researcher could not have access to because of their sensitive nature. However, the researcher was able to ascertain the veracity of some of these matters through open-source information and corroboration from other sources.

Recommendations

This study sets out to probe whether Islamic fundamentalism is responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram since over a decade or whether there are non-religious explanation Nigeria. While indeed Boko Haram professes Islamic fundamentalist views, the study finds that Boko Haram has remained resilient largely due to the many failures on the part of successive governments that have been in power since the outbreak of the violent phase of Boko Haram's terrorist activities. The study also noted that though Boko Haram is propelled by its Islamic fundamentalist philosophy, the resilience of the group cannot be entirely hinged on Islamic fundamentalism. It is therefore recommended that other nonreligious factors which have made for the resilience of the terror group be investigated, if the government indeed desires to defeat Boko Haram.

Many factors (including government policy failures) have been found to be responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram. Since the failures or ineffectiveness of these policies have contributed significantly to the resilience of Boko Haram, a comprehensive and thorough review of all the government's counterterrorism policies are

recommended. The proper implementations of the prevailing policies of the Nigerian government are also recommended.

Available evidence shows that various counterterrorism policies implemented by the Nigerian government have either been flawed or their implementations have been affected by extraneous factors, such as corruption, inter agencies feuds, ethnic and other political considerations. There is a great need for better coherence in government's policies against terrorism. Conflicting policies of the Nigerian government to a large extent have been a contributory factor in the resilience of Boko Haram.

Undoubtedly, there is also the issue of good governance. If the Nigerian government is to make significant headway in the battle against Boko Haram, good governance must be enthroned. Factors such as corruption that has militated against proper implementation of policies against terrorism must be reined in and good governance enthroned. The importance of good governance at both the federal, state, and local levels cannot be over emphasized. There is the need for transparency in governance. The findings of probe panels that investigated various terrorist acts of Boko Haram must be made public, instead of being shrouded in secrecy as currently obtains. During its formative stages till date, Boko Haram's rallying cry has been that it is at war against western-oriented governments that have continued to impoverish the people and diminished their values.

Since corruption has adversely affected Nigerian governments' battle against eliminating Boko Haram, and contributed significantly in making the group resilient, the anti-corruption measures of the government need to be strengthened through further

empowering the institutions charged with the government's anti-corruption fight, like the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) and Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB). The study finds that corruption in the procurement of the needed arms and ammunition by the military to fight Boko Haram debilitated the military's ability to eliminate Boko Haram, hence the resilience of the terror group. It is recommended that the Nigerian government forge the needed cooperation with leading world powers to guarantee the supply of the required arms and ammunitions with which to fight Boko Haram. This will strengthen the military and boost the morale of Nigeria's soldiers.

In the battle against Boko Haram, the periods that the Nigerian government gained the upper hand in the fight against Boko Haram have been periods when the government was able to get needed support from leading world powers. Due to the global nature of terrorism, defeating terrorism requires international cooperation with leading world powers. It is recommended that the Nigerian government should seek international cooperation with countries of Europe and America, if Boko Haram is to be checkmated. Accusations of human rights violations leveled against the Nigerian military in its prosecution of the war against terrorism have often hampered the much-needed international cooperation.

The Nigerian government must as a matter of necessity partner with developed countries with better knowledge in dealing with terrorism. Available evidence shows that Boko Haram's terrorist activities were at its highest levels during periods that Nigerian governments did not have the support and buy-in of international western partners.

During periods when international western partners supported the Nigerian government with the supply of arms, ammunition and military advisers, Boko Haram retreated. The cooperation envisaged should include military training, sales of arm and ammunition and sharing of intelligence.

The study also finds that Boko Haram may have been resilient due to a large number of out of school youths in the northeast. A lot of these vagrant youth known as 'Almajiri' are neither engaged in pursuit of western education nor are gainfully employed. Consequently, they become ready recruits of Boko Haram. The government must pay special attention to the education of this teeming population of youths and create employment to keep them busy. More schools should be built by government and made more secure. The three large scale kidnappings ('Chibok girls', 'Dapchi girls' and 'Kankara boys') of students which took place during the period under review is a pointer that the government needs to do more to have secure schools. Many young people have been discouraged from going to school, due to insecurity. Some other youths may have been lured into terrorism because of being out of school or not being gainfully employed. This category of youths easily are the foot soldiers that have kept Boko Haram going. It is recommended that school curriculum should also be tailored to properly educating these students about the implications and dangers of extremist organizations like Boko Haram.

The study finds that the government relied so much on hard military approach in tackling Boko Haram. While military power might be necessary to contain terrorism, the overly reliance on military power is not sufficient to defeat a terrorist organization with

extreme ideological views. The “fire for fire” approach of the Nigerian military over the past decade has not decimated Boko Haram as expected. Rather the group has become more sophisticated in repelling military attacks. The government, therefore, needs to direct its efforts to exploring other avenues to truly decapitate Boko Haram. This can be done through providing the military with the resources needed to prosecute the war against Boko Haram. However, there is the need for strong civil oversight of the efforts of the military so as to prevent the abuse of their powers. A strong civil oversight against the military will ensure that the military complies with internationally accepted standard rules of engagement while ensuring that the military is adequately equipped to conduct its operations.

While military power is essential in fighting terrorism, a soft approach such as negotiating with the terror group may be more helpful to attain the goal of containing Boko Haram. It is instructive to point out that the releases of 103 of the captured Chibok girls, 104 Dapchi schoolgirls and the over 300 schoolboys kidnapped in Katsina State in Nigeria, were secured, not with hard military fire power but through negotiations. Regarding the kidnapped schoolboys in Katsina state, the British Broadcasting Corporation stated, “the boys were released after negotiations with the kidnappers”. The report further emphasized that “three separate negotiations had taken place before the students’ freedom was secured” (BBC, 2020).

A softer approach to defeating Boko Haram is recommended. As a terror organization anchored on extremist ideology, the defeat of Boko Haram cannot be accomplished with just military might alone. The government must urgently fashion out

and start the implementation of de-radicalization of captured and surrendered Boko Haram fighters. There is the need to involve mainstream Muslim clerics and other religious leaders, Emirs, and respected tribal Chiefs in this process. The de-radicalization process should also involve the overhaul of the criminal Justice system to ensure that the right judges, security agencies and prison staff are put in place to adequately process surrendered and captured Boko Haram terrorists. Such a comprehensive program of de-radicalization would ensure that terrorists or alleged terrorists who are released are re-integrated into society, so they do not go back to join the terrorist group. Not much is currently known about the Nigerian government's de-radicalization process because of the secrecy that shrouds the process.

The government must also devise workable economic solutions to begin reversing the severe economic devastation caused by Boko Haram in the northeast of Nigeria. Efforts should be doubled to rebuild the economy of the northeast. This can be done firstly through the provision of adequate security in the region so that people of the area can return to their normal economic activities of farming and trading. Rebuilding the economy of the northeast would help mitigate the poverty in the area. The study identifies abject poverty as a factor that Boko Haram has taken advantage of to advance their cause and remain resilient. Many vibrant youths have been attracted to areas controlled by Boko Haram, in search of subsistence living and security which they believe Boko Haram can offer them.

Another soft approach to defeating Boko Haram that is recommended is the building/re-building of basic infrastructures in the areas ravaged by Boko Haram. There

is the need to improve or construct better roads and provide basic amenities like electricity and water supply. The government can achieve these with the aid of international development partners and civil society organizations. The military must guarantee the security of personnel and properties of organizations that are willing to work in these dangerous territories. There have been cases when, rather than cooperate with these international development partners, the military bickered with them, sometimes accusing them of working for the terrorists. On the other hand, some international development partners and civil society Organizations have often accused the Nigerian military of human right abuses and extra-judicial killings. This acrimonious relationship has only helped to make Boko Haram more resilient. It is recommended that the government should forge better working relation between the military and the civil society groups, so they can see each other as joint stakeholders in the fight against Boko Haram.

The study finds that a major factor in the resilience of Boko Haram is the fact that the Nigerian government has not been able to decipher how Boko Haram is funded. The government needs to do more to uncover and block the funding source(s) of Boko Haram. This can be done if the Nigerian government forges the right and effective alliances with local and international security agencies. In so doing, sharing of sensitive security information will be made easier and would also result in fewer feuds among security agencies.

The government should also involve and engage members of the public to assist its efforts against Boko Haram. Local inhabitants know their terrain much better than

security agencies and can provide information and sometime logistics to help the security agencies checkmate the activities of Boko Haram. It is instructive to note that the collaboration between the Nigerian military and civilians in the Northeast which saw to the formation of the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) was hugely successful in repelling the activities of Boko Haram in the northeast. There is, however, the need to supervise the activities of the CJTF because they have been accused of human rights violations, molestations, and other vices which Boko Haram in turn used as a recruitment tool.

Implications

This study has implications for positive social change, not only for Nigeria but also for the Lake Chad Basin countries of Cameroun, Chad, and Niger, all ravaged by the terrorist activities of Boko Haram. The findings from this research study have the potential of changing the way Boko Haram's terrorism is viewed and dealt with by the concerned governments. The study goes beyond previously held views that Islamic fundamentalism is responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram to focusing on other non-religious factors (including government policies) that have contributed to this resilience. This study has the potential to elicit a fundamental shift in thinking. The current state of thinking is that Boko Haram's resilience is due to its Islamic fundamentalist ideological leanings. However, this study has established that contrary to that line of thought, other extraneous nonreligious factors (including government policies) may actually have been responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram. Consequently, a thorough review of these policies, better implementation and focusing on other factors that have aided Boko Harams resilience, would be a good beginning in checkmating Boko Harams terrorism in

Nigeria and by extension other Lake Chad basin countries currently ravaged by Boko Haram's terrorist activities. The implication of this is that knowing the true reasons for the resilience of Boko Haram, the governments concerned would be better able to deal decisively with the terror organization. Another implication of this study is that the knowledge that other factors, including government policies, may have been responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram, would will elicit thorough reviews of these policies and may bring about better implementation.

The implementation of the recommendations of this study potentially has positive social change implications for the almost 3 million Internally Displaced People (IDP's) that the United Nations estimate to have been displaced from their homes, and another 7 million who are at the risk of starvation (Campbell and Harwood 2018). The implementation of the recommended solutions would bring about life-changing circumstances to the millions of displaced people in the northeast and other Lake Chad countries. The Internally Displaced People would be able to return home and engage in the reconstruction, rehabilitation and restoration of their socio-economic infrastructures. If Boko Haram remains resilient, the rebuilding of the economy of the northeast may not be successfully carried out.

A reasonable expectation from this research study is that it will galvanize the Nigerian government and other Lake Chad Basin countries to proactively formulate social-economic policies to address the non-religious causes of terrorism. It is expected that when the Nigerian and other Lake Chad countries channels their attention to the

formulation and implementation of such policies, the conditions of the masses would improve while the factors responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram would abate.

From the findings of this study, the socio-economic policies recommended, when implemented through direct government action, would address the grievances of the fringe elements and the unemployed youths who are usually targeted and recruited by Boko Haram. If the grievances of these sets of Nigerians are addressed, Boko Haram would be weakened and such government action would elicit positive social changes in the lives of those directly affected by the terrorist acts of Boko Haram. For other Lake Chad Basin countries, the findings from this study could serve as possible blueprint for the governments on how to deal with Boko Haram. The nationals of the Lake Chad countries can learn from the policy failures of the Nigerian government which are highlighted in this research study.

Finally, this study offers a new prism to look at Boko Haram's terrorism. By focusing on non-religious reasons responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram, this current study unveils a new body of knowledge, as an attempt to fill the gap in the prevailing thought which claims that Islamic fundamentalism is at the root of resilience of Boko Haram. The gap in knowledge which this study has attempted to fill is the view that something more than Islamic fundamentalism is responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram. This research study contends that the non-religious reasons may be more responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram than Islamic fundamentalism explanations, as previously thought. Therefore, the Nigerian government and other Lake Chad countries need to shift their attention to these non-religious factors if Boko Haram is to be

finally defeated. It has become imperative, therefore, to turn the attention of researchers and the Nigerian government to non-religious reasons that may have been responsible for the resilience of terrorism.

Implementing the recommendations contained in this study may mark the beginning of finding more lasting and holistic solutions to the terrorism conundrum that Nigeria is currently enmeshed in. This new body of knowledge will make for better understanding of why Boko Haram's terrorism has persisted, despite the military and policy efforts of two successive governments - Presidents Goodluck Jonathan and Muhammadu Buhari. It is hoped that the findings from this study have provided a new insight into Boko Haram. A further implication of this research study is that the fine-tuning or overhauling of policies directed at Boko Haram will help ensure the safety, security, and well-being of the nationals in the countries concerned. Finally, the study has provided the theoretical framework on which future researchers on Boko Haram can further explore and base their research on.

Conclusion

The topic of this qualitative research is Nonreligious explanations of Boko Haram's resilience in Nigeria. This qualitative research study sets out to examine whether Islamic fundamentalism has been responsible for the resilience that Boko Haram terrorist organization has shown despite Nigerian governments' military offensives and policy measures directed at crippling it. The theoretical frameworks used for this study are the Rational Choice Theory, Instrumental theory, Economic theory, and theory of

fundamentalism. Data collection was done in Nigeria through interviews (face to face and telephone), documents and audio-visual materials.

The study finds that other factors (including Nigerian governments' policies against Boko Haram) may have been responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram in the decade of its violent terrorist activities in Nigeria. Some of the identified factors are corruption, government's lack of pro-activeness, injustices and human rights abuses, unknown funding sources of Boko Haram, conflicting and poorly implemented policies, intelligence failures, socio-economic deprivations in the Nigerian society, especially in the northeast, among other factors.

While Boko Haram is an extremist Islamic fundamentalist organization, the study finds that majority of Nigeria's Muslims do not subscribe to its hateful ideology/campaigns and cannot wait to see the end of the terrorist organization. The study, therefore, finds that in addition to other factors, inconsistent government policies and their shoddy implementation have also been responsible for the resilience of Boko Haram. The study recommends a comprehensive review of these policies and better implementation, in addition to instituting other socio-economic measures that would serve to make Boko Haram less attractive to youths who are lured to their activities. Additionally, this study recommends a hybrid of hard military offensives and other softer approaches, if Boko Haram is to be weakened or checkmated. The recommendations made, if implemented by the Nigerian government, would not only go a long way in weakening or checkmating the activities of Boko Haram, but could also serve as blueprint

for other Lake Chad countries (Cameroun, Chad, and Niger) currently caught up in the Boko Haram terrorism saga.

The positive change implication of this study is that the findings offer a new prism to understand the resilience of Boko Haram. This new prism fills a consequential gap in the existing knowledge on why Boko Haram has remained resilient for over a decade. Previously, it was thought that Boko Haram had been resilient because of its professed extremist Islamic fundamentalist ideology.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

1. What do you know about Boko Haram terrorist organization?
2. When did you first become aware of the activities of the terror organization?
3. What do you think have been responsible for the exponential spread of Boko Haram?
4. It's now 10 years since Boko Haram began its terrorist activities in Nigeria. Why do you think the organization has existed for that long despite the government's efforts?
5. Are you aware of any government policies addressing the problems of Boko Haram?
6. Do you consider the policies to be adequate and effective? Has there been proper implementation of these identified policies?
7. Two successive governments (Presidents Jonathan and Buhari) have had to contend with Boko Haram. Do you think the governments have done enough to combat Boko Haram terrorist activities in Nigeria? What do you think could be done better?
8. What other actions or inactions of successive Nigerian government do you think have helped or hurt the fight against Boko Haram terrorism?
9. Do you think the Islamic religious affiliation of Boko Haram is a factor in the sustenance of the terror organization?
10. What is the position of the Islamic religion on matters of terrorism?
11. Do you think that Boko Haram is using terrorism to spread Islam in Nigeria?
12. What other factors do you think are responsible for the continued existence of Boko Haram?
13. Do you view any actions or inactions of government as being responsible for the resilience that Boko Haram has shown in the last 10 years?

14. Corruption has been identified as a major concern in Nigerian government circles. To what extent is corruption to be blamed for the resilience of Boko Haram in Nigeria?
15. There is a high youth unemployment rate in Nigeria. Do you see this as a factor in the continued existence of Boko Haram?
16. Do you think the social media/other media organizations are complicit in Boko Haram's resilience?
17. What solutions would you recommend for curbing the terrorist activities of Boko Haram?

Appendix B: Recruitment Letter

JIMMY IMO**28 Ben Magaji Street, Lokogoma, Abuja.****Tel: 0703-950-0723****Email: jimmy.imo@waldenu.edu**

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Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Jimmy Imo, a PhD student in Public Policy and Administration at Walden University, USA, specializing in Terrorism Mediation and Peace. I am conducting an academic study, tentatively titled “**Islamic Fundamentalist Terrorism in a Secular State: Boko Haram as a Case Study**”. The focus of my study is on the resilience of Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria despite several government measures against it. The research seeks to know if there are non-religious factors responsible for this resilience.

Consequently, I am seeking the views of Muslim and Christian Clerics, Public Officials, Civil Society Organization members and members of the Public through face-to-face interviews, to get their insights on this phenomenon.

As a leader in your field, your views would be highly appreciated. If you consent to granting the interview, your privacy would be respected and the interview would be conducted at your convenience, at a place and time of your choice. Everything you say would be strictly confidential. The interview proper is not expected to last longer than an hour.

May I point out that you are at liberty to turn down this invitation, as it is voluntary? However, your views would be highly appreciated as the study has the potential of projecting your views on Boko Haram to a wider audience, thereby aiding in the solutions to the problems posed by Boko Haram to Nigeria. It is also my expectation that the findings of this research would benefit not only Nigeria but other neighboring states through the initiation of new policy directions that would help solve the problems of terrorism.

I eagerly look forward to your participation. You may respond to this invitation by telephone or email to set up an interview appointment.

Sincerely

Appendix C: Nigerian Government Policy Measures Against Terrorism

NO	YEAR	POLICY	AIM/PURPOSE	REMARKS
1	1999	Nigerian Constitution, Section 11 of the Nigerian Constitution (1999)	The 1999 Constitution under Section 11 empowers the National Assembly to make law for public safety, law and order for the security of Nigeria	Ineffective in trial of terrorist
2	1999	NEMA - The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)	Established by Act 12 as amended by Act 50 of 1999 to manage disasters and related issues Nigeria.	Though founded by the administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo, before the advent of Boko Haram, NEMA has been deployed towards the management of disasters
3.	2011	Terrorism (Prevention) Act (TPA)	Policy defines terrorism acts and framework for investigation/prosecution and interdiction of terrorists	Marked the beginning of actual legislation against terrorism.
4.	2011	Negotiation	. Former President Olusegun Obasanjo held informal discussions with some prominent members of Boko Haram on behalf of the government but as a private initiative.	There were no formal results from this engagement. without formal or tangible results
5.	2012	The Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) made up of combined military force from the Lake Chad region – Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroun.	MNJTF was set up to counter Boko Haram terrorism in the Lake Chad region.	In January 2015 the MNJTF headquarters in Baga, Nigeria, was attacked by Boko Haram, local resident was massacred by Boko Haram. MNJTF has been reorganized several times under different commanders. Boko Haram has suffered several defeats in the MNJTF in the hands of MNJTF.
6.	2012	Negotiation and Diplomacy	The National Security Adviser, Colonel Sambo Dasuki engaged leaders from the Northeast to convey the government's willingness to engage Boko Haram in negotiations and possible amnesty	This effort yielded no dividend as Boko Haram rebuffed offer of Amnesty. Shekau, leader of Boko Haram said they had done nothing wrong and that it was the government that needed amnesty, not his group.

7.	2013	Terrorism Prevention Act (Amended) TPA	The amendment of this law made the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA) to coordinate all matters of counterterrorism	Captured Boko Haram members have been tried under this law.
8.	2013	The Civilian Joint Tax Force (CJTF)	CJTF started as a community effort in Borno State, became a joint effort with Nigeria security forces to fight Boko Haram.	The CJTF is credited with helping Nigeria military recover towns and villages from Boko Haram and rescued women, children and other victims of Boko Haram
9.	2013	State of Emergency (SOE)	President Goodluck Jonathan declared a State of Emergency (SoE) in northeastern Nigeria. The objective was to eliminate Boko Haram and disrupt its operational capacity.	Despite the declaration of State of Emergency, Boko Haram was able to launch successful attacks against the military.
10.	2014	Ceasefire and Negotiation.	A ceasefire was announced by a spokesman of the government of President Goodluck Jonathan, but Boko Haram repudiated and denied the existence of a ceasefire and willingness to negotiate.	The Jonathan administration engaged in secret negotiations with Boko Haram members to get the release of the abducted Chibok girls in exchange of detained Boko Haram members “The approach to the negotiations has been ad hoc, reactive, frequently secretive and highly controversial”.
11	2014	NACTEST	The National Counter Terrorism Strategy was first adopted by President Goodluck Jonathan’s government in April 2014	The implementation did not quite yield the desired results.
12	2014	Specialized Tasks, Training, Equipment and Protection (STTEP)	An initiative of President Goodluck Jonathan to bring an end to Boko Haram’s terrorism, in his efforts to end to the insurgency turned to the Specialized Tasks, Training, Equipment and Protection J. T. Omenma et al. (STTEP), a South African private military contractor, who assisted to degrade and reclaims some territories under Boko Haram before the 2015 general elections.	This was a South African private military contractor engaged to counter Boko Haram and recover territories lost to the terror group.

13	2015	Reinvigorated MNJTF	President Muhammadu Buhari reinvigorated the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) terminated STTEP, strengthened ties with Nigeria's neighbors- Niger, Chad, and Cameroun, contributed US\$ 100 million with a view to making the regional counterterrorism force more effective.	By July 2016, MNJTF recaptured most of the territory under Boko Haram, foiled many terrorist attacks, captured many terrorists, and significantly degraded Boko Haram's capability and dislodged the terror group from many of its stronghold. President Buhari declared Boko Haram", technically defeated" at this stage.
14.	2015?	Presidential Initiative for the Northeast (PINE)	Founded by the administration of President Goodluck E. Jonathan to alleviate poverty and illiteracy said to be motivations for terrorism.	Despite the PINE initiative, the Northeast still lagged in infrastructural development, children still out of schools and Boko Haram activities festered leading to millions of internally displaced persons
15.	2016/2017	NACTEST revised	The National Counter Terrorism Strategy (NACTEST) revised in 2016 and in August 2017, to provide the Policy Framework and National Action Plan for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE). NACTEST was designed to: Forestall; Secure; Identify; Prepare; and Implement (NACTEST, 2016).	The Counter Terrorism Centre (CTC) became institutionalized NACTEST. The ONSA responsible for the coordination and the implementation of the national CT strategy. To oversee security and intelligence operations in Nigeria.
	2016	Presidential Committee on Northeast Initiative PNCI	Responsible for developing the strategy and implementation framework for the purpose of rebuilding the Northeast.	Commission Set up to exist for an initial 3-year period, after which a long-term regional development framework to be established

16.	2016	Operation Safe Corridor (OSC)	Operation Safe Corridor was set up to facilitate the de radicalization and reintegration into society of “low risk” Boko Haram members.	17 MDAs collaborate to implement the tasks of OSC. They include: the military, security and other law enforcement agencies. Other agencies are National Orientation agency, National Directorate of Employment, Nigeria Correctional Service, National Emergency Management Agency, Ministries of Humanitarian Affairs, Justice, Women Affairs, National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, Northeast Development Commission, and National Identity Management Commission, among others.
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