



## THE EFFECT OF BOKO HARAM CRISIS ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES IN YOBE STATE

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**Abstract:** *The study assesses the effect of Boko Haram crisis on Economic activities in Yobe state. The terrorizing effect of the activities of the fundamentalist sect, Boko Haram on the socio-economic condition of Yobe states of Nigeria has become so devastating that some financial institutions and other business ventures have closed down in many areas, thereby causing relocation of non-indigenes to their own states. It is based on the above that this paper seeks to find out the extent the Boko Haram insurgency has affected the socio-economic situation in Yobe state of Nigeria. During the course of the study, it was discovered that the insecurity situation in the state was so tense that even the indigenes have started to send their children and wards to the some parts of the country for their education. At the end, the paper proffered solutions to the problem.*

**Key Words:** *Boko Haram, Socio-Economic activities, Yobe State*

**Introduction:** Yobe state is coping with a violent underground group, Boko Haram. The targeting of prisons, barracks, security officers and politicians makes the entire population feel unsafe, since violence has become unpredictable. The state apparatus is so visibly challenged that it tends to overreact and actually kills even more civilians than Boko Haram does. Boko Haram has deep roots in the social and economic marginalisation of a large section of the northern states' population.

The official name of Boko Haram that is object of discussion here is Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'await wal-Jihad which in Arabic Language means "People of the way of Prophet Muhammed (peace be unto him) and Community (of Muslims) in line with the earlier generation of Muslims" and not Boko Haram which simply means "Western

secular education is Islamically prohibited". Boko Hara has also been defined to mean that evangelism deceptively camouflages as Western Education is Islamically unacceptable (DCCN, 2009). Please note that the origin of the name "Boko Haram" have been traced to Media and Public/Community coinage (DCCN, 2009). In prosecuting their objective, Boko Haram are used to bombing Churches, Mosques, Police Stations, Schools; Universities inclusive and other Government owned Properties. As well as privately owned property without excluding innocent souls through the machinery of suicide bombers as well as slaughtering and kidnapping people; alien inclusive which have resulted to demise of the larger percentage of the Captives. The most pitiable fact is that most of those suicide bombers are teenagers which can be summarily

belief to be the resultant effect of brainwashing. It is my humble view that Boko Haram during the cause of prosecuting their objective has done great harm to this Nation order than other set of militants that have emerged in Nigeria.

The economic effects of militancy insurgency in Nigeria simply connote consequential effect on people and government's life which can be viewed from two different perspectives. They are the effect on the State that is, Nigeria and individual member of the State that is, Nigerians particularly residents of Yobe State. The militants; not limited to Boko Haram alone by their nature are used to crippling the economic activities of any place they spread their tentacles as well as led to migration of people from the affected place due to restiveness. No wonder the Nation Newspaper (2013:3) reported about the activities of Boko Haram thus:

Borno and neighboring Yobe State – the epicenter of the activities of the sect – have been crippled economically. Thousands of people have died in the sect's bloody campaign.

It must be noted that Boko Haram have not only led to closure and or abandonment of people's business activities within the state but also led to migration of people from the state as well as reduction of people's patronage of product from Northern Region because of rumour that member of Boko Haram are planning to send poisonous product from their region to other parts of Nigeria. No wonder Mr Umar Ibrahim Yakubu

(Leadership Newspaper: 2012) opined thus in respect of Boko Haram:

We discovered that 97 per cent of businesses were negatively affected by the security problem. Some of them had to close down, some of them had to retrench their workers, and others had to cut down in the number of hours of operation

For instance, commercial banks have been forced to review their operational hours to begin from 9.00am to 12.00 noon as against the normal operational period of 8.00am to 4.00pm (Mohammed, 2012:2). According to Mohammed, this is a part of efforts by these financial institutions to safeguard their business premises. Under this new operational arrangement, bank customers especially traders, find it very difficult to deposit their daily proceeds in the banks due to the limited banking operational hours that are no longer in their favour. Alternatively, these helpless traders have to hide their money in their shops. That is why in addition to the frequent suicide bombings, there are rising cases of shop-breakings and burglaries in the affected areas. The growing insecurity in the north has seriously affected the socioeconomic condition such that many people including businessmen are fleeing to more peaceful environment in the southern parts of the country. More so, the prices of foodstuffs have started increasing astronomically following the drastic fall in the transportation of the foodstuffs from north to the south where they (foodstuffs) are greatly consumed. This is because

the traders farm south find it unsafe to travel to north where they are sold. Consequently, these farm products are stockpiled wasting in the hands of farmers who rely on them as the only source of livelihood.

### **Origin and background of Boko Haram**

The group was founded by Mohammed Yusuf in 2002 in the city of Maiduguri with the aim of establishing a Sharia government in Borno state under former Governor Ali Modu Sheriff. He established a religious complex that included a mosque and Al-Majiri School where many poor families from across Nigeria and from neighboring countries enrolled their children, (Shehu 2012). Prior to this time, Mohammed Yusuf was born in Girgir village of Yobe state. The Boko Haram group started as Sahaba group in 1995. The main leader of the Sahaba group then was one Abubakar Lawan who latter left to study in university of medina, when He left, the older cleric conceded the leadership to young Yusuf who was young and versatile. But immediately Yusuf took over, the doctrine of the sect changed and he abandoned the older cleric view and came up with extremist Boko Haram doctrine (Shehu 2012). Mohammed Yusuf, because of his brilliancy was a favourite student of Sheik Jafar Mohammed, the highly influential and well known preacher who was shot dead in Kano by gun men while leading the dawn prayers in his mosque on the eve of 2007 Nigerian general elections. Yusuf latter fell out with his mentor Sheik Jafar, even before his death. (Shehu 2012)

stated that “available information indicates that the group emanating from an orthodox teaching slightly resembling that of Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The school of taught considers anything western as an aberration or completely Unislamic. The group views the western influence on Islamic society as the basis of the religion’s weakness. Hence their declaration that western institution and westerners are infidel and as such must be avoided by Muslim”

### **Socio-economic effect of Boko Haram activities in Yobe State**

The impact of the heinous activities of Boko Haram terrorism on the social economic and political structure of Yobe State is over-whelming and devastating. Many businesses in the state have been affected by the activities of the insurgence. Some shops have been taking over by the military personnel who have made it their base, forcing the businesses owners to either relocate or abandon it totally. Small businesses that use to thrive in the night like Tea selling, Restaurants, e.t.c. are no longer operating as a result of the security situation. Banks can no longer travel to local government council to pay salaries due to frequent attacks along the way, staff of the local council have to come down to the state capital for their salaries which is very risky.

### **Effect on the Economy of the North**

In his statement, the minister of information Mr. Labaran Maku while speaking to journalists in Abuja after the Federal Executive Council Meeting on February 9, 2012 said that the North is

losing heavily due to the violence. When you destabilise Kano, which is the commercial nerve centre of the North, you are threatening the socio-economic well being of the North”, he said “Kano is the economy of Chad, it is the economy of Niger Republic, and of northern Cameroun, so when you destabilize peace in Kano, you threaten the foundation of economic and social well-being of that region. It makes no sense to attack innocent people and destroy the North”.

Reduction of people’s patronage of product from Northern Region because of rumour that member of Boko Haram are planning to send poisonous product from their region to other parts of Nigeria. 97 per cent of businesses were negatively affected by the security problem. Some of them had to close down, some of them had to retrench their workers, and others had to cut down in the number of hours of operation. Also the insurgencies of Boko Haram have reduced drastically government derivation from the affected region due to restiveness in those places as well as reduced investment and growth of business in the affected places without excluding government executed project. Insecurity in Adamawa, Borno, Yobe, Kano etc alone has cost the Nigerian economy N1.3trillion (\$6 billion) as a result of attacks by the Boko Haram group.

#### **Political and Social Effect**

Although, recently election were held into local government offices and by-election in Nangere house of assembly constituency, but the security situation (if not improve) may not allowed some

people in other location of the state to perform their civic right in future election, especially those in Gujba local government area, because a lot people have relocating from Buni yadi, Goniri, e.t.c. to other part of the state. Another effect is that the insurgence of Boko Haram in state has drastically reduced government of the day’s performance in the affected area. Although it is trite fact that Nigerian politicians are fond of promising heaven and earth for the purpose of gaining people’s mandate;

The social effect of Boko Haram activities is that it have made some Non-Muslim who have not be privilege to mingle with Muslim in their life to belief that all Muslim are fundamentalist while some of them were mischievous with their opinion with little exclusion about few Muslims from Yoruba Part of Nigeria. It should also be noted that the activities of Boko Haram have makes some Nigerian who are not from Boko Haram affected State to be avoiding affected State to the extent that some Nigerian Graduate who are serving the Nation under the scheme of National Youth Service Corp (NYSC) are seriously rejecting being posted to some part of Northern Nigeria. The social challenges posed by insurgence of Boko haram can also be attested to by the mass movement of residents who are from other States of the federation; out of the North Eastern part of the country, especially Damaturu, the capital of Yobe State. And not only have that, insurgence of Boko Haram had reach the extent that suspicious and rumour of attack is the easiest

information to spread within state. The table below depicts series of attacks perpetrated by Boko Haram sect in Yobe State between July 2009 and June 2014.

**Table 1: Series of Attacks in Yobe State by Boko Haram Sect between July 2009 and June 2014**

S/n	Date	State	Type of Violence/Attack
1	July 2009	Yobe	Attack on potiskum, Yobe State Divisional Police Headquarters, three Policemen and one fire service officer died
2	March 30 2011	Yobe	Bomb planted by Boko Haram in Damaturu, Yobe State, exploded and injured a police officer
3	November 4 2011	Yobe	About 150 people killed by Boko Haram in Damaturu.
4	November 27 2011	Yobe	Seven people killed in attacks in Geidam
5	February 17 2012	Yobe	Two people killed in Geidam
6	June 17 2013	Yobe	7 student and 2 teachers were killed in GSS Damaturu

7	July 6 2013	Yobe	41 children and 1 teacher were killed in Gov Sec School Mamudo.
8	September 29 2013	Yobe	40 student of College of Agric were killed while 150 sustained injuries.
9	February 25 2014	Yobe	Many student of Federal Govt College Buni Yadi were killed
10	June 17 2014	Yobe	Many children were killed near a viewing centre in Damaturu

### Conclusion

The activities of Boko Haram have heightened serious fears among the Nigerian populace, especially those in Yobe state. The trend has led to loss of lives and property. Business ventures and shops have remained closed. Boko Haram has succeeded in instilling fear and hatred among the people who have been living in peace and harmony for decades.

### Recommendations

The present security challenges ravaging Nigeria is a multi faceted problem. Its solution can only be achieved through a multi dimensional approach.

The government should develop the political will to expose and prosecute the high caliber individuals both within and outside the government who has been linked with the Islamist militant group. This will cut the life source of the terrorist group and serve as a deterrent to other

negative minded individuals who might be nursing similar ambition in the future. In his view U.S Ambassador to Nigeria Terence McCauley said: We believe the Nigerian Government needs to have a strategy which addresses these act of violence which reassures the Northern population that there is a plan to ensure their security. Security forces will target extremist and perpetrators of violence in a way that does not inflict civilian casualties of damage properties and violent human rights. It is incumbent upon government to react with a broad based strategy by addressing security as well as the questions of development and poverty which feed underlying grievances that can promote acts of violence” (Olukorede 2012).

Many people have forwarded arguments that the present security challenges in the country is as a result of unemployed. These schools of taught believe the unemployed youths usually called Al-majiri in the northern Nigeria are vulnerable tools in the hands of scrupulous politicians who easily buy them off to secure their selfish political agenda. The federal government should devise an employment oriented programme specifically for the youths not only in the northern Nigeria but also in the south where there are a large number of graduates roaming the street in search of job where there is none. This is a fundamental problem that the federal government must have to tackle.

The federal government should embark on Re-orientation Campaign to change the attitude of

northerners to western/formal education. Most parents in the north send their children to Arabic schools even when they have the option of sending their children to formal schools. These set of children spend years in this Al-majiri school and graduate without career employability potential. Sometimes they attend some of these Islamic school were they are taught radicalism and extremism. This campaign will dispose them positively towards western education which will guarantee the future of these young children.

According to Agboti (2002) Political Corruption refers essentially to the fraudulent conversion of public funds for private ends. It also includes all manner of inducements and bribes offered to public officers in order to gain favours from them or to influence their judgments over issue that affect the public or one’s client. In Nigeria, the prevalence of corruption is so endemic that an average Nigerians has given up hope for its elimination due to insincerity and lack of political will on the part of the government.

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