

# **Making Sense of the Boko Haram Insurgency from a Historical Materialist Perspective**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Since the end of colonialism and the dawn of its independence on October 1, 1960, independent Nigeria has continued to be characterized with the existence of violent and militarized conflicts. The high point of this phenomenon was the emergence of Boko Haram in 2002 which was accompanied with a number of violent attacks and loss of hundreds of lives. Boko Haram is against western education and western induced policies and its attacks targeted both Christians and Muslims. This unending violence and attacks have gained the focus and interest of scholars who tried to explain the rise of Boko Haram by referring to different factors. One of the widespread explanations focuses on the failure of good governance in Nigeria. Good governance entails accountability of government, a clear legal framework embracing the rule of law, citizen access to reliable information and transparent, open government which includes an end to corruption. This thesis discusses the shortcomings of such a framework that explains the dynamics of the Boko Haram insurgency in terms of the failure of good governance. It employs an alternative theoretical framework by drawing on critical terrorism studies and in specific a historical materialist approach to terrorism.

**Keywords:** Boko Haram, Good Governance, Historical Materialism, Poverty, Structural Adjustment Policies,

## ÖZ

Sömürgeciliğin sona ermesi ve 1 Ekim 1960 Nijerya'nın bağımsızlığını kazanmasından itibaren, bağımsız Nijerya devleti şiddet ve askeri çatışmaya maruz kalmaya devam etmiştir. Bunun en önemli nedeni 2002 yılında ortaya çıkan ve batı eğitimi ve batı eğilimi olan politikaları destekleyen Hristiyan ve Müslümanları hedef alan ve yüzlerce saldırı düzenleyen Boko Haram'dır. Bu bitmeyen şiddet ve saldırılar, farklı faktörlere atıfta bulunarak Boko Haram'ın yükselişini anlatmaya çalışan birçok bilim adamını etkilemiştir. En yaygın açıklamalardan biri Nijerya'da iyi yönetişimin başarısız olduğu ile ilgilidir. İyi yönetişim hükümetin hesap verilir olmasına, hukukun üstünlüğünü kucaklayan açık bir yasal çerçeveye, vatandaşın erişebileceği güvenilir ve şeffaf bilgilere ve yolsuzluğa son veren bir hükümete dayanmaktadır. Bu tez Boko Haram'ın arkasında yatan dinamikleri açıklayan iyi yönetişimin başarısızlıklarını ve eksikliklerini tartışmaktadır. Ayrıca eleştirel terör çalışmaları ve terörle ilgili tarihsel materyalist yaklaşımlara odaklanarak alternatif bir teori kullanılmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Boko Haram, İyi Yönetişim, Tarihsel Materyalizm, Yoksulluk, Yapıya Uyum Politik

## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to the poor, unemployed youth, the poor market women, the alma Jiri's, the girl child, the proletariat or lumpen class, the weak, the soldiers posted to these war torn Boko Haram states, and the people resident in these Boko Haram states; they are the ones who feel the strong impact of Boko Haram

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

AG	Action Group
BH	Boko Haram
HM	Historical Materialism
IMF	International Monetary Funds
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NEPA	National Electric Power Authorities
NCNC	National Council for Nigeria and Cameroon
NITEL	Nigeria Telecommunications Limited
NPC	Northern People's Congress
PHCN	Power Holding Company of Nigeria
SAP	Structural Adjustment Policies

# Chapter 1

## INTRODUCTION

Nigeria's history since the attainment of independence from British colonial rule in October 1960 has been characterized by violence. Nigeria's first democratic experiment which was modeled after the British Westminster parliamentary system was terminated in 1966, by the military which inaugurated the regime of Major General Johnson Thomas Ummakwe Aguiyi-Ironsi. The crisis that followed culminated in a thirty months civil war from 1967 to 1970. The war marked the consolidation of the military rule which only ended in 1979 following Nigeria's return to democratic, civil rule with the emergence of Alhaji Shehu Shagari as Nigeria's president. Nigeria's second democratic experiment that was modeled after America's executive presidential system was similarly short-lived, due to the seizure of power by Major General Muhammadu Buhari, Nigeria's current civilian president, in December 1983. General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida overthrew the Buhari junta in August 1985 and after a failed transition to civil rule program which ended in 1993 ushered in an interim national government, headed by Chief Ernest Shonekan. The latter was overthrown in November 1993 by General Sani Abacha, whose demise in 1996 hastily ushered in a new successor General Abdulsalami Abubakar who handed over power to an elected civilian president, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo in May 1999. Nigeria's transition to democracy in 1999 did not come without a price. Side by side with the threat posed to democratic rule by the military, went the Niger Delta militancy, located in the heart of the Delta creeks. The high point of this phenomenon of Nigeria's

security issue which posed a threat to the Nigerian state, until amnesty was granted to the militants in 2009 by the late President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, was personified by the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND). The menace of the Niger Delta militants was eclipsed by the emergence of Boko Haram, an organization that mobilizes people by using an Islamist discourse and symbols.

Northern Nigeria. At its onset in 2002, Boko Haram limited their focus to the northern states of Nigeria and environs. Boko Haram considers itself to be the law enforcement agent against those who oppose the doctrine of the group, most especially the elites, both Christian and Islamic clerics. The term Boko Haram that means "Western education is forbidden" was used to mobilize many unemployed, unskilled and poverty-stricken youths to join its cause of total replacement of secular, Western oriented state. The seemingly harmless threat posed by Boko Haram became serious after the 2009 bombing in Borno State, Nigeria. Boko Haram is a notable organization that mobilizes people by using an Islamist discourse and symbols.

It is located in Nigeria's northeast, North Cameroon and Niger Republic. Among its objectives is the establishment of a pure Islamic state, with Sharia as its law. It seeks to put an end to Westernization<sup>1</sup>. At inception in Maiduguri the group adopted the name 'congregation for the people of tradition for proselytism and Jihad' to reflect its opposition to Western beliefs. The fragility of the Nigerian government and the improper disposition of security forces to matters of national security constituted the

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<sup>1</sup>Abdulwahab, T. (2012). The microsm of Global insecurity in Modern African nations, an example of Nigeria, 2007-2011. *Global journal of human social science, history and anthropology*, 11(1), 5.

driving force of more successful raids carried out by the Boko Haram after its first raid in 2009.

The crisis can be traced to 2009 when the Nigerian police arrested Boko Haram sect members who had breached an existing law making the use of bike helmet mandatory. They reacted by destroying government properties and burning down the Maiduguri police station, thereby releasing criminals under police custody. The Nigerian police retaliated by using forceful means to arrest Mohammed Yussuf, the presumed leader of Boko Haram sect who until his extrajudicial killing by the Nigerian police in 2009, had adopted a strong stance against the sorry state of affairs in Nigeria. He saw the Nigerian state as having no moral standing due to the poverty experienced in the country's northeast. Therefore, Boko Haram was a way to restore Nigeria to the post Jihad status quo.

The serious threat posed by Boko Haram in 2011 with the bombing of the Nigerian police headquarters, as well as the United Nations building, Abuja became intensified in January 2012, upon Abubakar Shekau, Yussuf's assumption of office as the second in command of the leadership of Boko Haram that saw the latter's resumption of attacks via YouTube. The terrorist group was able to draw support from unemployed university graduates; women and children. Boko Haram was able to capitalize on the fragility of Nigeria, using poverty, underdevelopment and poor leadership to garner support. Boko Haram has since evolved into a mini-state structure that is situated within a state, enjoying all paraphernalia found in a state<sup>2</sup>. Prior to the 2011 bombings

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<sup>2</sup>Alozieuwa, S. (2014). Understanding the Boko Haram crisis in Nigeria: A lenticular perspective. *Research institute for European and American studies*, 2.

in Abuja, Boko Haram had confined its activities to the North-East area of Nigeria. Their attack on the United Nations building in Abuja, (with Shekau describing the place as a ‘forum of global evil’<sup>3</sup>) invariably brought them to limelight. Ever since then, it has claimed responsibility for atrocities committed or linked to terrorist attacks in Nigeria.

An assessment of the literature on Boko Haram reveals that there are at least five perspectives that explain its rise, The first perspective to understanding Boko Haram cite religion and religious diversity, the second perspective states that Boko Haram is as a result of the political confusion in Nigeria, the second perspective trace the origin of Boko Haram to the political division brought about by the political class, the third perspective suggests that Boko Haram is an offshoot of Maitatsine revolt which started in 1986, the fourth perspective trace the origin of Boko Haram to the economic inequality as a result of the uneven distribution of economic growth and development, the fifth perspective is the good governance school. The first perspective is championed by Agbiboa and his colleagues (2013) link the rise of Boko Haram to religion and religious identity in Nigeria, however I think that religious conflict are not about religion and usually have nonreligious conflict, however religion serves as the unifying factor which supplies the fault lines for intergroup and religious identity to occur. The second perspective is championed by scholars like Ahokegh (2014) and Oluwaseun Bamidele (2012) who suggest that Boko Haram violently co-exists with the people as a consequence of the political confusion in Nigeria brought on by competition among the political class, which led to agitations among the working class.

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<sup>3</sup>Briefing, A. H. (2014). *Terrorism in Nigeria: The threat from Boko Haram and Ansaru*. London: The Henry Jackson Society.



However, I think attributing the rise of Boko Haram to the few years of democratic governance is untenable because it glosses over the fact that the socio economic condition of Nigeria was the result of years of failed military and democratic dispensations. The third perspective is championed by scholars like Abimbola Adesoji (2010), and Peter Pham (2012) who suggest that Boko Haram is an offshoot of the Maitatsine revolt<sup>4</sup> of 1984, but fail to provide an elaborate account to justify such a position, because in my opinion the Maitatsine revolt occurred in the 1980s and making an inference to Maitatsine as the behind Boko Haram insurgency is totally unrelated. The fourth perspective is championed by scholars like Ouwasegun Bamidele (2012) who cites the economic inequality between the north and south of Nigeria made manifest by the harsh realities of demography which transcends into high level of social and political dissatisfaction.

The fifth perspective links the rise of Boko Haram to the good governance literature; namely poor governance, illegitimate leadership practices arising from the selfish interest of leaders (material acquisition) and corruption is used to explain the rise of Boko Haram in Nigeria. This good governance account could better incorporate other accounts because there is no way the emergence of Boko Haram can be explained with good governance without taking account of the socioeconomic and political conditions or the religious animosity in the country. In this thesis I will engage myself with the literature on good governance because even though this literature is not the most wide spread, it takes into account certain conditions that are lacking in a country, such as

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<sup>4</sup> The Maitatsine revolt was a series of violent uprisings championed by Islamist militants in Northern Nigeria around 1980-1985, it represented the first wave of Islam instigated violence in Northern Nigeria it was led by Muhammad Marwa a Cameroonian residing in Kano state. (Maitatsine is an Hausa term for who damns)

economic conditions, poverty, religion, electoral democracy etc. which other literature on Boko Haram fails to acknowledge.

President Barack Obama in his state visit to Ghana in 2009 acknowledged the striking turn around in the political economies of Africa. He memorably gave the main reason for this historic advance: “Development depends on good governance; that is the ingredient which has been missing in far too many places, for far too long, it is the change that can unlock Africa’s potential”<sup>5</sup>. Good governance can be explained as the accountability of a government. That is a clear legal framework which embraces the rule of law, citizen access to reliable information, and a transparent government without corruption.<sup>6</sup> The World Bank from Ray Kiely’s standpoint interprets good governance as a means to an end, in which appropriate institutional structures promote the development of a free market as the main solution to the problem of slow growth and lack of development. Good governance became a central feature of donor driven state reform in developing countries from the 1990s and it includes the idea that premarket institutions will ensure efficiency and development<sup>7</sup>.

In this thesis, I will conduct a critical analysis of the literature that relates the rise of Boko Haram to the failure of good governance. What are the problems with the good governance literature? Is the relationship between growth and good governance as

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<sup>5</sup>Herbst, J., Kelsall, T., Hyden, G., Ran de Walle, N., & Joseph, R. (2015). *Good Growth and Good Governance in Africa: An Experts Forum*. Africaplus, 1.

<sup>6</sup>Ray Kiely. (2005). Globalisation and the Third Way in the 1990s. In R. Kiely, *The Clash of Globalisations: Neo-Liberalism, the Third Way and Anti-Globalisation* (p. 88). Netherlands: BRILL.

<sup>7</sup>Khan, M. (2005). Markets, States and Democracy: Patron-Client Networks and the case for Democracy in Developing Countries. *Democratization*, 12(5), 705-724.

consistent as is often stated? What about the impact of structural adjustment policies that have been implemented in Nigeria since the 1980s? Do they account for the rise of Boko Haram in 2002 by causing more deprivation for significant sectors in the society?

Good governance literature does not recognize the role of structural adjustment policies in the rise of Boko Haram. It also fails to appreciate structural contradictions as a major constraint inhibiting the actualization of democracy in Africa. Victor Ayeni opines that the problem of good governance emanates from the separate words; good, and governance. In his view, even though human beings are in constant search of what is good, coupled with the desire to achieve something different from the methodological working, yet, what has been achieved is a naïve over simplification of the problem of governing complex, developing society, especially those in Africa. Even though Africa needs those over simplifications, it should also be proved and made clear with the intention of better explaining the limitations to good governance. Using the World Bank definition of good governance leads to categorizing those countries that refused to embrace the market system as “bad governance”<sup>8</sup>

Thus, Carlos Santiso (2001) views good governance as a multifaceted concept, with restrictive mandate and institutional ethos that has been deployed by the World Bank as a means through which power is exercised in the management of countries’ economic and social resources for development. Carlos asserts that the quality of governance is measured by its democratic content, and suggests a convergence for

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<sup>8</sup>Ayeni, V. (2000). What really is good governance. *AAPAM Round Table* (pp. 1-8). Mahe, Seychelles: Commonwealth .

democracy and good governance. He concludes that to improve and strengthen good governance in developing countries, the World Bank should address the issue of power, politics and democracy, instead of its emphasis on aid conditionality. He rather suggests a radical approach in which donors should cede control to the recipient country within a framework of agreed-upon objectives<sup>9</sup>.

Merilee S. Grindle (2002), however, sees good governance as a necessary condition in today's world, but like many other good ideas it is not a magical bullet<sup>10</sup>. Hence, James Gathii postulates that the good governance proposal is a political compromise or an avenue through which those who continue to lose out under the stringent neo-liberal economic programs can consent to their control by the owners of the means of production. Laurie Nathan (1998) therefore suggests that the establishment of good governance has a positive relationship with disarmament, development and security, noting that militarization in Africa is a symptom of state crisis, which gave rise to a security vacuum that states sought to fill through violence<sup>11</sup>. S.M Omodia and Monday Aliyu (2013) agree that the failure of good governance or lack of people-centered governance has led to a scenario where the people, especially the primary groups have resorted to militancy as a means of making their voices heard by the government with regards to resource allocation.<sup>12</sup>Jomo Kwame Sundaram and Anis Chowdhury (2012)

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<sup>9</sup>Santiso, C. (2001). Good governance and aid effectiveness: the World bank and conditionality". 7(1), p. 2.

<sup>10</sup>Gathii, J. (1999). Good Governance as a counter insurgency agenda to oppositional and transformative social projects. *International law, law ecommons*, 558.

<sup>11</sup>Nathan, L. (1998). Good Governance, security and disarmament in Nigeria. *African Journal of Science*, 3(2), 8.

<sup>12</sup>Omodia, S. M., & Aliyu, M. (2013). Governance and Threats to National Security in Emerging Democracies. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*, 3(4),1.

in their book, *is good governance good for development*, provide a strong critique on the World Bank's worldwide governance indicators and associated research. They assert that conclusions derived from government effectiveness are at best "partial and, at worst misleading". Their conclusion is that the failure of good governance to explain the rise of Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria has led to other alternative ways of explaining this Islamic group.

So, if good governance literature is limited, what kind of framework can be used to make sense of the dynamics behind Boko Haram? In this thesis, I decided to use a historical materialist perspective that brings class into the study of terrorism to analyze the rise of the Boko Haram in Nigeria. Such a perspective would distinguish it strongly from mainstream and orthodox studies of terrorism which argue that the state has monopoly on the legitimate use of force and that terrorism is carried out by non-state actors only. Yet, "what is required is a class analysis of the state of terrorism, one that is historically specific to the changing dynamics of capitalist globalization, and one which considers the ways that terrorism can be a tactic of all sides in class conflict, rather than just a tactic of subordinate classes."<sup>13</sup> Bringing class back into the equation does not in any way mean class reductionism. Terrorism is not all about class, yet, what needs to be refuted is the implicit assumption that class has nothing to do with terrorism. The historical materialist (HM) approach to terrorism uses Karl Marx's materialist conception of history and argues that "government and the ruling class in the society use state terrorism to suppress dissent and induce fear on the population

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<sup>13</sup>Herring, E. (2006). *Critical Terrorism Studies: An Activist scholar perspective. School of sociology, politics, and International Studies, University of Bristol working paper series*, 79.

(citizens) while oppressed lumpen class vis-à-vis a membership of certain group(s) or organization(s) use individual terrorism to achieve political objectives, express grievances and lash out at societal injustice”<sup>14</sup>.

It is no coincidence that one of the worst forms of political violence in Nigeria today originated and continues to unfold in the most socio-economically deprived parts of the country. In the North, for example, where unemployment and chronic poverty are rife, radical Islamist groups have challenged the authority of the state. In the South, specifically the Niger Delta where Nigeria’s oil resources are located, environmental degradation caused by irresponsible oil practices has compromised the livelihoods of the indigenous people. This, in turn has given rise to various militant groups in the region, often consisting of unemployed youths, who have engaged in kidnappings, oil pipeline vandalism, extortion, car bombings and other forms of violent attacks against the Nigerian state and its oil infrastructures.

Historical materialism as a theoretical perspective was developed by Karl Marx (1818-1883) to explain the conditions of the material life of a society. Whereas most works have ignored the socio-economic conditions that gave rise to terrorism, Karl Marx’s historical materialism exposes the class nature of terrorism in the current capitalist mode of production<sup>15</sup>. Ogunrotifa (2012) thus opines that the discourse of terrorism cannot be isolated from its class nature and socio-economic conditions that gave rise to it. Indeed, Herring argues that terrorism needs to be studied from the perspective of its evolution as an instrument of power and privilege of the global north<sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid Ogunrotifa

<sup>15</sup> (Ogunrotifa B. A., 2012c, p. 227)

<sup>16</sup> (Herring, *Critical Terrorism Studies: An Activist scholar perspective*, 2008, p. 23)

## **1.1 Research Question**

This thesis has one main research question: What are the dynamics behind the Boko Haram insurgency?

## **1.2 Theory Guided Hypothesis**

In the application of historical materialism to terrorism studies, the hypothesis of this research states that Class struggle manifests itself in religious rivalry which serves as the rallying point for Boko Haram.

## **1.3 Research Methodology**

This thesis draws on critical terrorism studies and in particular historical materialist conception of terrorism. The aim of this thesis is to examine the rise of Boko Haram from a historical materialist perspective. It is important to note that historical materialism is a theoretical tool which Karl Marx, a German philosopher used to explain the scientific law that governed the evolution, development, and historical succession of society per time. Marx's view of the history of existing society is anchored on existing class struggle, which originated out of hitherto existing social relations of production. The historical materialism discourse of Karl Marx dwells on the dialectics of historical development in all societies as the locomotive of class struggle. So, the historical method also known as historiography better helps in shedding light on Marx's historical materialism theoretical discourse, because the historical method is generally used to explore either what happened at a particular time and place or what the characteristics of a phenomenon were like at a particular time and place.

In this research, I am using qualitative method and I will analyze Boko Haram through the perspective of Historical Materialism, because I believe that there exists an

objectively knowable, mind-independent reality, however, we need to acknowledge the roles of conceptual sources in perceiving reality. I will use the Historical Materialism framework that brings class into terrorism studies; this is so because the study of history should be done scientifically to unveil the law that governs historical changes. Such changes involve how the development of the productive forces brings into focus different production relations and forms of class in the society. Terrorism therefore reflects the social relations existent within the social classes deeply entrenched within modern capitalism which made the act of terror to be used by any of the social classes whenever their interests, rights and privileges are threatened. The ruling class employs state terrorism to suppress citizens' dissent and counter the revolt from the bottom, ranging from the working to the lumpen class, while the lumpen class comprising mostly members of certain group or organization employs individual terrorism to vent their grievances and lash out at what they perceive as societal injustice. In this case, terrorists could be state and non-state actors depending on the socio-political context. The usefulness of historical materialism in understanding the nature of terrorism lies in the fact that terrorism is within the society not outside it, and that terrorist is not limited to non-state actor (individual or group) but also institution such as the state itself. Therefore, terrorist is not a fixed label. Thus the hypothesis is that if the following variables interact harmoniously together, class struggle could be imminent.

In order to evaluate the dynamics of Boko Haram insurgency, this research examined the existing literature on good governance used to justify the emergence of Boko Haram before incorporating historical materialism of Karl Marx as a lens to understanding the dynamics at work. It employs the historical method, built on



primary historical data , including demographic records, such as birth and death certificates; newspaper articles; letters and diaries; government records; or even architectural drawings guided by the nature of the question being asked, to produce a more coherent and conclusive explanation. Thus in this thesis, historical materialism approach that brings class into terrorism studies makes use of historical methodology because this work aims to explain Boko Haram from a historical materialist perspective by making reference to the glaring empirical essence of historical evidence. .In order to provide an adequate analysis of historical materialism as developed by Karl Marx, and how it helps in explaining the emergence of Boko Haram the focus is on qualitative method of research with the use of secondary sources. Emphasis is on the political and economic implications of the failure of good governance principle in explaining the rise of Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria.

In the subsequent chapters, this research employed the historical method by first giving a historical background of Nigeria, followed by the economic and political policies pursued by previous governments and their socioeconomic consequences for the lumpen class or the non-state actors because it was at this stage that the foundation for class struggle was initiated in Nigeria. The third and fourth chapters discovered that the structural adjustment policies adopted by the Babangida regime saw the full display of a unified class protest against the government; however government employed other means to quell this conflict. This research employed the works of prominent scholars like Campbell, Adesoji, Ogunrotifa, Agbibo and co to trace the historical and religious developments of Boko Haram in Nigeria. It was discovered that although the main literature on Boko Haram cites governance failure for its emergence, Boko Haram has a religious undertone and is linked to class struggle due to years of

government failures. Thus Boko Haram was a way of lashing out at society which did nothing to alleviate their suffering.

#### **1.4 Limitations and Scope**

The limitation of the study is drawn from the fact that this research work did not fully utilize primary data, because those interviewed like the Former State Security Service Boss and scholars who had published works on Boko Haram in Nigeria refused to divulge information about them and their views of the dynamics of the insurgency for security reasons. Insecurity in the conflict zone and the phenomenon of female suicide bombers which bred suspicion of the female researcher also meant that data could not be retrieved from Nigeria. I made use of journal articles, books and online newspaper reports to overcome the limitation.

The scope of this study is 1960-2009. This is so because it is important to understand the historical and economic changes of Nigeria from independence in order to properly understand the forces behind the rise of Boko Haram. The historical background helps us to gain a better understanding of the peoples and culture that make up Nigeria, while the economic background examines the economic reforms in Nigeria till her adoption of the structural adjustment policies in 1985, in a bid to properly understand the impacts of these economic processes on the lives of its people. This thesis further examines the origin of Boko Haram in Nigeria with emphasis on its actors and the class that has its support in order to give a proper analysis from a historical materialist perspective.

#### **1.5 Thesis Chapterization**

The second chapter discusses how Boko Haram literature is analyzed, and further focuses on the good governance literature and how it makes sense of Boko Haram. It further examines the problem with the good governance literature and incorporates

historical materialism framework as a lens to understanding Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria. The third chapter aims to serve as the historical background of Nigeria, from Nigeria's independence in 1960 to the 1980s. While the fourth chapter focuses on the structural adjustment period in the 1980s, in addition to examining the economic policies implemented and who were the losers and winners of such policies. The fifth chapter focuses on the rise of Boko Haram. It further examines what it stands for and which sectors support Boko Haram, including the part of Nigeria they control. The sixth chapter is the analysis chapter, with emphasis on the limitations of good governance literature in making sense of the Boko Haram insurgency. It also attempts to examine how the rise of Boko Haram can be understood from a historical materialist perspective. The seventh chapter is the conclusion

## **Chapter 2**

### **HOW IS THE BOKO HARAM LITERATURE ANALYZED, FAILURE OF GOOD GOVERNANCE IN NIGERIA, THE PROBLEM OF GOOD GOVERNANCE LITERATURE? HISTORICAL MATERIALISM AS A WAY OF EXPLAINING BOKO HARAM UPRISING**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides the theoretical framework for this thesis. It is divided into three sections. The first section assesses the analysis of Boko Haram in the literature, and highlights the failure of good governance literature to explain the rise of Boko Haram, including the concomitant lacuna in this explanation. The second section focuses on the problems with the good governance literature in making sense of Boko Haram uprising, the last section focuses on the application of historical materialism approach to terrorism studies in making sense of Boko Haram. The chapter further incorporates the historical materialism theory to explain the rise of Boko Haram. It begins by looking at the framework used for making sense of Boko Haram, the reasons behind the formation and the rise of Boko Haram and proceeds to review the literature on the theoretical sources and evolution of good governance, and how it was used to explain the rise of the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria. In my assessment of the literature, different authors attribute the Boko Haram insurgency to different reasons. Yet, the explanation of the rise of Boko Haram in terms of the good governance literature is quite widespread. Therefore I have engaged myself with this literature, and elaborated its shortcomings. The second part of the chapter evaluates and criticizes the good

governance literature, including its explanation of the rise of Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria. It further highlights the partiality of the good governance paradigm, used only for developing and third world countries. The third section canvasses historical materialism as an alternative perspective to good governance by incorporating class analysis into terrorism studies. Mainstream terrorism is located within the realist and liberal traditions of world politics but its class analysis is necessary. Class analysis is historically precise to the changing dynamics of capitalist globalization, and focuses on an aspect of terrorism that is fair to all sides in class conflict rather than a specific subordinated class.<sup>17</sup>The historical materialist approach strongly recognizes the role of government and the ruling class in suppressing dissent and inducing fear in its citizens. The lumpen class and the members of certain groups use terrorism as a vehicle for expressing grievances and lashing out at societal injustice.<sup>18</sup>The chapter thus conceptualizes the emergence of the Boko Haram insurgency which needs to be understood not from the failure of good governance, but from a Marxist historical materialist approach.

## **2.2 Engaging with the Literature on Boko Haram**

In this section I will engage with the literature on the reasons behind the formation of Boko Haram. The literature shows that there are four different perspectives on the rise of the organization in Nigeria. Some authors ascribe the formation of Boko Haram to widespread socioeconomic and religious insecurities while its ideology is informed

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<sup>17</sup>Herring, E. (2006). *Critical Terrorism Studies: An Activist scholar perspective. School of sociology, politics, and International Studies, University of Bristol working paper series*, 79.

<sup>18</sup>Ogunrotifa, B. A. (2012). The Myth about Terrorist: Historical Materialism as a response to Realist approach. *International Journal of Social Science and Education*, 107.

within a certain community due to both a historical narrative and modern grievances. Yet, other authors argue that the rise of Boko Haram is deeply rooted in political ideology, namely resentment of the recent shift of political power from the North to the South, exemplified by the Jonathan presidency. In fact, Boko Haram is seen as a child of political rascality<sup>19</sup>. Another account seeks to establish a nexus between the Mohammed Marwa-led Maitatsine movement of the 1980s and Boko Haram, because of their shared objectives of purifying Islam<sup>20</sup>. The former had latched on the economic hardship of the period, which was complicated by the deteriorating conditions of Nigerians brought on by structural adjustment policies with attendant riots, to wage war on the Nigerian state. The third group does not actually pin the emergence of Boko Haram to any particular cause, while the fourth group is the good governance school.

In the first group are scholars like Agbiboa (2013), Roman (2012), Theo Brinkel and Souma Ait-Hida (2012), Adetoro Rasheed Adenrele (2012) as well as Stuart Elden(2014) who assert that the understanding of Boko Haram should be gleaned from the important role played by religion. Religion has always played an important role as an identity marker and a force of mobilization in Nigeria, especially with the current trend of Boko Haram terrorism. Nigeria is a pluralist country, divided between a Christian South and a Muslim North, with a history of chronic conflicts and instability, in which Islam and Christianity, the two dominant religions act as two identity markers in political, social and economic relations. Agbiboa (2013) further explains that the

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<sup>19</sup>Forest, J. F. (2012). *Confronting the terrorism of Boko Haram in Nigeria*. Boulevard: Joint Special Operation University.

<sup>20</sup>Adesoji, A. (2010). The Boko Haram Uprising and Islamic Revivalism in Nigeria. *Africa Spectrum*, 45(2), 95-104.

understanding of Boko Haram should be done between religion and violence, and traces its history to Western scholarship<sup>21</sup>. Furthermore, the role of religion as a legitimizer of power has serious implications for a pluralist Nigeria due to the dominant religious groups in the country who see God as the source and summit of power. This notion of power leads to the struggle for political leadership along religious lines, and partly explains why elections and political appointments are situated in areas where the interplay between religion and politics often come to the fore in Nigeria. Followers of religious groups more often than not campaign for one of their kin to be elected into political office. In many instances, “the resultant effects of these campaigns end in violence. In such conflicts, holders of particular identities as defined by the attackers are singled out for liquidation, forced to relocate and their properties destroyed. The collective nature of the violence is perhaps serving to strengthen geo-political solidarity”<sup>22</sup>.

No wonder, Aderenle (2012) suggests that Boko Haram’s origin could be remotely traced to Usman Dan Fodio’s Islamic fundamentalism in the 19th century which demanded the institutionalization of Sharia law because of perceived socio – economic injustice (wide spread poverty) and political ambition still within the context of religion<sup>23</sup>. However, Roman (2012) argues that the development of Boko Haram as a movement shows yet again that Muslims in Nigeria do not form a homogeneous block but are divided into numerous larger and smaller movements and groups that

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<sup>21</sup>Agbibo, D. E. (2013). no retreat no surrender: understanding the religious terrorism of Boko Haram in Nigeria. *African study Monographs*, 34(2), 403.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid (2013, p. 403)

<sup>23</sup>Adenrele, A. R. (2012). Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria as a symptom of poverty and political alienation. *IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (JHSS)*, 2(5).

mirror social, political and religious orientations and divisions. While some of these movements fight against the Nigerian state, others are deeply involved in governmental dynamics and politics of positioning. It is these differences in orientation that have been the seed of competition among Nigerian Muslim movements. The end product has been the bitter conflict experienced among Nigerian Muslims over questions of leadership and the interpretation of “Islam”<sup>24</sup>.

With a background of state failure, poverty and feelings of humiliation, the radical jihadist group Boko Haram emerged with the aim of overthrowing the government of Nigeria and establishing an Islamic state in its place. Boko Haram is rooted in the Islamic Yusufiyya sect, which is named after its founder Mohamed Yusuf. Theo Brinkel and Souma Ait-Hida (2012) agree that Boko Haram is indeed primarily driven by religious motives while its members who view themselves as believers of the only true interpretation of the Islamic faith are motivated by a Jihadist version of Islam. Their aim is to establish a Sharia-based Islamic state in Nigeria<sup>25</sup>. As Stuart Elden aptly observes, Boko Haram is a Sunni Islamist group, seeking to have Sharia (Islamic law) imposed in the north of Nigeria, and in some accounts to have a separate Islamic state<sup>26</sup>. Agbedo (2012) infers an evidence of admixture of politics and Islamic theology, with every statement underscored by such catalyzing events as establishing an Islamic state in Nigeria, attacks on the Nigerian state and her security apparatus, as well as release

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<sup>24</sup>Roman, L. (2012). Boko Haram: The development of a Militant religious movement in Nigeria. *African Spectrum*, 47(4-3), p.140.

<sup>25</sup>Brinkel, T., & Soumia, A. H. (2012). Boko Haram and Jihad in Nigeria. *Journal of Military Studies*, 40(2), 4.

<sup>26</sup>Elden, S. (2014). The geopolitics of Boko Haram and Nigeria's. *The Geographical Journal*, 180(4), 414-425.



of their members from detention. A kind of disjointed treatise garnished with fixated phrasal mantras usually follows such statements. An analysis of such statements reveals deliberate efforts by Boko Haram spokesmen, Qaqa and Shekau to convince Muslims in Nigeria and elsewhere to rise in defense of their Islamic faith. This predisposes Muslims to rebel against ‘apostate’ governments and to question any system or practice that constitutes ‘shirk’. This point was underscored by Shekau in one of his statements, which partly read thus: “We are calling on all Muslims in this part of the world to accept the clarion call and fight for the restoration of the Caliphate of Usman Dan Fodio which the white man fought and fragmented. The white man killed prominent Islamic clerics and emirs and also replaced the white Islamic flag with the Union Jack.” In like manner, Abu Qaqa utilizes a number of consistent words and phrases to dismiss any call for negotiation with the federal government<sup>27</sup>:

Almighty God has told us repeatedly that the unbelievers will never respect the promises they made. As such, henceforth, we would never respect any proposal for dialogue. In fact, we have closed all possible doors of negotiation. We would never listen to any call for negotiations. Let the government forces do whatever they feel they can do and we too would use all the where-withal at our disposal and do what we can... We are optimistic that we would dismantle this government and establish Islamic government in Nigeria.<sup>28</sup>

Jeffrey Seul (1999) once argued that religious conflicts need not be about religion, and indeed usually have non-religious causes. They are called religious conflicts because

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid (2012, p. 4)

<sup>28</sup> Agbede, C. U. (2012). Linguistic Determinants militancy and terrorism in Nigeria: The case of M.E.N.D and Boko Haram. *Developing countries studies*, 2(11).

religion serves as the unifying and mobilizing identity. In his words: “Religion is not the cause of religious conflict; rather for many, it frequently supplies the fault lines along which intergroup identity and resource competition occurs”).

However, the literature on religious violence in Nigeria clearly implicates the socio-economic, political and governance deficits as the major causes of such violence<sup>29</sup>. Though religion can serve as an instrument of social harmony in many civilizations, but it has towed the path of a stimulant for violence; hence it has been viewed as a double-edged sword. The literature in this area focuses on socio-political, economic and governance factors, rather than religion as the reason for the violent conflicts.<sup>30</sup> The literature agrees that Boko Haram is not only the product of widespread socio-economic and religious insecurities because the rigor of the North had co-existed for several decades with these so-called ‘evils’ without any conflict. So, why are all these catalysts serving as the reason for the emergence of Boko Haram? By and large, religion remains a powerful source of a people’s identity, one of the most powerful, and deeply felt as well as influential forces in human society, and Nigeria serves as an important example of religious identity and conflict.<sup>31</sup>

One constant factor that cannot be ignored with regards to Boko Haram’s emergence is the high level of relative poverty and inequality in the North. It is for this reason that

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<sup>29</sup>Terwase, I. (2014). Religious violence in Nigeria: Causal diagnoses and strategic recommendations to the state and religion. 104.

<sup>30</sup>Okoli, C., & Lortyer, P. (2014). Terrorism and humanitarian crisis in Nigeria. *Insights from Boko Haram*, 14(1), 43.

<sup>31</sup>Agbiboa, E. (2013, June 15). *the socio-economics of Nigeria’s Bok Haram insurgency: fresh insights from identity theory*. Retrieved from [www.google.com](http://www.google.com).

scholars argue that under-development is the main reason for Boko Haram's emergence. Indeed, there is a glaring nexus between poverty-conflict and bad governance<sup>32</sup>. Yet, the rise of Boko Haram is hinged on a lot of factors, such as socioeconomic exclusion, social inequality and youth unemployment.

The second perspective on Boko Haram is based on the ideas of authors like Ahokegh (2014) and Oluwaseun Bamidele (2012) that argues that Boko Haram violently co-exists with the people as a consequence of the political confusion<sup>33</sup> in the country that is caused by competition among the political class. It is obvious that antagonism between the big Whigs in the ranks of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) which ruled Nigeria for 16 years, 1999-2016, provides a potent source of insecurity in Nigeria. The authors see the activities of Boko Haram as a reaction of desperation, which is wrongly targeted at those who have no governmental security instrument to protect them. Boko Haram in Ahokegh's (2014) opinion is making a case against the government it opposes; that the government is incapable of carrying out its constitutional responsibility of protecting the citizenry. Arguably, the group raises the consciousness of Nigerians on the idea that the government is a failed one and should not continue in power<sup>34</sup>. Scholars in the fourth school of thought led by Oluwaseun Bamidele (2012) emphasize economic inequality whereby the dividends of economic development have not been distributed equitably. States situated in Northeast Nigeria

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<sup>32</sup>Olarewaju, J. (2014). Globalization of terrorism: A case study of Boko Haram in Nigeria. *International Journal of politics and governance*, 18.

<sup>33</sup>In Nigeria political confusion implies a situation in which the government is uncertain on how to effect its political promises to the people, such a situation could lead to failure of government in fulfilling its social contract to the people

<sup>34</sup>Ahokegh, A. F. (2014). Boko Haram: A 21st Century Challenge in Nigeria. *European Scientific Journal*, 8(21), 2-3.

fall prey to both demographic and economic realities which invariably feed into high levels of social and political dissatisfaction in these states. When this dissatisfaction is given meaning in the context of anti-modernization, civilization and radical Muslim ideologies, it creates a fertile breeding ground for catastrophic terrorist recruitment<sup>35</sup>

James Forest (2012) is not specific on the reasons behind the emergence of Boko Haram, generalizing, instead that daily life is difficult for a great many people, and more difficult for a large majority than for a tiny minority. Furthermore, the difficulties of life in Nigeria are greater in the north, which has roughly half the GDP per capita as the south. A legacy of corruption, infrastructure neglect, social deprivation, and ethnic identity politics combined with modern trends in migration and urbanization to create new conflicts and rising perceptions of insecurity. While bad policy choices have been made, not exclusively due to corruption, decades of autocratic rule have produced a political culture in which protests are seen as a subversion of authority. Investigating elites is difficult and dangerous, and in some cases elites sponsor sectarian conflicts in order to divert attention from their faults in a bid to remain in power<sup>36</sup>.

Significantly scholars in the third perspective like Adesoji (2010), and Pham (2012) have established a nexus between Maitatsine and Boko Haram uprisings. They argue that the Maitatsine uprisings to which those of Boko Haram is compared in terms of its philosophy, objectives, organizational planning, armed resistance, and modus operandi have generally been explained by a combination of factors, like economic

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<sup>35</sup>Bamidele, O. (2012). Boko Haram Catastrophic Terrorism -An Albatross To National Peace, Security. *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*, 14(1).

<sup>36</sup>Forest, J. F. (2012). *Confronting the terrorism of Boko Haram in Nigeria*. Boulevard: Joint Special Operation University.

dislocation, deprivation, and income inequalities, as well as poverty aided by local disasters, notably drought and a rinder pest (cattle plague) pandemic, all with links to Islam. Other contributory factors were the rejection of the secular nature of the Nigerian society and the impact of the success of the 1979 Ayatollah Khomeini revolution in Iran. Significantly, many of the explanations offered for the outbreak of the Maitatsine uprisings in the 1980s are relevant to the Boko Haram uprising<sup>37</sup>. Peter Pham suggests that the emergence of the militant sect cannot be understood without reference to the social, religious, economic, and political milieu of Northern Nigeria. He hazily links the group's origins with the Maitatsine uprisings of the early 1980s, which left thousands dead and cut a path of destruction across five Northern Nigerian states<sup>38</sup>.

It is in this context that scholars' like Babatunde et al (2014), Gabrielle Blanquart (2012), Sean Gourley (2012), Mohammed Aly Sergie, and Toni Johnson (2014) conclude that the understanding of Boko Haram should be gleaned from the way the Nigerian society is structured, which paved a way for frustration. The latter inevitably compelled the people to express their frustration through various shades of anti-social behavior, including violent responses that are directed at those perceived to be responsible for their predicaments or are readily available to be used as political agents for destructive purposes<sup>39</sup>. Gabrielle Blanquart further opines that Boko Haram is the

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<sup>37</sup>Adesoji, A. (2010). The Boko Haram Uprising and Islamic Revivalism in Nigeria. *Africa Spectrum*, 45(2), 95-104.

<sup>38</sup>Pham, P. (2012). Boko Haram;s evolving threat. *African security brief*, vol 20, p.1.

<sup>39</sup>Babatunde, M. M., Obong, U. U., & Olanwaju, M. K. (2014). Historical antecedent of Boko Haram insurgency and its implications for sustainable and educational development in North Central Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 5(22), p.61.

product of the political discontent and a change in the political landscape of Nigeria<sup>40</sup>. Sean Gourley sees the emergence of Boko Haram as the byproduct of the festering symptom of the underlying political frustrations and distrust made manifest in the occasional and highly visible rioting that occurs. A more complex symptom is experienced when religious, social, or ethno-cultural groups step in to fill the governance void<sup>41</sup>. Also, Mohammed Aly Sergie, and Toni Johnson citing Chris Ngwodo conclude that while Boko Haram cannot be neatly characterized as an insurgency or terrorist organization, its origins appear rooted in grievances over poor governance and sharp inequality in the Nigerian society: “The emergence of Boko Haram signifies the maturation of long-festering extremist impulse that runs deep in the social reality of northern Nigeria”. They thus view the emergence of Boko Haram as an effect and not a cause; because of “decades of failed government and elite delinquency finally ripening into social chaos.”<sup>42</sup>

Scholars, like Ahokegh(2014), Okeke, & Uzodike(2012)of the conspiracy theory school<sup>43</sup>argue that the recent shift of political power from the North to the South, exemplified by the Jonathan presidency<sup>44</sup> has made Boko Haram to be seen as a child

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<sup>40</sup>Blanquart, G. (2012). Boko Haram: Terrorist Organization, Freedom Fighters or Religious Fanatics? An analysis of Boko Haram within Nigeria: An Australian perspective and the need for counter Terrorism responses that involves prescribing them as a terrorist organization. *Australian Counter Terrorism Conference* (p. 2). West Australian: Security Research Institute Conferences.

<sup>41</sup>Gourley, S. M. (2012). Linkages Between Boko Haram and al Qaeda: A Potential Deadly Synergy. *Global Security Studies*, 3(3), 2.

<sup>42</sup>Sergie, M. A., & Johnson, T. (2014, 10 7). Nigeria's Boko Haram and Ansaru. *Boko Haram*, p. 2.

<sup>43</sup> Scholars in this conspiracy theory school assert that the change of political leadership from the north to the south was a precipitating factor in Boko Haram origin.

<sup>44</sup> (Ahokegh, 2014, p. 47), Okeke, U., & Uzodike, M. B. (2012). *The Changing Dynamics of Boko*. Al Jazeera Centre for Studies.

of political rascality<sup>45</sup>. However, it is totally fallacious to blame the emergence of Boko Haram on politics alone, even though majority of Nigerian politicians are high on politics as a result of the high standards derived from politics. This is so because Boko Haram was in existence even during the democratic tenure of late President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua.

Next, I focus on the good governance literature because despite the grievances cited by other scholars, the good governance literature is still worthy of attention, given that many scholars have understood the motive of Boko Haram's origin, objective, and growth in terms of a governance crisis, high unemployment, mass poverty and rampant corruption which epitomize the failure of governance in Nigeria. Fifty five years after the independence of Nigeria (1960-2015) majority of Nigerians can still not meet the minimum basic human and socio-economic needs necessary for their survival. A high proportion of youths lack access to food, quality educational system, and effective healthcare delivery system; pipe borne water, proper shelter, and employment opportunities. Yet, despite the existence of these socioeconomic problems, abundant wealth was being embezzled by the political elite. It is the inability of the government to bring about good and effective governance, and fulfill its social contract to the citizens as well as mass frustration that has resulted in violence, especially in the Northern part of Nigeria. It suggests that the failure of governance implies that those in political control have not properly managed the economy and other social institutions. Thus bad governance implies the absence of good governance<sup>46</sup> and the consequences of bad governance include incessant religious crisis, persistent ethnic

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<sup>45</sup>(Forest, 2012, p. 27)

<sup>46</sup>Ogundiya. (2010). *Africa Journal of International Relations*, 205.

and sectional conflicts, separatist movements and gross social, economic and political instabilities deepened by a legitimacy crisis.

The story of good governance is incomplete without understanding the story behind the political context that shaped the condition for the rise of good governance discourse. Good governance was informed by concern and implications for development, leading to the reformation of the Washington consensus which was prompted by disappointing results of the first generation market reforms. Essentially first generation reforms were the economic reforms implemented in the 1980s, yet by the 1990s it became clear that a new set of reforms this time targeting the political structure would be implemented. Governance is the management of resources and policy making by means of exercising authority (power). However, good governance entails a normative definition of the values according to which the act of governance is realized, and the process in which groups of social actors interact in a certain social context<sup>47</sup>. Ziya Onis and Fikret Senses also trace the good governance literature to the post Washington Consensus. They assert that it represented a “novel synthesis of the two previously dominant paradigms in development theory”<sup>48</sup>. The post Washington Consensus acknowledges the important role states have to play in overcoming market failures. By and large, they recognize the fact that avoiding the issue of state failure requires institutional innovation and democratic governance.

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<sup>47</sup>(United Nations economic and social communication for Asia and Pacific:, 2015, p. 1)

<sup>48</sup>Onis, Z., & Senses, F. (2005). Rethinking the emerging post-Washington consensus”. *development and change*, 36(2).



The World Bank, from the 1980s applied the notion of accountability to developing states because African countries to them suffered from a crisis of governance. Thus they defined good governance to mean “accountability of government, a clear legal framework to embracing the rule of law, citizen access to reliable information and transparent, open government which includes an end to corruption”<sup>49</sup>. From the 1990s, good governance gained widespread prominence because it was viewed as crucial to sustainable development and poverty reduction. It gained widespread usage within international organizations<sup>50</sup>. During the cold war, they were not accorded importance in donor-recipient relationship; the end of cold war ushered in a feeling that market based policies of structural adjustment policies had failed to resolve the economic problem which plagued different countries, and the ineffectiveness of aid in achieving its objectives forced the initiation of such a template. Bad policies and bad governance in recipient countries were considered largely responsible for these failures. Thus, good governance became conditionality for development assistance from donor agencies.

During his 2006 visit to Kenya, President Barack Obama observed the lack of progress made in Africa towards creating an accountable and transparent government<sup>51</sup>. He stated that despite Nigeria’s abundant human and natural resources, bad governance had made her backward. Campbell blames Boko Haram’s insurgency on chronic poor

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<sup>49</sup>Ray Kiely. (2005). Globalisation and the Third Way in the 1990s. In R. Kiely, *The Clash of Globalisations: Neo-Liberalism, the Third Way and Anti-Globalisation* (p. 88). Netherlands: BRILL.

<sup>50</sup>Udo, E. (2004). Defining good governance :the conceptual competition is on. *Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung gmbh*, 2.

<sup>51</sup>member, G. G. (2013). *European journal of business and social science*, 2(2), 58.

governance by the Nigerian federal and state governments. He emphasized that political marginalization of Northeastern Nigeria coupled with impoverishment partly led to the emergence of Boko Haram<sup>52</sup>. The immediate source of discontent between Nigeria's wealth and its poverty is the failure of governance at all levels. Boko Haram to him therefore provides a platform for youths to attack a system they believe is largely responsible for their plight.

Uzodike and Benjamin fault the emergence of Boko Haram in Nigeria on grievances which are highly localized and emblematic of the conditions of state failure. They agree that the cocktail of bad governance in Nigeria includes the widespread failures of state policies, inefficient and wasteful parastatals and endemic corruption, poverty, unemployment and extensive underdevelopment in the North of Nigeria<sup>53</sup>. They conclude that unless the Nigerian government alters significantly the conditions of state failure, the menace is unlikely to dissipate. But Forest asserts that the rise of Boko Haram may be ascribed to a group in the Northern part of Nigeria who feel politically and economically marginalized, a situation which was further heightened during the discovery of oil reserves in the Niger Delta. Even though corruption and state institutions are weak, the cause of the problem is not good governance.<sup>54</sup> Onuoha, Arowolo and Aluko concur that the practice of democracy in Nigeria over a decade ago has not yielded much to the need for good governance, blaming that on the weak security structure of Nigeria and the type of democracy practiced. They conclude that

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<sup>52</sup>Campbell, J. (2014). *US Policy to counter Nigeria's Boko Haram*. Centre for preventive action. North America: Council on Foreign Relations.

<sup>53</sup> (Okeke & Uzodike, 2012, p. 1)

<sup>54</sup>(Forest, 2012)

the pervasion of electoral violence, manipulation of election results and political participation constraints have made the attainment of good governance in Nigeria a tasking objective<sup>55</sup> which has placed her on the path to a weak state<sup>56</sup>.

George-Genyi and Member Euginia<sup>57</sup> Tolu Lawal et al (2012) liken the problem of Nigerian leadership to lack of good governance and government failures as the cause of insecurity. They conclude that good governance may be unattainable except with the emergence of transnational, selfless, competent and disciplined leaders who are ready to make sacrifices for the development of their country<sup>58</sup>. Also, the problem of development in Nigeria is linked with bad governance<sup>59</sup>.Declan (2013:p.80), while cautioning about the tendency to blame the rise of Boko Haram to bad governance, emphasizes the lessons to be learnt from the sect's threat, as the emergence of an Islamist movement that camouflages in the garb of radical populism. Boko Haram rather uses the economic deprivation theory- poverty in the North and mass disgruntlement, thereby capitalizing on government failure to protect the citizenry and

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<sup>55</sup>Arowolo, D. E., & Aluko, O. A. (2012). Democracy, political participation and good governance in Nigeria. *International journal of development and sutainabilty*, 1(3), 4.

<sup>56</sup>Onuoha, F. C. (2014). *Why do youths Join Boko Haram?* United States: United States institute for peace.

<sup>57</sup>( Genyi & Euginia, 2013, p. 63)

<sup>58</sup>Lawal, T., Imokhuede, K., & Ilepe, J. (2012). Governance crisis and the crisis of leadership in Nigeria". *International Journal of academic research in business and social sciences*, 2(7), 1.

<sup>59</sup>Adeosun, A. B. (2012). Nigeria @50: The role of good governance and effective public administration towards achieving economic growth and stability in fledgling democracy. *International journal of*

provide sustainable development<sup>60</sup>. Indeed, Omilusi (2013) views Nigeria as a failed state,<sup>61</sup> and the emergence of Boko Haram as a reflection of the failure of governance. However, Ogege Omodjohwoefe (2013) who presents Boko Haram as a reflection and not cause of insecurity emphasizes the frustrated expectations and state of hopelessness sustained. He recommends good governance as the panacea for terrorism<sup>62</sup>. But, to Odomovo Afeno (2011), Boko Haram's uprising is both a security problem and exposure of the weakness of governance in the country. In his view, the combination of accumulated grievances and religious extremism gave rise to Boko Haram, whose confrontation with the state is a consequence of the failure of successive governments to address human development and other pressing issues.<sup>63</sup> In fact, the literature on good governance in Nigeria is unending, yet the evidence suggests that the deteriorating leadership experienced by Nigeria coupled with the changing economic conditions. Therefore, the good governance literature is not sufficient to explain the phenomenon.

### **2.3 The Problem with the Good Governance Literature**

The good governance literature is marked with a number of problems and in this section I have attempted to address these questions. Firstly, good governance has been given a lot of credit for emphasizing government accountability and rule of law, yet its champions failed to address the fundamental power relations and asymmetries of

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<sup>60</sup>Ibid (Amaragbu, 2013, p. 8)

<sup>61</sup>Omilusi, M. O. (2013). Interrogating Nigeria's governance failure through the prism of insecurity. *in Global journal of human social science and political science*, 13(10), 1.

<sup>62</sup>Omodjohwoefe, O. S. (2013). Insecurity and sustainable development: The Boko Haram debacle in Nigeria. *in American international journal of social science*, 2(7), 1.

<sup>63</sup>Afeno, O. S. (2011). The Boko Haram uprising and insecurity in Nigeria: Intelligence failure or bad governance in conflict trends. *conflict trends*, 2.

power that exist between classes at the level of the nation state. This is despite the fact that it is the very power relations that need to be challenged for key development issues to be tackled in a comprehensive manner<sup>64</sup>. Scholars like Jomo Kwame Sundaram and Anis Chowdhury(2012), Ray Kiely (2005), Onis and F, Senses, (2005), Avellandeda, S.R, (2006), Gisselquist, R.M (2012), Grindle, M.S (2005), Resnick, D and Birner, R (2006),have negative opinions on the concept and reason behind the good governance agenda. Ray Kiely (2005:p.88) traces the concept to the policy reforms of states in advanced capitalist countries in the 1980s and 1990s, and argues that the idea was directed to make state institutions act more like the private sector via a process of deregulation, internal competition, and where necessary privatization<sup>65</sup>. The concept of good governance encouraged democratic institutions to promote accountability, rule of law, free and fair elections with more focus on market institutions by the developed world and the World Bank from the late 1980s.

The literature on good governance agrees that because of the mixed results from structural adjustment policies, even though such policies were not misguided, but as a result of a crisis of governance suffered by most African countries upon the recommendation of most developed countries' governments, the World Bank has since selectively made good governance the condition for giving aid since the end of the cold war. Thus, the World Bank views good governance as a means to an end in which appropriate institutional structures promote the development of an efficient, free-market economy. The World Bank sees in free-markets the main solution to the problems of slow growth and lack of development. States institutions are viewed as

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid (Onis & Senses, 2005, p. 2)

<sup>65</sup>Ray Kiely. (2005). Globalisation and the Third Way in the 1990s. In R. Kiely, *The Clash of Globalisations: Neo-Liberalism, the Third Way and Anti-Globalisation* (p. 88). Netherlands: BRILL.

both powerful and the clog in the wheel of correct policy adoption. The World Bank's focus on good governance is informed by its concern about the achievement of sustainable projects it helped finance. It is observed that sustainable development is only practicable if predictable and transparent framework of rules and institutions exists for the conduct of public and private businesses. Thus the objective of good governance implies a predictable, open and enlightened policy, together with a bureaucracy imbued with a professional ethos and an executive arm of government accountable for its actions.

The World Bank drew the line between political and economic dimensions of governance, because of its mandatory policy on the promotion of sustainable development, thus placing its call on good governance as an exclusive concern for social and economic development. Yet, the World Bank does not openly commit itself to democracy as part of the process of embracing good governance, because of its selectiveness in its recommendation of good governance by developed countries and its selective usage in dispensing aid since the cold war ended. The World Bank only sees good governance as a means to an end because it enables the appropriate institutions to promote the development of a free market economy. Good governance is synonymous with sound development. Ray Kiely concludes that the notion of the state in good governance literature is inconsistent.

According to Jomo Kwame Sundaram and Anis Chowdhury (2012:p.1), though good governance is a worthy objective, but it is not a clause for economic growth and development. Rather growth and development improve good governance, not vice versa, because developing countries lack the necessary resources required to enforce good governance. Such resources can only be found in the developed world. Their

conclusions suggest that “it is unlikely for a poor country to achieve enforcement of the rule of law or property rights that is significantly beyond its ability to pay for these public goods”<sup>66</sup>. Significant improvement is unrealistic as a result of these constraints. One of the problems associated with good governance is the lack of analytical differentiation between the political and institutional embedded in the idea of governance, as well as between policies and institutions. The idea of refining the economic performance of a country by simply transplanting or setting in place a set of formal institutions is a recipe for disappointment, not to say disaster. As a result the good governance approach to development operates within a limited idea of how politics and social processes reconcile the relationship between formal institutions and outcome. Little wonder why despite the growing awareness that good governance matters for development, there has been slight evidence of any enhancement in global averages of governance in the last decade<sup>67</sup>.

Despite the major inroad innovation towards promoting good governance, its objective is extremely elusive because good governance means different things not only to different organizations, but also to different actors within these organizations. However, the concept of good governance by most donor institutions highpoints seven key areas: democracy and representation, human rights, the rule of law, proficient and operative public management, transparency and accountability, developmentalist objectives, and a variety of particular economic and political institutions. Yet, these are all a reflection of good things that do not go together in a meaningful way because donors advocate and support good governance reforms as a way of promoting

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<sup>66</sup>Ibid (Sundaram & Chowdhury, 2012, p. 1)

<sup>67</sup>(Grindle M. , 2010, p. 6)

development and aid in the quality of good governance, but their fuzzy thinking on the concept of good governance affects their ability to do both<sup>68</sup>

There are no magic bullets, no easy answers, and no obvious shortcuts towards conditions of good governance that can result in a faster and more effective development of poverty reduction<sup>69</sup>. The good governance literature has always been plagued with controversy because in general, developed countries score higher than developing countries across a range of governance indicators, thus raising the question of why some countries have shown greater progress towards development. However, it remains unclear why developed countries have better governance, because they are richer, or economic development has brought about improved governance?<sup>70</sup>

Despite the initiative taken by donor agencies on good governance, neither the donor nor recipient governing agencies are fully aware of the present state of governance within the recipient agencies. This makes it difficult to set a clear target for achieving good governance, given that developing countries are practicing democracy centrally, but are not practicing democracy locally<sup>71</sup>. The concept and importance of good governance differ according to the prevailing socio-cultural and political context, such

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<sup>68</sup>Gisselquist, R. (2012). Good governance as a concept, and why this matters for development policy. in *United Nations university/World institutions for development economic research*, 21, 30.

<sup>69</sup>Grindle, M. (2005). Good enough governance revisited. *report for DFID with reference to government strategy paper*,, p. 15.

<sup>70</sup>Earle, L., & Scott, R. (2010). Assessing the evidence of the impact of governance on development outcomes and poverty reduction. *government and social development resource Centre, GSDRC*, p. 9.

<sup>71</sup>Waheduzzaman. (2014). Good governance in democratic developing countries ;A paradox. *School of management* (p. 1). Melbourne Australia: Victoria university.



that good governance has remained a donor buzzword describing the goals of international development initiatives, even as the concept is poorly understood.<sup>72</sup> In short, the term good governance has been abused by many indicators, and this has posed an obstacle to its achievement. Faced with this, many governments have also been heavily involved in conflict of interest between trying to do the right things and doing the urgently needed thing right. It is also not self-evident that improving governance will result in a reduction of the myriad of problems facing the society, even though the inroad innovations may provide short term solutions to them.<sup>73</sup>

The good governance agenda marks a positive step for the bank in many ways. Presently the agenda is a compromise between the bank's political mandates on the one hand and calls for greater political involvement on the other, which needs urgent attention on the World Bank's role, philosophy and governance within<sup>74</sup> because the popularity of the good governance literature has far outpaced its capacity to deliver. This is as a result of the problem and challenges of fixing a large number of governance deficits, particularly in countries with fragile, weak or failed states. Weak formal institutions of governance are associated with poor and developing countries, the poorer the countries the more susceptible they are to weak or nonexistent institutions. Be that as it may, the critical problem associated with good governance agenda in practice is the burdens its length places on countries that are in the worst position to

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<sup>72</sup>Resnick, D., & Birner, R. (2006). Does good governance contribute to pro-poor growth: A review of the evidence from cross country studies. *Development strategy and governance division paper*, 30, p. 40.

<sup>73</sup>Vries, M. D. (2013). The challenge of good governance. *The public sector innovation journal*, 18(1), 8.

<sup>74</sup>Collingwood, V. (2001). *Good governance and the World Bank*.

respond to them<sup>75</sup>. Thus, Chowdhury and Skarstedt (2005) see good governance as a multi-level continuum of national policy making and cross-cutting international regulatory framework<sup>76</sup>. The good in good governance poses an impediment to its broader application because allocation of resources is linked closely with the guarded terrain of national decision making. States may choose to avoid the constraints of globally determined rules of good governance. However, the inability of the good governance literature in explaining the class dimension of Boko Haram terrorism; that is, how social relations of production among different social class induce terrorism within and across states<sup>77</sup>

## **2.4 Historical Materialism Approach to Terrorism**

### **2.4.1 Applying Historical Materialism to Terrorism**

Due to the problems with the good governance literature in explaining the emergence of Boko Haram in Nigeria, this section incorporates a very unique theoretical discourse, one that has to do with putting class into the study of terrorism. Historical materialism better explains the emergence of Boko Haram in Nigeria because it takes into account the different class dynamics existent in Nigeria. The Nigerian state is divided into the haves and the have not. So, for V. Chibber (2011), Marx's theory of historical materialism centers on two interpretations, one that clusters around property relations and the other on the development of productive forces. Thus, historical materialism deals on social forms and transitions focusing on the micro-dynamics of

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<sup>75</sup>Grindle, M. (2010). Good governance: The inflation of an idea. *Faculty Research Working Paper Series*, p. 13.

<sup>76</sup>Sundaram , J. K., & Chowdhury, A. (2012). *Is Good governance good for development?* United Nations.

<sup>77</sup>Ogunrotifa, B. (2012). Research on Terrorism: An overview on Theoretical Perspective. *Journal of Asian Research in Consorttium*, 2(9), 1-18.

production relations. Furthermore, Chibber subscribes to the view that property relations do not create class relations, but rather class relations occur when power over assets is assigned to one group unequally which leads to class exploitation. Therefore, if a particular group has full access to resources, and the productive access is distributed unevenly, it creates resistance and class struggle. Class struggle for Chibber therefore forms the fundamental axis of political conflict in any social formation<sup>78</sup>

Against this backdrop, historical materialism focuses on the social discourse, and deals with the underlying social mechanisms which generate change in the form of causal tendencies. Such social relations are however inherently dynamic and changing. Historical materialism is profound to the characteristics of particular phenomena across scales from the micro politics of the profit margins in particular transactions through to the macro scale of the nature of entire historical eras, and hence, it can lend itself to the multi-scalar analysis. This is the ‘historical’ aspect of historical materialism. The ‘materialism’ part refers to its prioritization of analysis of the class and productive basis of societies in ways which do not merely reduce everything to economics and which see production as involving a wide range of social relations. Historical materialism seeks to analyze the dominant discourses that have enabled state and non-state terrorism and the costly, repressive practices of much of so-called counterterrorism. It also seeks to relate these discursive practices to sustained analysis of class and other interests and social relations within capitalism<sup>79</sup>. This includes

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<sup>78</sup>Chibber, V. (2011). What is living and what is dead in Marxist theory of History. In *Historical Materialism* (p. 64). London: Brill.

<sup>79</sup>Ogunrotifa, B. (2013). Class theory of terrorism: A study of Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*, 3(1), 1-34.

consideration of how they are used deliberately and instrumentally. Furthermore, adoption of a historical materialism perspective can facilitate a shift from Western-centrism and state-centrism to looking at multiple perspectives, with the state re-theorized in the context of the internationalization of capitalism and class relations at all levels, from the local to the global. Thus it moves the focus away from terrorism and counterterrorism as involving discrete events to be compared but events to understand as part of an interconnected, dynamically unfolding process of remaking social relations. Historical materialism has long reflected on the ways in which the dynamism of capitalism and its related social form of liberalism and its variants can be progressive as well as reactionary in their implication<sup>80</sup>. Eric Herring and Stokes identify it as being used as part of a process of destabilizing social formations that are pre-capitalist or capitalist in ways that are resistant to the more rapid circulation of capital. For example, terrorism, deployed by the state, by corporations or by fractions of elites in alliance with elements of urban or rural labor and reaffirmed through the use of the law, maybe particularly useful for overcoming the hindrance to capital accumulation posed by small-scale subsistence farming. It can be seen immediately that the distinctions between state and non-state terrorism and between political and economic violence get in the way of understanding this, as such violence blurs all of these boundaries.

Second, the ruling class of rentier states and in rentier economies can be inclined towards using terrorism domestically, whether generally or selectively. Rentier states rely substantially on income received from foreign sources such as by exporting natural

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<sup>80</sup>Lucero, A., & Recibido, M. (2010). On Walter Benjamin's Historical Materialism. *Astrolabio. Revista internacional de filosofía*, 128.

resources and by accepting aid payments, whereas rentier economies are composed of a significant degree of rentier state expenditure. The ruling class in such cases can more readily employ terror tactics because they are relatively free from the constraints of having to root themselves in, and hence not alienate domestic society. This rentier position gave Saddam Hussein a relatively free hand in Iraq, for example, in deploying terror to cow the population generally and in relation to the Kurdish and Shitte rebellions. Repression in post-invasion Iraq continues to be facilitated by the rentier position of elites. Third, the use of domestic terrorism may be part of an essentially domestic response of a ruling-class formation to being weakened by external pressure to neo-liberalize and in particular, to deregulate and privatize the economy and reduce welfare provision. The ruling-class formations within a particular state can use terror as one of their means of dealing with actual or potential opposition to that process. For example, although the wars in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda are often seen primarily in relation to ethnicity, the ruling elites of both states faced severe political problems due to requirements for them to engage in structural adjustment towards neo-liberalism. These ruling elites responded to their inability to deliver in financial, service and programmatic terms by redirecting hostility from themselves towards identity-based 'others' and licensing the most socially marginal to go on the rampage, terrorizing and dispossessing anyone who might even potentially oppose these elites. Fourth, the use of domestic terrorism by a ruling-class formation can be conducted as part of a strategic alliance in which an external actor plays a powerful role<sup>81</sup>. This can be seen in the case of the conduct in recent decades of US-backed state terrorism in Colombia. In this vein, Eric Herring (2008) requires a class analysis of the state and

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<sup>81</sup>Hayward. (2011). Terrorism and political economy. *Critical Terrorism Studies*, 6.

terrorism because it is specific to the changing dynamics of capitalist globalization. It also takes into cognizance ways in which terrorism can be a tactic of all sides in class conflict. Thus, historical materialism brings class back into an analysis of terrorism because it sees class as an important economic dimension that is not reducible to economics<sup>82</sup>

Indeed, historical materialism explains the discourse of terrorism that prevails in today's world. Thus, historical materialism uses a class theory of terrorism to explain Boko Haram's insurgency in Nigeria. Using Karl Marx's historical materialism, Ogunrotifa Bayo (2013) aptly observes that historical materialism centers on terrorism as an expression of an unending class struggle that is rather made manifest in the hidden structures of oppression and structured contradictions of global capitalist system. For him, the antagonistic class relations between the ruling class and the lumpen class translate into state and individual terrorism. Thus, even though most of the works on Boko Haram cite poor governance, religion, and political instability, the study of Boko Haram cannot be done without taking into consideration the class nature and the socio-economic conditions that gave rise to it<sup>83</sup>.

Thus, Leon Trotsky (1911) viewed the ruling class always in the habit of complaining about terrorism because they label all human activities of the proletariat directed towards the ruling class as terrorism. Justifying the need for historical materialism to

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<sup>82</sup>Herring, E. (2008). Critical Terrorism Studies: An Activist scholar perspective. *School of sociology, politics and International Studies, University of Bristol working paper series*, 79.

<sup>83</sup>Ogunrotifa, B. A. (2012). The Myth about Terrorist: Historical Materialism as a response to Realist approach. *International Journal of Social Science and Education*, 107.

terrorism, Eric Herring (2008) states that class analysis of state terrorism is very important but it has to be historically attuned to the changing dynamics of globalization so as to consider ways in which terrorism can be a tactic of all sides in class conflict, not just the subordinate or oppressed classes. Going further, he outlines a broad concept inclusive to the exploitative and hierarchical social relations. Thus in his conclusion, Herring states that the issue of state terrorism is deeply rooted in state practice<sup>84</sup>. Karl Kultsky (1928) takes us further by stating that even though there are economic conditions that influence the nature of men, they are however not the only thing that determine human affairs<sup>85</sup>. Nielsen (2003), , therefore, identifies mechanisms that have been a sustaining element of the capitalist order, namely authoritarian religion, the patriarchal family, systematically cultivated racism and an educational system more or less explicitly geared to indoctrinating the young with unquestioning patriotism. Thus historical materialism projects a growing contradiction between steadily developing forces of production and relatively stagnant relations of production whereby a new set of economic policies advances the forces of production initially but eventually turns into their fetters<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>84</sup>Herring, E. (2006). Critical Terrorism Studies: An Activist scholar perspective. *School of sociology, politics, and International Studies, University of Bristol working paper series*, 79.

<sup>85</sup>Karl, K. (1928). The aims and limitations of the materialist conception of history. *Social Democrat*, 6(11), 3.

<sup>86</sup>Nielsen, K. (2003). Does historical materialism imply socialism? *conference in honour of Kai Nielsen* (p. 3). Concordia: Concordia University.

Making inference from historical materialism, Ruth Blakeley (2013) argues that a collective agency on behalf of the oppressed has a necessary role to play in emancipatory politics. Thus emancipation to her is contingent on the capacity of specific agents located socially and historically, to identify practices that could bring about change in structures that might be transformed and appropriate agents that are in the best position to facilitate such change. Thus for Blakeley, historical materialism takes cognizance of the influence and effect of historical processes, as well as identifying the possibilities for social transformation in relation to state violence and terrorism as a social relation that is created by and at the same instance reproduced by earlier forms of oppression. She concludes by affirming the relationship between the state, capitalism and world order that is enshrined in the social organization of production.<sup>87</sup>

For Ogunrotifa (2012) the link between historical materialism analysis and terrorism is inevitable due to the capitalist mode of production which has bred conflict between social relations and productive forces, culminating in a continuous class struggle. Since the state is the main facilitator of these exploitative and hierarchical social relations, the capitalist mode of production thrives, thereby fostering private property in which losers and gainers are created. This leads to inequality among the classes and further alienates the rich and super rich from the have-nots. Such contradictions became sharper following the structural adjustment policies of the 80s. During economic crisis, government welfare packages are not guaranteed; just as the capitalist and pro-business class contribute to class conflict by making cuts and harsh economic policies. The

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<sup>87</sup>Blakeley, R. (2013). Human rights, state wrongs and social change: The theory and practice of emmancipation. *Review of International Studies*, 39(3), 4.



working and lumpen classes are the most affected by these cuts, thus making the gap between the ruling and lumpen classes obvious in economic decline. Ogunrotifa, therefore, opines that class conflict and social conflicts are triggered by harsh austerity measures and economic reforms<sup>88</sup>On historical materialism and terrorism, Ogunrotifa (2012c) asserts that there is no fixed label like a ‘terrorist’, terrorist group(s), terrorist organization(s), but identifies certain individual(s), group(s), or organization(s) (like the state) that employ two types of terrorisms, state and individual terrorism, to advance and protect their interests. He concludes that government and the ruling class in the society employ state terrorism to suppress dissent and induce fear in the citizens while certain individual(s), group(s) or organization(s) use individual terrorism to achieve political objectives, express grievances and lash out at societal injustice.<sup>89</sup> I also observed a link between Boko Haram and historical materialist account to terrorism studies because of the support structure of the organization. The majority of Boko Haram supporters is gotten from the poor in the society, women, unemployed graduates, the almajiri’s who are promised better standard of living by this Islamic sect, thus fall prey to their promises.

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<sup>88</sup>Ogunrotifa, B. (2012B). Putting Historical Materialism to terrorism studies. *International Journal of Current Research*, 4(4), 227-235.

<sup>89</sup>Ogunrotifa, B. A. (2012c). The Myth about Terrorist: Historical Materialism as a response to Realist approach. *International Journal of Social Science and Education*, 3(1), 107.

## **Chapter 3**

### **POLITICAL ECONOMY OF NIGERIA FROM 1960 TO 1985**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the historical background, I attempt an analysis of the colonial impacts and legacies in Nigeria in the context of her political and economic policies up to 1985. In effect, the chapter focuses on two important issues, namely the legacies of colonialism and postcolonial policies implemented by successive Nigerian governments until 1985 and their impact on the distribution relations.

The grouping together of people of diverse socio-cultural, religious and ethno-linguistic backgrounds in Africa by the British colonial masters was aimed to serve the selfish economic interest of the colonial powers. There is no denying the fact that the different ethnicities that were forced during the amalgamation of Nigeria in 1914 were not duly consulted. The attendant consequences of that infamous act have been the much contested case of state disunity, political instability, mutual distrust and suspicion between the diverse ethnic groups and affiliations that sum up the geographical landscape called Nigeria. There is no denying the fact that the forced and un-consented artificial unity of different diverse ethnic and cultural groupings done by the British colonial masters to ease their administrative and economic policy has become the trigger in a manifestation of various chaotic political and identity conflicts plaguing Nigeria's democracy. The manifestation of this act has been the unfair and unequal sharing of the geographical and social-political entity to favor the northern

domination of Nigeria against the other regions, coupled with the lack of developmental objectives in other regions in Nigeria, which has instigated an ongoing debate.



Figure 1. Map of Nigeria;source:[www.nigeriainfonet.com/images/Nigeria2.19877.g](http://www.nigeriainfonet.com/images/Nigeria2.19877.g)

The effect of these policies has been further intensified by the multi-lingual ethnic society that has posed a problem with respect to governance and administrative process which ignores meritocracy and encourages a system that places one tribe at a political advantaged position than the others. In light of the foregoing, this historical background briefly identifies the major ethnic groups and their relationships within Nigeria, and further delves into the political development and the effect of military rule on the Nigerian economy.

### **3.2 The legacy of Colonialism and Independence**

Britain's decision to embark on the gradual process of amalgamation took place in 1893 in order to pool the economic resources of its different administrative units in the area. The steps to Nigeria's independence became manifest on January 1, 1914. As Tamuno (1980) aptly notes Britain, Nigeria's colonial master had on that date inaugurated the colonial state of Nigeria when it merged the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria and the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria to give a common political head to the two formerly separate territories. The views and consent of the affected subject peoples were not sought and obtained. Amalgamation, which was guided mainly by the economic consideration of minimizing the cost of administering a vast African colony was therefore an imposition, and existed basically on paper, given that up to 1939, without a "uniform style of administration", Nigeria "resembled a federation of two groups of provinces". It is important to note, therefore, that Britain did not create the Nigerian state out of nothing. Amalgamation was facilitated by the existence of diverse peoples who were organized in different independent pre-colonial, socio-political units and state systems, but did not exist in isolation. They had intermingled and related for centuries to the point of evolving some common identities making for pre-colonial unity (Mordi 2005), in a compact geographical environment, which according to Ade Ajayi and Alagoa (1980) was characterized by the "essential unity of the river systems" that encouraged movements of peoples and ideas, as well as inter-group relations, both north and south and east and west. The geographical compactness provided by these natural connecting features meant that "culturally and economically, Nigeria was not really an arbitrary creation". Instead, evidence supports the view that the Niger and Benue Rivers had promoted trade and other forms of interaction among pre-colonial Nigerian peoples, who did not view themselves in

ethnic terms, but as distinct peoples who lived in multi-varied socio-political formations.

One important aspect about Nigeria is the fact that prior to independence in 1960, the Hausa-speaking people who built the pre-colonial states of the central Sudan in Kano, Katsina, Zazzau, Gobir, Zamfara, Kebbi, among others, were in the 19th century defeated and reorganized into the Sokoto caliphate, based in Sokoto and Gwandu by the Fulani. The caliphate was organized into emirates, headed by emirs, under an Islamic, theocratic arrangement, an expansionist scheme which was halted by Borno. To the North-east of Nigeria flourished the empires of Kanem and Borno in the central Sudan which had encompassed parts of present day republics of Niger, Chad, Camerouns, and Nigeria, an area of over 300,000sqmiles or 482,803.2sqkm with a history of revolts, wars and demographic changes (Lavers 1980). Mordi (2005), citing Smith and Abubakar notes that both Hausa land and Borno have a history of centuries-old interactions, encapsulated in the Bayajida legend of origin which is prevalent in the southern half of Hausa land. It was these pre-colonial groups that imperial Britain reorganized and grouped together as the colonial state of Nigeria in 1914.

Nigeria attained independence in 1960 within the framework of the colonial state. The main issue was that independence was achieved by Nigerians who had merely coexisted as mutually antagonistic ethnic groups, the consciousness of which had been instilled in them by their colonial rulers. It has been shown that the British in their African colonies infused common identities and solidarity in their newly created ethnic groups, but did much afterwards to exaggerate their differences and separateness. As the groups competed for the limited opportunities offered them by the colonial state, they had abandoned their deliberately constructed cordial, pre-colonial relationships

by which they saw themselves as related by common descent, and began to defend their own interests which were defined in political terms vis-à-vis other competing groups. Thus the issue of tribe became more pronounced. The Nigerian state did not help in this scenario with the creation of regional based parties to represent their interest at the federal level. Ethnic identity is therefore a colonial twentieth century phenomenon which has posed serious problems to the scholar , given the arbitrariness that governs its application to the explanation of post-colonial nation building problems, and the easy recourse of the elite seeking election or appointment to national offices to the manipulation of ethnic sentiments .Post-independence Nigeria which is Africa's most populous country of over 170 million people , is thus variously described as consisting of 250 ethnic groups, a democratic country operating a stable presidential system of government (inaugurated in 1979) since 1999, after sixteen years of military dictatorship from 1984 to1999.Bolanle Awe (1999) postulates that even though governance in the pre-colonial period enabled the participation and accommodation of the interest of all including women and youths, the subsequent periods witnessed the exclusion of the ruled from the rulers, an elite group, the British and their subsequent Nigerian successors who made the interests of the majority subservient to their own. The long period of military rule became the burning fuel to an already fired state. Other contributory factors of conflict; ethnicism and religion further intensified the crisis, which was further aggravated by the oil boom coupled with the subordination by the political and elite class of the lumpen class.

The major interest of the colonial masters was to make use of Nigeria's economic resources, the agricultural sector was the focus of the British colonial authorities, with the export of cash crops being the paramount activity. However, the emphasis on cash crops did not come without a price because of the devastating effect it had on the

production of food crops. The proceeds from cash crop exports were transferred to Britain, instead of being ploughed into local development. Bolanle Awe quoting Aboyade (1978), pointed out that colonialism created a set of administrative institutions that not only undermined local traditional democratic process but also mobilized the help of the local community for the massive, sustained development.

Thus, in order to assist the British rulers, the British led administration established a Western oriented educational system in Nigeria. However, the beneficiaries were located in the South due to the strong presence of Islamic rule in the North. This development led to an educational gap between the North and South. At the dawn of Nigerian's independence, due to the demand by the educated elite for independence from the British rule, it gradually led to ethnicism with retreat into ethnic group politics, which encouraged an uneven development, educational gap and the struggle for dominance. The new constitution of Nigeria at independence was a reflection of these feelings; thus for Bolanle Awe (1999) colonialism sowed the seed of conflict on many fronts. Politically, colonial rule alienated the ruled from the rulers; it also excluded different segments of people from one another. Even the educational policies adopted created a bridge between the North and South, with a strong consequence for leadership struggle in the government and economy of the Nigerian state. Also, the disparity in developmental terms between the urban and rural areas led to alienation and conflict between the richer and poorer classes, and/or urban and rural dwellers. Thus at independence, the newly elected leaders of Nigeria while paying lip service to equality and embracing all segments of the society saw the new state as an instrument of their will. Even the constitution at independence excluded women in the North from political participation, especially in matters pertinent to their lives. They were denied franchise alongside lunatics and children. Thus, Nigeria at independence adopted a

development plan with the expression of high hopes for the development of a just and fair egalitarian society, but the opposite was witnessed. Indeed, these new leaders at independence failed to involve the masses of people whose lives were being planned. Due to an emphasis by the political leaders at and after independence on growth and development based on Gross National Product per capita calculations and capital accumulation at the detriment of sustainable development, it was not a surprise when majority of Nigerians at independence turned to other avenues such as their communities and ethnic groupings to seek fulfillment.

The economic development policies carried out by the political leaders at independence went towards a downward slope at the discovery of petroleum. Rather than improving the standard of living for Nigerians, it made it worse. One important point to highlight is the fact that even though the discovery of oil led to the establishment of many development projects; road constructions; industries which created employment for skilled and unskilled labor, it also created rural-urban migration, thus leading to the decline of agricultural production in the Nigerian economy. Nigeria became a net importer of food items such as sugar, rice, beans which were otherwise obtainable locally at prices cheaper than purchased. Thus, the oil boom of the 1970s served as an instigator in the conflict and divergence between the elite and the proletariat.

It is in line with this that the military seized power with a view to correct the wrongs of civilian rule. Thus the first republic crumbled due to a lack of vision, opportunism and the acceptance of the logic of the colonial political system by the elite and the proletariat. Other factors such as the cleavage along regionalism, religion and ethno-cultural lines provided the opportunity for the triumph of ethnic chauvinism and



parochialism, irredentism and geopolitical sentiment. The military was however not without fault, it also played a contributory role in the heightening of conflict and divergence within the Nigerian society because of the exclusion of the vast majority of Nigerians from modern governmental processes. The government after independence till the military coup still operated within the colonial frame because it was a government of the minority.

### **3.3 Political and Economic Development of Nigeria from 1960-1985**

Nigeria's attainment of independence on October 1, 1960, which was a culmination of post- World War II constitutional nationalism , had brought with it high expectations that Africa's most populous country, with huge resources would make a great success of its new-found freedom, and democracy . However, the expectations quickly turned out to be misplaced. Between 1962 and 1965, Nigeria's first democratic government since 1914, grappled with one crisis after another. The teething problem overwhelmed the polity, and brought about a bloody military coup d'état on January 15, 1966, which terminated what is generally regarded as Nigeria's First Republic, 1960-1966.

Scholars (Post &Vickers 1973, Dudley 1982, Osaghae 2011) identify the genesis of the crisis with the internal crisis which engulfed the Action Group party in power in Western Nigeria in 1962, culminating in the imprisonment of Obafemi Awolowo, its leader who was also the leader of the opposition in Nigeria's Westminster Parliamentary democratic system. There was also the crisis over the conduct of a national population census in 1962-63, which was politicized because its outcome determined constituency delimitations, and, therefore, given Nigeria's ethno-regional politics, the character and composition of the central government to be produced in general elections scheduled for December 1964. The latter election became

contentious and brought the country on the brink of a precipice. The two parties which controlled Nigeria's central government, the Northern People's Congress (NPC) and the National Convention of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) that had contested the elections on the basis of alliance of parties had, through opportunistic compromises made up a unitary government. It was expected that they would demonstrate their strength and conclusively resolve their contest for supremacy in the 1965 West Regional Parliamentary election. The latter was rigged and frustrated the aspirations of the NCNC to entrench itself in power in subsequent elections, in addition to frustrating Western Nigerians' expectations of an opportunity to demonstrate solidarity with their jailed leader. Violence, including arson and killings, erupted in the region, and culminated in the military seizure of power in January 1966.

The crisis which bedeviled Nigeria's First Republic has been attributed to a number of reasons. One, the general election of 1959 that produced Nigeria's first post-independence government was the first democratic election in Nigeria since the amalgamation of 1914. Consequently, Nigeria's first post-independence leaders had no exposure and experience in democratic governance, given that colonial rule did not consult properly with the people. Besides, Nigerian politics was ethno-regional in character, not only because of the effects of especially the 1946 Richards and 1951 Macpherson constitutions on promoting and consolidating parochialism. It was also due to the scuttling of accentuation on national consciousness by the introduction of carpet-crossing in the Western Region by the Awolowo-led Action Group to frustrate Azikiwe, Nigeria's foremost nationalist from going into the Western House of Assembly in 1951. Abubakar (2008) notes that the "episode marked a regrettable turning point in the history of politics and parliamentary democracy in Nigeria," given that subsequently, each of Nigeria's three regions at the time "became the ethnic nest

of the predominant groups within it and ethnicity became the bane of Nigeria's politics" .

Given the ethnicity and suspicion which characterized Nigerian politics, the 1959 elections could not produce a national party with a clear majority in parliament to single-handedly form the first government of post-colonial Nigeria. Nigeria's first democratic government was, therefore, led by a coalition of parties, namely the NPC and NCNC, even though Dudley (as cited by) Osaghae (2011) is inclined to believe that NCNC-AG coalition would have been more national, given their spread. Other considerations, particularly the need not to estrange the Northern Region, whose leaders could opt not to accept independence "if they did not control the federal government, or were not at the very least, part of it", became paramount, and produced a coalition government of "strange bedfellows and even serious rivals". Indeed, the last British Governor-General of colonial Nigeria, Sir James Robertson had foreclosed the possibility of an AG-NCNC coalition government when he invited Sir Abubakar to lead the new government as prime minister before all the seats in the election were declared, thereby pre-empting the outcome of the process and acting "without due constitutional propriety". By his action, he "ensured that no other ruling coalition could emerge without creating a political crisis".

It has been observed that the NCNC had rejected the AG's offer to form the coalition government with it because of narrow calculations of greater prospects of payoffs from NCNC-NPC government. However, the calculations failed to materialize in the form the NCNC had envisaged. The NCNC, therefore, sought to extend its power base in the Western Region, where it constituted the official opposition party. Hence, the crisis over the 1963 census and the desparations over the 1964 general elections and the

political involvement of the military in settling disputes, which culminated into the eventual military seizure of power in January 1966, in the aftermath of the 1965 West Regional Parliamentary elections, thus bringing to an end “what many had come to see as an insufferable government”.

Nigerian politics would conform to the patterns and directions set by the events and activities of the politicians of the First Republic, namely narrow calculations to oil the patron-client relationship which would satisfy elite demands and assure them of the support of their supporters. The result was that the elite competition for resource allocation and accumulation diverted Nigeria from the path of development, and sustained a vicious cycle of crisis, which culminated in a civil war 1967-1970, and years of military rule. Not even the splitting of Nigeria into smaller political divisions from its three- regional structure to 36 states could exorcize the ghost of ethnicity, regional thinking, and parochialism from the polity. Instead, the emphasis on the sharing of federal resources and revenues, as well as distribution of offices to reflect federal character did not include the proletariat whose interest the political class vowed to protect.

As a consequence, Nigeria’s huge oil resources and accruing revenues did not lead to an enhanced quality of life for the citizenry. It is estimated that oil accounts for over eighty percent of Nigeria’s federally collected revenues, and ninety percent of foreign exchange earnings. Nigeria’s fortune as an oil producing country had peaked in the early 1970’s in the wake of the Arab-Israeli war. Oil revenue thus rose rapidly from some paltry hundred million naira to over four billion naira in 1975, rising to ten billion naira in 1979 and fifteen billion naira in 1980). Yet, Nigeria did not control oil production and processing, being content to collect rent from foreign multinational oil

companies. Nor were the huge earnings from oil deployed to the betterment of the lots of Nigerians. Instead, oil wealth bred and sustained corruption and the struggle for the control of power which became an instrument to recruit into and eliminate clients out of the state apparatus. This was reflected in the struggle for revenue allocation between the federal government and other levels or tiers, and between the federal government and oil producing states, as well as between oil producing states and non-oil producing states, federal government and oil producing minorities and oil producing minorities with oil multinationals. As Obi (1998) aptly surmises; “These oil related battles” involving different strata of the state center on “the distribution of spoils”, with the attendant nexus between oil revenue and the crisis of Nigerian federalism.

The fortunes of Nigeria took a nose dive in the early 1980’s due to a glut in the international oil market vis-à-vis increased demand for domestic consumption of oil in Nigeria which translated into increased volumes of petroleum products provided to satisfy the demand. To meet the challenge, the government effected an upward adjustment in the prices of petroleum products, even as the government equally resorted to massive imports of petroleum products to augment dwindling local production. Thus, the per liter price of premium motor spirit (PMS) increased from five kobo in 1975 to 70 kobo in 1991, rising to 22 naira in 2000, or 3000% increase. During the same period, the national currency was massively devalued vis-à-vis the American dollar, just as the inflation rate increased from 13% to 44.5%. In effect, the incidence of poverty increased among vulnerable groups, unable to satisfy their basic necessities of life, and exposed to repugnant illiteracy levels, high infant mortality, malnutrition, and environmental degradation.

Consequently, oil wealth, rather than promote sustained economic growth, had ushered Nigerians into a period of poverty and misery. The military government of Nigeria had squandered the huge earnings from oil, rather than invest in manufacturing and uplifting of the standard of living of the ordinary Nigerian. It has been noted that huge oil wealth is a means of sustaining autocratic regimes in power, and does a greater damage to democracy by facilitating corruption, and turning out to be a curse for the vast majority of the citizenry.

In 1982, the attendant situation in Nigeria was characterized by the World Bank as “Poverty in the Midst of Plenty” (cited by Tella 2012: 59). The democratic regime that took office from the military, which had at any rate handed over a disorderly society, characterized by breakdown of discipline, and widespread corruption that was promoted to “a way of life”, unleashed even a greater profligacy and corruption on the polity. As the elite class they failed to pay workers’ salaries, retrenched a large number of the workers, and called on the poor to make sacrifices, if the economy would not collapse. Even as workers were retrenched the size of government was bloated. For instance, the National Party of Nigeria-led federal government in 1983 appointed at least forty federal ministers, and sponsored legislators and top government officials on recurring overseas trips, which attracted huge allowances. This mismanagement of the economy meant a drastic decline in Nigeria’s Foreign Reserves from N5.462 billion in 1980 to N798.5 million, hardly enough to finance one month’s imports in 1983. Conversely, Nigeria’s external debt doubled from US \$9 billion in 1980 to about US \$18 billion in 1983. In fact, in spite of huge earnings of N56 billion at the end of 1983, the federal government left a total of N17.7 billion in external debt. Thus, oil glut was only a partial explanation for Nigeria’s economic crisis of the 1980s. This set the stage for the adoption of the Structural Adjustment Programs (SAP) in Nigeria.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

By and large, colonialism has been the most important aspect of contemporary identities and identity conflict within the Nigerian society. By fusing together various Nigerian groups into an artificial political and cultural entity, the British colonial overlords set the catalyst for intergroup competition and power mobilization for scarce resources in the Nigerian state, thereby indirectly promoting ethnic conflict. Ethnicity played a decisive role in the events that led to the Nigerian civil war; ethnicity has also played a major role in Zaire conflict (Congo). Colonial institutions are seen as an important determinant of post-independence level of political stability, economic growth, and public goods provision. The ostensible plan behind colonialism was to save the benighted continent from darkness, and an act of favor upon the conquered; they opined that the institutional packages of Christianity and civilization would provide higher standards of living and quality administrative governance than the primordial institutions destroyed. Scholars no longer view colonialism as positive, and continue to debate its importance.

On Nigeria's independence, prior to the military coup of January 1966, the government was nothing more than an alliance between tribally based parties in the east and the north on the one hand, and a tribally based opposition in the west. The marriage of convenience paved way for an alliance between the North and the west against the East. The focus deviated from national interest to regional interest; Nigeria witnessed a turbulent life, before the military intervention. The present state of Boko Haram insurgency could be linked to the colonial legacies bequeathed from Britain. Consequently, one can ask; would this disaster have been averted if Britain had focused on building a nation-state rather than promoting separatist propensities in Nigeria?

## **Chapter 4**

### **STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT POLICIES OF THE 1980S IN NIGERIA**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The fourth chapter focuses on the structural adjustment policies implemented from 1985-1994. It elaborates essentially on the economic implications of the policies implemented and the losers and winners of these economic policies.

The 1980s witnessed a huge economic imposition because it was a decisive point in development policies pursued by most developing countries. It was also a period when developing countries lacked the power to shape their domestic policies as a result of the overwhelming role played by the Bretton Woods institutions in shaping the trend of development by implementing policies through the conditionality approach. Neoliberal reforms started from the late 1970s, and encouraged free market and private enterprise ideologies while discouraging state intervention. This view was championed by the likes of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher who viewed government intervention in the economy as the reason behind the economic crisis of the 1970s. They argued for a restrictive economic policy as the best way to overcome the crisis. The notion was to combat poverty, and promote economic growth with a strong reliance on market forces and private enterprises. Thus, states were to perform a lesser role in economic development because neo-liberalism viewed the civil servant and the decision making body of the government as a contributory problem of state economic failure. Thus the IMF and the World Bank led structural adjustment policies saw these



government policies as a representation of certain interests in the society. Hence the new Structural Adjustment policies emphasized the negative impact of government intervention, as against the positive impact of market policies. The rationale behind SAP was the limitation of state interventions in the economy and the promotion of market mechanism as the driving force for development.

The debt crisis that hit developing countries in the 1980s compelled the affected countries to turn to multilateral financial institutions like the World Bank and the IMF for loans. However, the approval of such loans was based on a set of well laid conditionality's that involved the adoption of stabilization policies and liberalization as a prerequisite for granting loans and debt rescheduling. However, countries that were unwilling to accept the conditionality's were immediately excluded from participating. It is imperative to note that the procedure for debt rescheduling by donor countries led to a total eradication of autonomy for developing countries, and a transfer of power from the state to the World Bank and IMF. There are several reasons responsible for the 1970s economic crisis which preceded the structural adjustment programs. They ranged from the excessive financial consuming policies of most advanced capitalist countries, to the oil and debt crisis of the 1970s and 1980s.

Nigeria, like most countries in Africa, decided to embark on drastic and radical economic policy reforms from the 1980s. The new policy reforms involved an all-encompassing shift from trade restrictions and price control, towards trade liberalization, privatization and less government intervention in the production of goods and services. These reforms were associated with the structural adjustment policies (SAP) advocated by the World Bank and the IMF. However, IMF imposed 'conditionality's' were attached to adjustment loans, and brought about increased

poverty, inequality and very low living standards in Nigeria from 1986 to 1993. This chapter looks at the high poverty and inequality lines that have been associated with the implementation of the SAPs during General Babangida's rule in the 1980s. The next section analyses the structural adjustment policies implemented in Nigeria. The second section delves into income distribution, levels of poverty and standards of living from 1986-1994. The third section analyses the losers and winners of the SAP policies in Nigeria and how it created class consciousness among the working class.

## **4.2 Background to Structural Adjustment Policies**

The unprecedented oil boom enjoyed by Nigeria in the 1970s by virtue of being an oil producing nation had a remarkable impact on her expenditure during this period. Nigeria's economic policy during the 1970s had a welfarist orientation with the government playing an active role in development; provision of a massive transport system and good road network, health infrastructure, increased rates of employment, rapid increases in food subsidies, transport and education. The government in the 1970s also engaged in a subsidized resale of agricultural products to the masses, a policy abruptly ended by the Shagari government.

The oil and economic crisis of the 1980s, hit the oil-dependent Nigerian economy very badly. As a result of this, the Nigerian state borrowed huge sums of money to cushion the effects of this crisis. However, the situation was not made better because of gross mismanagement and corruption in the Nigerian government. Consequently, the industrial related sectors had to close down half of their firms, invariably leading to the layoff of many workers. The Nigerian government faced with this enormous crisis, had to therefore accept the SAPs as well as the 'conditions' attached to them, in a bid to stop the crisis.

Even though Nigeria fully adopted SAP policies in 1986, the first efforts towards SAP started in 1981 under the leadership of Alhaji Shehu Shagari when he instituted a commission of inquiry into government parastatals, culminating in the 1982 economic stabilization act. The latter was designed to control government imports, introduce effective disciplinary measures in the monetary system, as well as reduce government expenditure and income by cutting government spending. The economic stabilization act was however a failure because of its failure to remove subsidies and commercialize public enterprises and ventures. This refusal was linked to the ownership and the control of government parastatals by the National Party of Nigeria (NPN). Thus, the IMF was a last resort by the Shagari government to get an extended loan facility to the tune of 1.9 billion and 2.4 billion naira. The IMF however insisted on the fulfillment of certain conditions in order to make these loans a reality. They include privatization, reduction of government spending, trade liberalization and introduction of sales tax. However, no definite agreement was reached before the administration of Shagari was ousted from power in 1983.

The regime of General Buhari reached an agreement with the IMF on the reformation of the Nigerian economy but met a stalemate as a result of his refusal to accept part of the recommendations of the IMF such as currency devaluation, privatization (liberalization of trade, and removal of petroleum subsidies). It accepted the commercialization policy but insisted on state regulations and the resultant effect was a tightening of the boycott of Nigeria by Western banks, and export credit guarantee agencies. These financial institutions insisted on a clean bill of health by the Nigerian government from the IMF before the debt of \$20 billion in 1980 could be initiated and capital injection authorized.

The alternative approach initiated was a counter trade approach with Brazil and other Western European countries. It was however inadequate and very expensive, especially with the magnitude of economic problems faced by Nigeria. In this light, the regime of General Buhari introduced a comprehensive package of austerity measures as part of its economic stabilization efforts. This came with severe import restrictions, thus posing a problem for local industries to purchase needed essential imported raw materials, leading most of them to shut down and consequently leading to increased unemployment. The situation was further worsened with inflation in the prices of goods and commodities, thus making life very difficult for the masses and affluent as well. The SAPs also affected the health and educational sectors. Funding reduced drastically in the health sector during this period. The education sector was not spared either due to the privatization of schools and subsequent heavy levies indiscriminately imposed on parents of students in schools, as well as the withdrawal of government sponsorships on tertiary schools students.

The legitimacy of Buhari's regime became questionable as a result of his authoritarian rule and he was deposed by Gen Ibrahim Babangida in August 1985. With Nigeria still suffering from the effects of a heavy debt burden, coupled with a decline in oil revenues, Babangida's regime re-opened the debate on the terms and acceptance of the IMF loans and conditionality's, and the government's role in the management of the economic crisis. Despite the protest of the Nigerian masses, the regime of Babangida went ahead to accept the IMF adjustment policies as well as the adjustment of the naira to its true realistic value.

### 4.3 The Impact of SAP on the Political Economy of Nigeria

Though Babangida claimed that the SAPs would reduce economic stagnation and revitalize economic growth, but it was aimed at bolstering the market forces and reducing the activities of the state. This had bad consequences for the Nigerian economy, its people, state, agriculture and industry.

Table 1. Rural Urban Poverty Incidence in Nigeria by Agro-Climatic Zones, 1985-93

Rural Urban Poverty Incidence in Nigeria by Agro-climatic Zones, 1985-93						
(Poverty Line=N395.41)						
RURAL						
	1985/86			1992/93		
Region	P <sub>0</sub>	P <sub>1</sub> ,	P <sub>2</sub>	P <sub>0</sub>	P <sub>1</sub> ,	P <sub>2</sub>
Northern	0.549	0.220	0.115	0.442	0.198	0.117
Southeast	0.434	0.158	0.075	0.260	0.117	0.070
Southwest	0.419	0.141	0.064	0.271	0.113	0.062
All Rural	0.495	0.194	0.098	0.364	0.167	0.098

Table 2. Rural/Urban Poverty Decomposition by Agro-climatic Zones, 1985-93  
(Poverty Line=N395.41)

Region	P <sub>0</sub>	P <sub>1</sub>	P <sub>2</sub>	P <sub>0</sub>	P <sub>1</sub>	P <sub>2</sub>
Northern	0.342	0.106	0.046	0.403	0.160	0.086
Southeast	0.273	0.072	0.027	0.226	0.097	0.057
Southwest	0.324	0.087	0.034	0.230	0.084	0.044
All Urban	0.317	0.093	0.038	0.304	0.140	0.076

Source: NCS, 1985/86 and 1992/93.

Table 3. Rural/Urban Poverty Decomposition by Agro-climatic Zones, 1985-93 (Poverty Line=N395.41)

RURAL						
	1985/86			1992/93		
Region	P <sub>0</sub>	P <sub>1</sub>	P <sub>2</sub>	P <sub>0</sub>	P <sub>1</sub>	P <sub>2</sub>
Northern	61.8	70.3	72.5	67.9	56.1	78.8
Southeast	21.2	17.3	16.2	16.8	8.2	17.1
Southwest	17.1	12.4	11.3	15.3	7.2	4.1
All Rural	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
URBAN						
	1985/86			1992/93		
Region	P <sub>0</sub>	P <sub>1</sub>	P <sub>2</sub>	P <sub>0</sub>	P <sub>1</sub>	P <sub>2</sub>
Northern	48.4	55.5	58.4	57.6	71.3	68.5
Southeast	24.9	19.4	17.7	19.1	15.2	15.1
Southwest	26.7	25.1	23.9	23.2	13.5	16.4
All/ Urban	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: NCS, 1985/86 and 1992/93.

As this graph shows the rate of urban poverty increased 48% from the north in 1985 to 68.5% in 1993 making it the worst hit state with that high rate of poverty in Nigeria, however for the other region, the poverty increase was at a rather slow pace as compared to Northern region.

During this period, the government implemented its policy of retrenchment of workers and disbanding of existing public enterprises, notably the Nigerian National Supply Company (NNSC), and the merging of other government owned corporations<sup>90</sup>. In light of the above, the regime of Babangida had to use other forceful means in order to enforce SAP policies. He also tried to implement other policies in order to assuage the masses. Among such worthy policies instituted in order to render assistance to those in the rural area could be mentioned the directorate of food, roads and rural

<sup>90</sup>Ibid (Attahiru, 2003, p. 31)

infrastructure, and better living standards for rural women. These initiatives however failed due to underfunding and corruption.

It is important to observe the various economic and political crises faced by Nigerians as a result of the effect of the orthodox SAP policies that came into existence in the mid-1980s. Yet, it can be said that SAP cannot be blamed for the many conflicts and contradictions in the Nigerian society and economy but it merely escalated them. Like other economic policies adopted such as the economic stabilization act, the introduction of SAP became deeply embedded into the Nigerian economic crisis, increasing problems associated with previous pre adjustment policies which laid new grounds for more internal problems. Some authors see SAP as a catalyst to the emergence of political violence associated with ethnic identities within the Nigerian country side. The issue of ethnicity in Nigeria is not new; it was rather the precipitating factor in the Nigerian civil war and a stumbling block in the integration of Nigeria. During the structural adjustment period, opposition to SAP played on the ethnic lines of the masses, especially from those in Northern Nigeria that were badly affected by SAP.

The removal of subsidies on import inputs such as fertilizers and insecticides as well as petroleum products led to a very severe economic and social hardship for most people in rural areas. Even though the beneficiaries from the removal of these subsidies were found in the few minority dwellers, they were however well off with regards to resource endowments. Thus the withdrawal of the federal government from fulfilling

their social services to the people increased the rural dwellers' vulnerability, the majority of whom constituted small peasant producers or self-providers<sup>91</sup>.

Another sector affected by SAP was the education sector. Due to a cut in government expenditure, the education sector was insistently underfunded. Previous administrations had invested more in the education sector and had a great effect on the pattern of learning, infrastructure and research activities, as well as the quality of students produced. Workers were owed their wages, and had to abscond their duties in pursuit of other means of survival. The withdrawal of subsidy<sup>92</sup> also affected the healthcare sector; it led to infant mortality increase from 87.2 per 1,000 live births in 1985 to 191 per 1000 live births in 1993. Access to clean water also reduced from 45 per 1000 in 1985 to 40 per 1000 in 1993 when Babangida stepped aside. Under Gen. Babangida's administration, budget deficit increased from 90- 100 billion naira with an annual budget of 120 billion naira. How then can an adjusting economy like Nigeria amass such high deficit? Thus, here is no denying the fact that SAP, rather than helping in boosting the Nigerian economy contributed to its deterioration. SAP policies created an avenue for economic hardships, poverty and public discontentment among every member of the Nigerian society<sup>93</sup>

Table 4. Decomposition of Poverty Incidence by State, 1985-93 (Poverty Line=N395.41)

1985/86	1992/93					
STATE	P0	P1	P2	Po	PI	P2
Lagos (Urban)	0.6	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
FCT	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.4	1.9	2.2
Anambra	4.5	2.9	2.6	3.1	1.1	0.9

<sup>91</sup>Egwu, S. G. (1998). *Structural Adjustment, Agrarian change and rural ethnicity in Nigeria*. Sweden: Nordiska Afrikaninstitutet.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid (Ekande, 2014, p. 5)

<sup>93</sup> Ibid (2014, p. 6)



Bauchi	5.8	8.9	9.7	6.9	9.5	9.4
Bendel	4.1	3.7	3.5	2.0	0.7	0.7
Benue	4.4	4.9	5.1	4.0	4.1	4.7
Borno	5.0	5.3	5.6	6.1	6.7	6.8
Cross River	6.0	5.2	4.7	4.4	4.1	4.3
Gongola	5.1	6.1	6.3	3.6	2.7	2.5
Imo	4.8	3.0	2.7	2.8	1.1	1.1
Kaduna	9.0	10.1	10.0	5.6	3.2	3.0
Kano	11.3	11.5	10.9	15.3	18.1	16.4
Kwara	3.0	2.4	2.1	3.0	2.4	2.5
Lagos (Rural)	1.5	1.3	1.2	4.6	3.9	3.6
Niger	2.8	4.9	6.4	3.3	3.9	4.2
Ogun	2.9	2.6	2.3	1.9	1.1	0.9
Ondo	3.9	4.3	4.6	3.7	2.5	2.5
Oyo	6.6	2.9	1.9	5.8	3.0	2.8
Plateau	3.9	4.1	4.3	6.1	6.8	7.1
Rivers	2.5	1.5	1.1	3.2	3.0	2.9
Sokoto	12.5	14.1	14.7	13.1	19.8	21.3
All Nigeria	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: NCS, 1985/86 and 1992/93<sup>94</sup>

The most hit were the middle class that had a reduced purchasing power and high unemployment, school children had to resort to street hawking, while city dwellers had to convert their private cars to taxi's at night in order to make ends meet.

The impact of SAP policies was also felt in the rapid intensification of agrarian capitalism which instituted land grabbing and alienation in the rural areas. The collapse of the agricultural sector greatly contributed to the economic crisis experienced by Nigerians. Thus in order to combat the shortage of raw materials that faced the industrial sector, the Nigerian government diversified the economy by encouraging non-oil exports, as well as the production of food for domestic consumption which was geared towards reducing the high bill accrued from the importation of food. The impact

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<sup>94</sup> The table shows that the most hit with this poverty incidence from the graph above are mostly those from north east Nigeria, the birth zone of Boko Haram

of these policies was the revitalization of the private sector through incentives and government guarantee of lands at a generous offer.

This led to the establishment of the notorious reawakening of the 1978 land use act as a legal framework in dispossessing small peasants of their land. The land use act, even though it commercialized lands and encouraged private property rights, it also recognized customary land rights. It is imperative to note that the purpose of SAP was not reserved for economic restructuring but rather a politico-administrative reform which entails state restructuring projects. The crisis experienced by most African states during the 1980s exposed the failing character of state-society relations that moved towards authoritarianism and government institutional decline. Thus the political project of SAP was also important to the market based economic reforms made glaring in Nigeria which the notion of structural adjustment policies was conceived. In light of the forgoing, the purpose of SAP was geared towards economic and political restructuring, which is creating an enabling political environment towards enhancing market rationality. Nigeria SAP relied heavily on the mechanisms of the market, along with the contraction of the state.<sup>95</sup>

Criticisms of structural adjustment policies view the programs as disproportionately hurting the poor, because many developing countries enjoyed short term prosperity, accompanied by dramatic increases in inequality and child poverty<sup>96</sup>. The IMF-World Bank led structural adjustment policies invariably forced the government to make

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<sup>95</sup>Ibid (Egwu, 1998, pp. 56-68)

<sup>96</sup>William, E. (2003). Structural adjustment programs and poverty in managing currency crisis in emerging markets. In M. P. Nooler, & J. A. Frankel., *National bureau of economic research*. (p. 362). Chicago: University of Chicago press.

adjustment in the scarce macroeconomic indicators that caused harmful effect to the formal sector

Contrary to most presumptions about the effect of structural adjustment economic policies on Nigerians, those at the top echelons of power amassed vast wealth. The Babangida administration was accused of corruption; in fact if Babangida's assets are monumental and sprawling as alleged by the citizens, he could personally offset SAP foreign debt and end SAP. It was in light of this uncontrollable crisis that university students led mass, street protests against the unbearable hardships ranging from increase in food items, and high cost of education which became the prerogative of the rich. In fact, the mass public opposed IMF loan and opted for SAP. The spiral of violence that engulfed Nigeria during the SAP period goes further to show that the citizenry were disenchanted and fed-up with the economic crisis. In fact, the effects of SAP on the citizenry were so glaring due to the fact that SAP not only sapped Nigerians economically but also tainted their opinion of foreign based organizations and their overriding objectives. Indeed, SAP lacked human face due to its inability to meet human needs and fostered insecurity. This is so because the adoption of SAP translated to deregulation, privatization, austerity measures, and currency devaluation coupled with reduced government expenditure in social welfare package in Nigeria. The result was a deterioration of living standards of household income earners due to massive under-employment. SAP rather than improve the living standards of Nigeria, contributed to its deterioration, due to food insecurity.

This table illustrates the income level of observed household from the start of SAP in 1986 to the end of SAP in 1992, from the table it is observed that the per capita

expenditure was high but it declined to a deteriorating 0.456% for the rural region which is made up of North east Nigeria

Table 5. Pattern of Real Household Per Capita Expenditures by Region

<b>Pattern of Real Household Per Capita Expenditures by Region</b>					
	<b>1985/86</b>		<b>1992/93</b>		
<b>Region</b>	<b>PCE</b>	<b>Gini</b>	<b>PCE</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Gini</b>
				<b>Change</b>	
Lagos Urban	762.67	0.340	748.62	-1.84	0.399
Other Urban	650.28	0.366	816.71	25.59	0.441
Rural	531.28	0.391	779.96	46.81	0.456
Nigeria	592.81	0.387	792.64	33.7	0.450

Table 6. Pattern of Real Household Per Capita Expenditures by Geographic Regions

<b>Geographic Region</b>	<b>1985/86</b>	<b>PCE 1992/93</b>	<b>PCE</b>	<b>Percentage change</b>
Northern Belt	540.58	633.91		17.26
Middle Belt	536.15	753.56		40.55
Southern Belt	660.63	934.48		41.45
Nigeria	592.81	792.64		33.71

The harsh IMF-World Bank led policies aggravated food insecurity in Nigeria as well as reducing the purchasing power of Nigerians living below poverty line<sup>97</sup>

#### **4.4 The Impact of Structural Adjustment Policies in Northern Nigeria**

Structural adjustment had been designed to rationalize a bloated African economy, where government expenditures had gone hay wire, yet the World Bank unfortunately made the situation worse off. In fact, the World Bank statistics of adjustment lending in Africa are a record of colossal failure<sup>98</sup>. Prior to the implementation of Structural Adjustment Policies in Nigeria, the economy of Northern Nigeria was agrarian in nature. Agriculture was the main stay of the economy of Northern Nigeria. In fact,

<sup>97</sup>Abdulwahab, T. (2014). The microsm of Global insecurity. *Global journal of human social science, history and anthropology, volxiii issue xvi*, 204.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid (2014, p. 1)

more than 80% of the rural labor workforce engaged in peasant farming, which accounted for a good proportion of the Nigerian GDP. The northern part of Nigeria was blessed with a geographical specialization of cotton, rice, beans, groundnuts, and livestock<sup>99</sup>. However, the eradication of subsidy derived from petroleum products drove Nigerians further into abject poverty because government were rather involved in debt servicing instead of providing the needed social services for the people, the effect of which was the creation of unemployment and under unemployment. Peasant farmers the bulk of who were located in Northern Nigeria were incapacitated, due to economic hardship. Even though one of the objectives of SAP was economic transformation, SAP rather led to the loss of jobs and government withdrawal of basic welfare packages. Subsidy withdrawal further caused a decline of businesses due to devaluation of currency made visible in the difficulty of business transaction due to a new exchange rate<sup>100</sup>. The implementation of structural adjustment policies in Northern Nigeria, leads one, in fact, (Renne, 1996) to agree that SAP was fraught with stories of mismanagement of government resources, and did not go in line with northern interest. Government acted as if it was less interested in the welfare of its citizens, even though it was acting in accord with its beliefs<sup>101</sup>.

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<sup>99</sup>Edo, S. a. (2014). The Nigerian economy reforms, emerging trends and prospects. In A. Onokerhoraye, *cped Monographs series* (p.23). Benin city.

<sup>100</sup>Anah, C. (2014). "who benefits? the political economy of national development plans in Nigeria". *journal of alternative perspective in social science*, vol.6, no.1, 106.

<sup>101</sup>Renne, E. (1996). perception of population policy and family planning programs in northern Nigeria. *population council of Nigeria*, p. p.134.

One of the reasons ascribed to the dismal failure of SAP in Northern Nigeria is linked to the fact that SAP was not attuned to the dynamics and unique characteristics of African economies, grouped into two sectors, the modern sector operated by the elite class and the traditional sector operated by the poor. The bulk of agrarian workers, unemployed citizens, women whose culture and religion prevented them from working, children who could not afford education due to privatization policies and those dependent on federal government subsidy allocations from the North fell under the category of those in the traditional sector. SAP operated for the benefit of the modern sector to the detriment of the traditional sector poor. Thus SAP facilitated a multiple duping by crooked African governments of the rural poor, through the misappropriation of some of its loans which the World Bank was fully aware of.<sup>102</sup>

#### **4.5 Conclusion**

Despite the huge economic hardship heavily influenced by the implementation of structural adjustment policies in Nigeria, there were those who gained from the recession and government policies. The resultant effect of the import license regime in the second republic was the creation of a new class of wealthy business men and women that created an enabling environment in strengthening political ties. Also, despite the low profits from 1982/1983 to 1983/1984, some multinational companies like the United Africa Company, Patterson Zochonis, and Mobil Oil gained huge profits, yet workers were not spared from retrenchment. Structural adjustment policies

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<sup>102</sup>Ikejiaku. (2008). Africa debt crisis and the IMF with a case of Nigeria: Towards theoretical explanation . *journal of politics and law vol.1, no.4*, p.3.

created a pattern of winners and losers which became increasingly glaring under SAP.<sup>103</sup>

It is important to stress that the issue of inequality and class consciousness became stressed during structural adjustment period. It was made visible in structured inequality, and thus inequality is explained from socioeconomic and political inequality. The bulk of the Nigerian population were losers of SAP due to the unprecedented opposition and antigovernment criticism and riot from the displaced economic class comprising students, workers, agricultural farmers and business oriented class who felt the impact of SAP policies. Be that as it may, it is not entirely justifiable to attribute most of Nigeria's economic problem to SAP because of other economic problems such as mismanagement of fund, corruption, political instability and the pluralistic nature of Nigeria which encouraged ethnicity<sup>104</sup>. (Ikejiaku, 2008)Agrees that the IMF/World Bank led SAP failed the vast majority of Nigerians because of the mass unemployment it created.

There is no denying the fact that those most hit by SAP implementation in Nigeria were those already at risk, that is the poor and women in the society because, by cutting the needed social subsidies and support system, they succeeded in marginalizing the vulnerable population. The currency devaluation that was a necessary precondition for SAP loan, made the wages inefficient to meet the basic standards of the people. Thus

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<sup>103</sup>Osaghae, E. (1995). *structural adjustment policies and ethnicity in Nigeria*. Sweden: Motal Grafiska, Motal.

<sup>104</sup>Sulaiman, L. M. (2014). the structural adjustment program in developing economies: Pain or gain? Evidence from Nigeria. *public and municipal finance vol13. issue.7*, p.46.

the middle class people found themselves in the lower class during the SAP policies unable to meet their pre-SAP life standard.<sup>105</sup>

Even though SAP had a lofty objective of eradicating poverty in Africa and transforming the African economy into a world class economy to reckon with, the problem with the structural adjustment policy was its failure to properly initiate dialogue with the common citizenry who needed these funds the most. Thus their inability to adapt such policies in favor of the unique African society created a dissent among a disaffected class who felt government policies had brought nothing but economic hardship on them as a result of massive poverty and inequality. Such poverty in the midst of plenty created ethnic dissent within a group of people in the North worst hit due to their unique economic and religious background that made it difficult for them to focus on other means of sustenance aside from agricultural produce and livestock farming, unlike those from the southern and eastern parts of the country who had trade relations with each other and were very versatile economically.

Therefore, one will not be far from the truth if she states that even though the working class and those in the agricultural sector were the worst hit by structural adjustment policies, those located in Northern Nigeria felt the enormous impact of SAP. They had a very high population due to high childbirth rate. Thus the income reduction by the federal government had significant impact on households in Northern Nigeria which was hitherto an agrarian economy in nature. The removal of subsidies on agricultural products and fertilizers which they were heavily dependent on severely adversely

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<sup>105</sup>Thorne, L. (2010). Neoliberalism and neocolonialism: The experience of Structural adjustment policies in Nigeria. *perspective on development*, p.9.



affected their ability to afford such necessary products needed for the development of the agricultural sector. It also created a situation in which families were focused on producing for their needs. In other words, the outcry from the north on the impacts of structural adjustment and unfavorable government policies on that region is unique and justifiable.

## **Chapter 5**

# **THE RISE OF BOKO HARAM AFTER 2003; ORIGIN, IDEOLOGY, SUPPORTERS; SECTORS THEY CONTROL**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the historical background to the phenomenon of Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria. It examines the factors that brought Boko Haram into global prominence after 2003, its driving and sustaining forces, its support bases and the parts of Nigeria it controls. There is no denying the fact that since 2009, Boko Haram has gained widespread prominence in Nigeria, and among her surrounding neighbors. Evidence abounds that the sway held by this initially seemingly harmless group which became glaring in 2009 can be attributed to the declining poverty especially for those states located within the Northern part of Nigeria. Be that as it may, it is also correct to observe that militancy has been a threatening phenomenon to the Nigerian state dating back to 2001, on the heels of Nigeria's return to civilian rule in 1999.

However, the lethal threat posed by Boko Haram became visible in 2009, after it bombed targets in Borno state Nigeria, thus inaugurating sporadic and unceasing attacks on the Nigerian state ,especially the Northeast, including bombing forays into Northwest and North central areas of Nigeria. The targets of these attacks include Christians, Muslims and all manifestations of western innovations, including teaching or institutions that go contrary to its beliefs and teachings. What beg for an answer are the conditions that gave way for a lumpen class, also known as the proletariat to lash out at the Nigerian government in such a way that has never been seen before. No

doubt, precision and coordination, military tactics as seen in their guerilla hit and run technique of attack and a steady source of income that can afford the expensive military armory and highly explosive bombs, as well as foot soldiers by which Boko Haram is enabled to strike continuously are worthy of investigation.

## **5.2 Historical Development of Boko Haram**

Boko Haram draws its inspiration from Islam which dates back to the 10th and 11th centuries in major cities like Kano (Known as the largest city in Northern Nigeria) with a strongly established Muslim presence. Hausa was the major ethnicity of the Muslim community during that era. Also, the region was divided into 14 Hausa city states, as witnessed by travelers and theologians such as Ibn Batuta in (1349-53) and al-Maghili (d. 1503-44) that were less impressed by the language of religion and more impressed by their non-Muslim inhabitants' habits. Such syncretistic habits called pejoratively *bida* led to the rise of Fulani pastoralists in the 18th century who challenged these life styles most especially Usman Dan Fodio (d.1817) through a Jihad, the aftermath of which was the adoption of Islam as a normative form of religion among these Hausa states. Crucial to the understanding of Boko Haram is the fact that Dan Fodio is a name revered throughout Islamic West Africa a historical figure in the propagation and spread of Islam.

Uprisings of fanatical origin in Northern Nigeria predate the Boko Haram insurgency. As Roman has aptly observed, Boko Haram was not the first Muslim movement to evolve from Northern Nigeria which advocated for Jihad (armed struggle) as an approach to achieve its reform policies. In fact, it was Usman Dan Fodio in 1804 that led the struggle for the overthrow of the Habe rulers in Hausa land. Dan Fodio had a career that can be summed up in two major sections; the teaching phase and the active

phase. His first phase was spent been closely associated with the Hausa rulers due to his preaching and hortatory capacity, 20 years after his ministry in 1804 he embarked on a hijra in Gudu where he established a base to attack the Hausa's who were seen as his primary enemies because of their nominal and syncretistic lifestyle. He succeeded in establishing a strong Muslim culture in the Northern part of Nigeria, Southern Niger and to a great extent Chad, no wonder the areas associated with Boko Haram emerged from within these locations.

Even though Dan Fodio ceased in his attack against the ancient Muslim sultanate of Borno ( the heartland of Boko Haram), he is used as a constant example due to his fight to promote Islam along with his strong objections against innovations considered to be alien to Islamic tradition. He thus created a strong foundation for other Islamic clerics to emulate, such that years after his demise there was a strong outgrowth of religious scholars, who strove to legitimize the new theocratic order, sustained by theological underpinnings. The theological underpinnings of the new order made a sound Islamic educational background a prerequisite for political participation among Muslims in Northern Nigeria. The introduction of western education and other forms of western technologies in northern Nigeria eliminated the already existing Islamic system of education and practices. In fact, Western education was viewed as an instrument of domination, brought on by a foreign pattern of colonial, Christian, materialist and corrupt process of westernization. It is important to note that the advent of British education, British rule and the entrenchment of the economic policies of the colonial era created a deep-rooted conflict in Islamic society in Northern Nigeria that can be viewed from the “modernization shock”.

Prior to the independence from Britain, the Northern Muslims were under the leadership of Ahmadu Bello (d. 1996) who advocated for the return of Sharia as the legal basis for Muslims and even the entire Nigeria. However, such desires did not reflect the true realities on ground because the years of Christian influence and growth in Southern Nigeria. Also, most of the economic activities at independence were located in the South or under the administrative leadership of Christians due to their high exposure to western education, unlike their Northern brothers who were influenced by Islamic scholars and Jihadist opposed to these western innovations. Even within these Northern spheres, division is even made visible by the split between the traditional Sufi elites also known as the Quadiriyya who were aligned to the conservative caliphal capital of Sokoto and the modernist Tijaniyya centered in Kano.

Despite these divisions, the North also witnessed the emergence of new radical leaders like Alhaji Ahmadu Bello, Aminu Kano and Abubakar Gumi, who have implemented reforms that attempted to Islamize modernity. The new radical group was under the leadership of Ahmadu Bello in Kaduna, where he enlisted the support of Abubakar Gumi (d. 1992) a very vibrant and charismatic radio preacher who had funds from wealthy Arabs. Yan Izala was an organization established by him as an avenue for his opposition to innovations, like Dan Fodio. However Gumi viewed all Sufis as innovators which was against Dan Fodio who was a dogmatic fighter and a reformer who opposed innovations, he was, however, a stout Sufi Quadiri which was fortunately associated with the majority of Northern Nigeria history.

Gumi and his Sufi opponents all through the 1970s and 1980s while advocating for a dogmatic Islam for Nigeria had witnessed the rise of a radical faction who opposed his teachings, they saw these reforms as not radical enough. A notable group was the

Maitatsine, which had problems with the military in 1980 and 1987. It was initially established by Muhammad Marwa, a Cameroonian Muslim scholar upon his settlement in Kano in the early 1960s. He created a group of associates among the immigrant Muslims in the Ayagi quarters of Birnin Kano. Due to his opposition to Western innovations, he was known as “master of rejection”. In 1980, the Maitatsine movement had a clash with the security forces; its members were accused of being heretics when they tried to invade the Muslim mosque and emir’s palace .The movement was however repressed by the Nigerian police after several days of fighting, leading to the death of about 6,000 people including their founder Muhammed Marwa, even though it continued to blossom until 1993. Also, Christianity in the middle belt of Nigeria had resulted to religious riots from the 1980s and 1990s due to the crusades of Reinhard Bonnke in Kano in 1991. Also the region of Northern Nigeria was also prone to cultural based riots a notable example was the Miss World hosting crisis of 2002, and the Danish cartoons of prophet Muhammed in 2006(this cartoon riot happened in Maiduguri, the birth place of Boko Haram)

The time lapse between Boko Haram and Maitatsine has been fraught with persistent corruption and less improvements in the socioeconomic conditions of northern Nigeria, thus creating a feeling of alienation for many communities in the north. This has invariably heightened the receptivity of the promising messages of radical transformation of the Nigerian society propagated by Boko Haram. As a result of the similarities in the radical militant approach of Maitatsine and Boko Haram, Boko Haram is seen as an upshot of Maitatsine because both adopted a radical doctrine of messianic revivalism with emphasis on Muslim establishment as the enemy, to a large extent, Maitatsine uprising rose as a revolt of the Northern city of Kano fulfillment of the apocalyptic prophesy in 1979-80. Like Boko Haram, Maitatsine revolt was not

suppressed as a result of the demise of Mohammed Marwa, but it continued late until the 1980s and 1990s. Even though there is a time lapse between Maitatsine revolt and Boko Haram, some of the socio-economic conditions that gave rise to Maitatsine are evident in the Boko Haram insurgency. Mass poverty, inequality of opportunities, unemployment and corruption as well as the mismanagement of the abounding resources, invariably contributed to garner support from the vulnerable and impoverished people for the insurgent group.

The emergence of Boko Haram is informed by the consequences of Nigeria's poor economic choices; in 1993 she was ranked 13th poorest country as a result of her stagnant human depilating index. The components that makeup this index was the falling real wage, poor health care standard and education, coupled with the increasing rate of unemployment. In fact, before the full emergence of Boko Haram, Nigeria had a recorded incidence of unemployment at 21.1% in 2012, 23.9% in 2011 and 25% 2010 which was above the average of the sub-region. The bulk of the increasing population in 2010 lived on less than \$1 per day, which was way below the human development and MDGs target, coupled with unemployment at 23.9% in 2012 and inflation at 12.6% unemployment statistics placed the youth at 41.6%. Also, the incident of unemployment is also alarmingly high among the female population at 24.1% and 17.7% for the male. Mordi (2015:39) asserts that the northeast and Niger Delta of Nigeria recorded the highest unemployment level, thus posing a threat to the security of the region and Nigeria where militancy and Boko Haram are glaring examples of this .

In addition, the Nigerian government prior to the emergence of Boko Haram embraced a development-driven service at independence, but derailed along the line due to the

high cost of shouldering economic responsibility in a dwindling and highly indebted country as a result of the economic crisis that led to the Adoption of Structural adjustment policies, even though under SAP, Nigerians became poor due to the uncoordinated economic policies initiated

### **5.3 Boko Haram: Origin**

Several factors facilitated the emergence of different Islamist groups in Nigeria, including the core violent manifestation of Boko Haram. Prominent among these could be mentioned the unending divide between the North and South; the North being a Muslim dominated side, perpetually remained economically underdeveloped and politically marginalized. The access to political power is a way to acquire individual and collective enrichment at the altar of ethnic and religious identities. In fact, the political terrain of Nigeria is characterized by a fierce competition for socioeconomic resources with the state as the main dispenser of these benefits. Politics in Nigeria is an avenue to sudden wealth which creates winners and losers as manifested in Boko Haram that is empowered by the resources of these dynamics. Thus the emergence of Boko Haram was facilitated by the poor socio-economic and political environment that made it possible for Boko Haram to thrive unhindered. It aimed to over-throw the Nigerian government and establish a pure Islamic state in Nigeria. It is deeply rooted in the Islamic Yusufiyya sect. The birth of Boko Haram is traced to Maiduguri, the capital of Borno, Northeast Nigeria, in 2004 when the group moved to Kanamma in Yobe close to the border with Chad, and has continued to wage war on the Nigerian state. However, the precise date of Boko Haram's emergence is not certain as reflected in divergent views on the subject in the literature on Boko Haram's origin due to the existence of confusing data.



In light of the foregoing, Emily Melgard agrees that Boko Haram's origins can be traced to the 1990s, in Northeast Nigeria, even though it was different from what it used to be. She identifies Yusuf Mohammed as the group's founding leader and ideologue, who propagated the isolation of Muslims from secular society and sought the purification of Islam from Western influences and beliefs. Some scholars trace the origin of Boko Haram to 2001 or 2002. However, Alozieuwa citing Madike traces the origin to 1995, naming Abubakar Lawan as the leader until his departure for further studies in Medina, Saudi Arabia. But ,Femi Owolade (2014:p.1) opines that the inception of Boko Haram in 2002, resulted from a clash between the moderate Islamic teachings of the prominent Sheikh Jafar Adam at the Mahammadu Ndimi mosque in Maiduguri, Borno state and the more militant interpretation of the Qur'an by Mohammed Yusuf, his disciple. Thus it resulted from Yusuf's belief in the establishment of a new order in which the wretched should inherit the earth. The radical, extremist views which he propagated led to his expulsion in 2002 from Ndimi Mosque. This expulsion prompted him to construct a mosque in Northeast Nigeria that served as an avenue for primary and secondary school pupils who responded to his teachings by abandoning Western schools and accepting his teachings and belief that Western education (Boko) is forbidden (Haram) ,thus the name Boko Haram.

On his part,(Connell, 2012) traces the emergence of Boko Haram to 1995, citing Lawal as the leader of the sect, even though it was quite different from the radical approach of Boko Haram. He further infers that it was upon Lawal's travel to Saudi Arabia for further studies that Mohammed Yusuf assumed the mantle of leadership. However, scholars point to Mohammed Yusuf as the founder of Boko Haram Sect in 2002. Adesoji traces the emergence of Boko Haram to fifteen years back, even though they operated with names like AhlsunnaWal'Jammahijra, the Nigerian Taliban and

Yusufiyya. Its initial focus was to call on government to focus on the glaring economic hardship, and poor living standards faced by the Nigerian populace.

The word Boko is coupled with Haram to mean 'education is forbidden' in Hausa language. It has grown to be associated with that due to its opposition to Western beliefs and ideologies. In fact, it connotes a deeper meaning that states Western education is sinful and thus forbidden. In line with its opposition to modern culture, and science it advocated for the propagation and implementation of a strict Sharia state, thus, seeking the imposition of Sharia in all states across Nigeria. However, it is also known as the 'movement for Yusuf' (the group's founder). Boko Haram addresses itself as Ahl-as-sunnah WA al-jama'aalaminhaj as-salaf (People of the way of the prophet (SAW) and the community of Muslims in line with the earliest generation of Muslims). In fact, Abul Qaqa, the group's spokesman categorically stated in an interview that the objective of Boko Haram was the application of Sharia law throughout Nigeria. In the Northeast of Nigeria, Western education is viewed from the Christian evangelical perspective of the Muslim who fears the Southern economic and political domination. Boko Haram connotes rejection and resistance to the forced imposition of Western education that overlooked the former Islamic order. However, this was contradictory to Yusuf's ostentatious life style where he enjoyed the best of what Western technology could offer in terms of communication equipment; he enjoyed exotic and sophisticated cars and encouraged his followers to go abroad for medical training.

It is important to understand the nature of the leader Mohammed Yusuf who was until his death in 2009, the sect's leader. He was killed by the Nigerian security forces during a sectarian conflict in July 2009 that left 1000 people dead. Yusuf was born on the 29th

of January, 1970 in Girgir village, Yobe state, Nigeria. He was a student of Salafi radicalism and a protégé of Ibin Iaymiyga, an Islamic scholar born in Haran, Turkey. He was the commander in chief of the group with two deputies to assist.

Adebayo subscribes to the view that prior to 2009, Boko Haram carried out its operations peacefully during the first seven years of its existence. However, the federal government ignored reports of the increasingly aggressive and militant nature of the group, including clashes with the military. Government's intervention that led to the arrest of some group members in Bauchi sparked civil unrest, leading to the estimated death of 700 people. Adesoji asserts that since the riots of July 2009 that cut across Bauchi, Kano, Yobe and Borno, perhaps Borno has been the base of the leader of the movement. What could account for the rise of Boko Haram after 2009 is linked to the sacking of the group's location in Dutsen Tenshin area of Bauchi on 26 July, 2009 by the joint security team that resulted in the arrest of nine of its members, thus leading to a reprisal attack by the group members, which was quelled when Yusuf was captured, and killed in police custody. Mohammed Yusuf, a gardi was also a product of the Madrasas school system, but a dropout of Western education.

Using an eyewitness account, Ahmad Salklda, citing Dan Borno, traces the origin of Boko Haram to 2002, when the group was relatively unknown. He mentions Yusuf who was seen as the unlikely heir to late Sheik Ja'afar Mahmoudadam in Maiduguri due to his intelligence and closeness to him. He however changed when he was approached by late Mohammed Ali to boycott democracy, civil service and Western oriented schools, thus prompting his disengagement with the Yobe state government. The sect also had problems with the Bauchi state government in 2006, thus prompting them to issue a press release stating their grievances to the government. The ideological

clash between Yusuf and Mohammed Ali prompted Yusuf's relocation to Kanamma in Yobe; the other faction led by Mohammed Ali launched an attack in Kanamma and later in Gwoza. This account, by referring to Mohammed Ali as the 'Taliban', is, however, contradictory to other accounts which identify Boko Haram as the Nigerian Taliban. Mohammed Ali is said to have disagreed fiercely with Yusuf when he tried to preach in several mosques but was denied access, even to radio stations. This prompted him to set up a preaching outlet in his house in Angwan Doki, millionaire's quarters among others. As a result of the demand for his tape, he was forced to build a mosque with the help of his in-law, late Baba Fugi Mohammed which he named IbnTaimiyya Masjid. It was his hard line top lieutenant Abubakar Shekau alias 'Arul Tauhid' together with Yusuf who began to construct an imaginary state within a state with full administrative functions, including military rank -and -file ,while Yusuf acted as the judge in dispute settlement.

The death of Abubakar Yusuf in July 2009, marked the emergence of Abu-Mohammed Abu-Bakar Ibn Mohammad al-Shakwi also known as Abubark Shekau as the new leader of the sect, even though he was declared dead in 2009 and the responsibility for that claimed by the Nigerian security forces. On October 2, 2009, he released a statement claiming responsibility for the leadership of Boko Haram. It is imperative to note that despite the death of Muhammad Yusuf and the sudden decline of Boko Haram activities in Northeast Nigeria, other factors facilitated the favorable environment for the emergence of radical extremism which is bent on waging a holy war against the Nigerian government. One important point observed is the fact that the sect cashed in on the poor educational system, unending strikes, secret cult activities, malpractice and prostitution in the Nigerian state which had no prospects for graduates to work. The

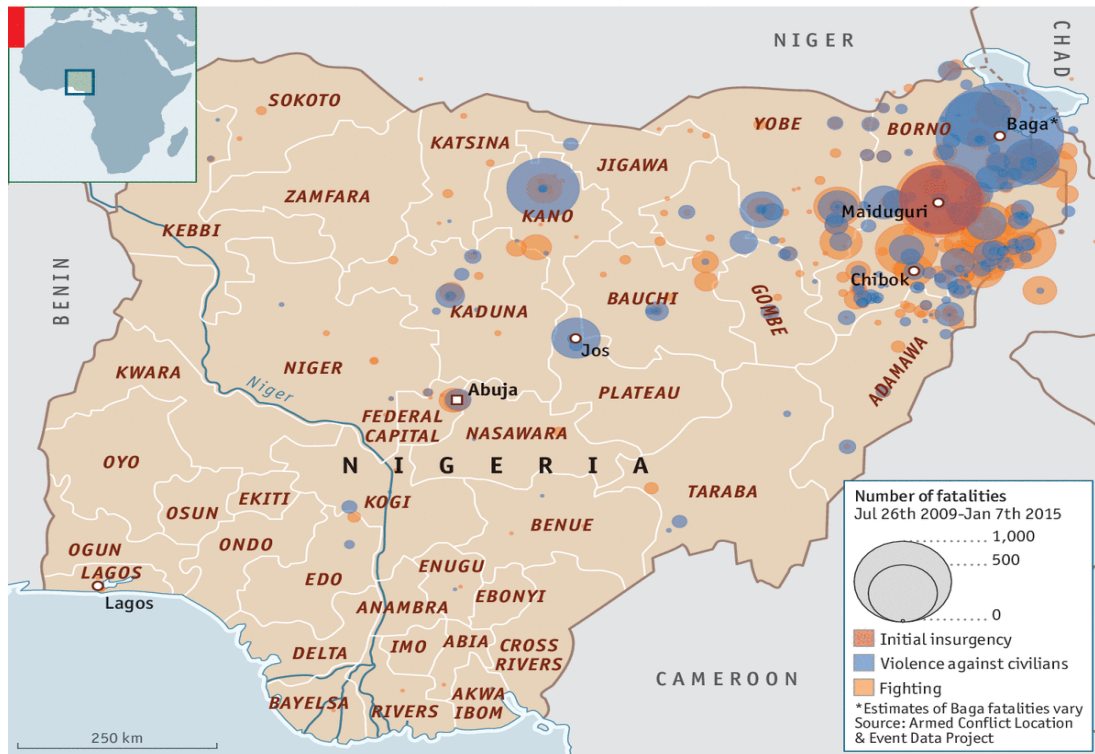
resultant effect was the enabling environment for graduates to abscond from school and embrace Yusuf's new state within a state that had promises of a better alternative.

Northeast Nigeria presents a perfect picture of impoverishment made visible by poverty, unemployment, infrastructural decay and environmental stress. It is one of the less developed and backward parts of Nigeria, with a high poverty rate of 49% making it the highest in Nigeria. Government neglect of the region is gleaned from the unexpected unemployed youths due to corrupt practices and inability to fulfill the social contract, thus making them vulnerable to terrorist propaganda. One therefore is not surprised why the region is the flash point for violence related conflicts.

The bulk of Boko Haram's operation is situated in the North of Nigeria, mainly Borno, Yobe and Bauchi states. However, the last two years, 2013-2015, has seen the extension of Boko Haram's field of operation to other states, like Kano and regions bordering Islamic north and Christian south of Nigeria. The geographical contiguity of these Northeast states, especially Borno as the command base of Boko Haram is very important in explaining the transnational focus of Boko Haram's terrorist focus, especially in the Sahel region. The region of Northeast Nigeria is bordered by neighboring countries like Niger republic, Chad republic, and Cameroon. One unique point is the fact that residents of Nigeria, Chad and Niger republic who have families' resident across these artificial boundaries could move unhindered and interact freely with each other because of the ease in crossing from Niger republic to get water in Nigeria, and the inter-communal relations among farmers resident in these border areas working together. The shared Kanuri ethnicity allows Boko Haram to socially camouflage in the neighboring Niger in which sleeper cells have been created, thus posing a challenge to the Nigerian government and also a future security issue for

Niger that has battled with the problem of narcotics and weapons linked to former government officials and Tuareg rebel leaders. Also, despite the security and heavy infrastructures people resident in Cameroon were not spared from Boko Haram's attack. It is also important to understand this border problem being experienced by residents of these neighboring countries in order to fully understand how the dynamic of any conflict could affect Nigeria. Of significance is facility with which some actors of Boko Haram could move unhindered from one bordering country to the other without being challenged by these community people who see them as brothers because of years of communication and relating together. Also, these borders serve as an avenue for transnational border crimes, like kidnapping, drug trafficking or narcotic and smuggling which serve as a source of income for Boko Haram activities. In 2009, Boko Haram initiated an uprising and has since then evolved in its attack tactics to incorporate assassination, bombing, and suicide attacks.

Recent events have gone further to illustrate the international character of Boko Haram through its extension of operations from local to federal levels. Also, the Movement for the Liberation of Azawad which declared an independent Republic of Mali in 2012 was led by 100 fighters from Boko Haram. Other terrorist groups have established contacts with Boko Haram, due to the fragility of the whole West African environment that has created an enabling ground for radical activities and terrorism.



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Figure 2. Map of Boko Haram affected states

## 5.4 Membership and Funding

Given Boko Haram's intent on creating a pure Islamic state, it is wise to take a cursory look at its religious character which is manifest in its ideology, pattern of recruitment and target selection. The core principles of Boko Haram are made visible in the strong role played by religion. In fact, it is made visible in the name, Boko Haram, which literally means ‘Western education is a sin’. Thus for Boko Haram, the acceptable education lessons should be understood from the Qur’an and the Sunna as being interpreted by the first generation Muslims (Salaf). Therefore, an understanding of Boko Haram should be done from a broader perspective that stoutly rejects all forms of Western influences and sees drugs, alcohol, and homosexuality, constitutional protection of women’s right and multiparty democracy as a crime.

Thus the Nigerian state has no moral standing for Boko Haram, which also frowns at Nigeria's cooperation with the United States. In its recruitment of members, religion plays an important role, and the followers act as members of a religious sect, praying alone with no interaction with the local population with their identity being displayed in their dress pattern with common characteristics similar to that of radical Islam. The members see themselves as the only true interpreters of Islam, thus making it a predominately religious group and not really an ethnically defined organization. In its act of violence, God is involved and the target of their attacks made manifest in church bombings, police stations, and other government buildings. Also, Muslims and Islamic clerics who had wholeheartedly adopted Western lifestyle and are active members of the state political structures are not excluded from Boko Haram attacks. A notable example was Bahir Kashara, a Wahhabi who was executed by Boko Haram members for openly condemning Boko Haram.

In order to fully understand the emergence of Boko Haram, it is imperative to take into cognizance the background and characters that sum up the majority of foot soldiers. They are in fact pupils, students (Almajirai) population, the majority of who have no home or recognized relations, but whose only friends or family are their fellow group members. They have also undergone the same radical indoctrination with their teachers who serve as guides and whose biddings they obey due to the significant authority role played and the subsequent punishment which awaits disobedience. Alma Jiri is very peculiar to the North; it is a Muslim Quranic system of education for poor boys, in which a student departs his home in an early age to study under an Islamic teacher called Mallam. It is important to observe that the Alma Jiri is constantly on the move, with no fixed income, thus making them a liability to any community they find themselves, in terms of feeding and general upkeep.



The introduction of colonial rule has however destroyed a northern system that had long existed prior to the introduction of formal education in northern Nigeria. The result was a decline in the support system and no recognition accorded to the students or the system. Urbanization, economic crisis, rural-urban migration and the increasing commercialization of formal education made formal education expensive and unaffordable and unattractive to the poor populace. Thus, the only option left for them was the Almajiranci, the effect of which was the increasing Almajairanci in the major cities in the North. The poverty and unemployment level also made feeding for these students burdensome. The group has also been exposed to drugs and militant gangs as a result of the intra conflict witnessed. At this stage of development, they have grown to be teenagers that could easily function as vigilante groups or do menial jobs in search of daily survival. These are the people that fall prey to Boko Haram propaganda as foot soldiers, and have over the years of rigid Quranic indoctrination become radicalized due to the poor economic standards in Northeast states of Nigeria like Bauchi, Borno, Gombe and Yobe.

Northeast Nigeria presents a perfect picture of impoverishment made visible by poverty, unemployment, infrastructural decay and environmental stress. This is due to the failure of governance in Northern Nigeria that is made manifest in the pervasive poverty and worsening economic conditions of the people. Government neglect of the region due to corrupt practices and inability to fulfill its social contract to the citizens is gleaned from the large number of unemployed youths, thus making them vulnerable to terrorist propaganda. One therefore is not surprised that the region is the flashpoint for violence related conflict.

Table 7. Zonal incidence of poverty by different poverty measures

Zone	Food Poor	Absolute Poor	Relative Poor	Dollar Poor
North Central	38.6	59.8	67.5	59.7
North East	51.5	69.0	76.3	69.1
North West	51.8	70.0	77.7	70.4
South East	41.0	58.7	67.0	59.2
South South	35.5	55.9	63.8	56.1
South West	25.4	49.8	59.1	50.0

Source: National Bureau of Statistics 2010 report

Recent events included bank robbery as a source of fund for meeting diverse needs such as helping the less privileged, sustaining widows of those killed in the propagation of Jihad and giving alms to the poor and needy

The sect also has the sympathy of some wealthy members such as Alhaji Buji Fai, among others. Boko Haram allegedly has over 280,000 members that cut across 19 states of Northern Nigeria, Niger republic, Chad, Cameroon and Sudan. Members are also known to pay daily fee of 100naira to their leader, and such payment however serves as a basic avenue of funds for the sect. There are also donations from government officials, politicians and other private individuals all sympathetic to Boko Haram cause. The sect is also accused of receiving outside resources. In fact, Mohammed Damasun, a member of the Nigerian Taliban was accused of being a source. Also, speculations by Western and Nigerian news media linking it with the activities of such groups like the Salafist group for preaching and combats in Algeria, Tablighi clerics from Pakistan, and Wahhabist missionaries from Saudi Arabia , Boko Haram could have possible ties to these Islamic bodies. A sufficient relationship also exists between Boko Haram and AI-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb. Most of the weapons of training used by Boko Haram come from outside Nigeria. A trust group known as AI-Muntada Trust Fund, with its headquarters in the United Kingdom is also

a source of financial assistance to Boko Haram. The sect also has reliefs from the Islamic World Society with its Headquarters in Saudi Arabia

Boko Haram had financial support from within Nigeria; some speculated sponsors included prominent Northern religious leaders and businessmen. Such assertions are informed by the support acquired by Boko Haram following the implementation of Sharia law in Northern Nigeria by governors of Northern Nigeria. Up until 2008, Sharia law had been the principal basis of law. However, it is very cumbersome to categorically state the full source of Boko Haram's revenue due to the secrecy shrouding the sect. Boko Haram gets sponsorship from several sources, thus making it difficult to pinpoint the actual source of its weapons

## **5.5 Conclusion**

In this chapter, I observed that Boko Haram's historical antecedent can be traced to the 10th and 11th century. The Hausa language was strongly established during that period, coupled with the influx of Muslim theologians which gave rise to the challenge of such syncretistic habits by Usman Dan Fodio through a Jihad. One important aspect in understanding Boko Haram is the name Dan Fodio which used as a historical figure in the spread of radical Islam in Nigeria.

This chapter identified that Boko Haram was not the first violent uprising to occur in Northern Nigeria, it was however the Jihad of Dan Fodio in 1804, coupled by the evolving division within the Muslims championed by Ahmadu Bello for the propagation of Sharia school, and the Sufi elites school. The 1980s however saw the formation of the Yan Izla movement, the Maitatsine revolt, religious riot in 1980s and 1990s, the Miss World hosting in 2002, and the cartoon riots of Prophet Muhammed

in 2006 in Bornu State (the birth place of Boko Haram). The time lapse between Boko Haram and these crises has been fraught with less socioeconomic advancement in Northern Nigeria, thus leading to a feeling of alienation, which acted as a precipitating factor in the acceptance of Boko Haram. One Unisom observed in ascribing for Boko Haram origin by the five perspectives of thought lies in the fact that the poor socioeconomic contradictions between the North and the South provided the fertile ground for the birth and manifestation of Boko Haram

## **Chapter 6**

# **ANALYSIS: UNDERSTANDING THE RISE OF BOKO HARAM FROM A HISTORICAL MATERIALIST PERSPECTIVE**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter incorporates a very unique but neglected theoretical discourse on Karl Marx's historical materialism in order to understand the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria. This theory states that terrorism is rather a deep expression of a continuous class struggle that is deeply rooted in the structures of oppression and structured contradictions of the global capitalist system. In recent times, the antagonistic class relations between the elite class and the lumpen class is made manifest in state and individual terrorism that has been the center of focus, especially in Nigeria's Boko Haram. This chapter underlines that Boko Haram terrorism cannot be understood without taking cognizance of class-nature and the socio-economic conditions that created it because it is these structural conditions that create its sympathizers which support these radicalized Islamist movement. Due to the high literature on Boko Haram that faults good governance as the reason for Boko Haram emergence, this chapter also looks at the limitations of the good governance literature in making sense of Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria.

### **6.2 The problem with Good Governance in explaining Boko Haram Emergence**

As discussed in detail in chapter two, the explanation of the emergence of Boko Haram from the perspective of World Bank and IMF led definition of good governance has

been problematic. This is because good governance implies a market friendly intervention and social capital, is a means to an end in which the appropriate institutional structures would encourage the development of an efficient free market economy, and fraught with inconsistencies. Therefore, explaining the rise of Boko Haram from the World Bank-IMF market led good governance perspective which views the free market as the antidote to the problem of lack of adequate development and slow growth is inappropriate. State institutions are being faulted as being so powerful that they pose a threat to the adoption of the right policies.

Nigeria since her independence in 1960 has adopted various market friendly neoliberal economic policy reforms, which ended as colossal failures due to lack of proper synergy with the peoples' needs and wants. Such policies after the adoption of good governance in the 1990s, enabled government to focus more on direct intervention and ensuring a productive atmosphere which involved the establishment of rules as a guiding force for an efficient market. Under these rules and institutions geared towards enabling flourishing and booming market bad policies were viewed as raising unexpected taxes on the private sector, economic redistribution benefits and market operation restrictions, including import restriction. After the failure of structural adjustment policies, Nigeria opened her markets to foreign based companies as stipulated. This invariably affected her home based industries, especially the textile industries located majorly in the northern part of Nigeria. These had to shut down because of their inability to meet up to the foreign standards due to lack of resources, thereby creating unemployment as a result of retrenchment. Thus the norm to allow markets to flourish only benefitted foreign based industries in Nigeria and multinational corporations to the detriment of the masses. Consequently, rather than

boost the economic sector of Nigeria, it turned into a bone in the neck and put Nigeria's economy in a sorry state.

Good governance in the literature as conceived by the World Bank expects institutions to encourage efficiency of the market against the state. Thus good governance, views civil society or capital as a means to an end, which includes the promotion of an efficient market led economy where the role of government is very minimal. This concept is seen as the dominant force behind the World Bank led poverty alleviation agenda of the 1990s. Poverty by the World Bank was viewed as a condition or process in which people become poor as a result of poor access to income earning activities created by the market<sup>106</sup>. However, this concept is also fraught with problems because even though they had a booming agricultural business in northern Nigeria which was a source of wealth for the Nigerian government the adoption of structural adjustment policies created an avenue for other foreign based companies in Nigeria to thrive and on the other hand the currency devaluation also made it difficult for home based industries to import due to the high value of the dollar. Thus poverty viewed as lack of income earning activities is wrong because even though the home based industries had the business idea and capital, they could not effectively compete with foreign companies which had better equipment and resources. The end product was the shutting down of market industries.

Similarly, the literature on good governance blames corruption as a clog in the wheel of development, privatization, and liberalization and state reforms as the oil to engine that wheel. However, corruption can only occur as a result of state regulations; thus

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid (Ray Kiely, 2005, p. 88)

rolls back of state and high wages for officials working under the state in order to curb corrupt practices were encouraged. Nigeria is viewed as a corrupt country which lacks moral standing. However, corruption is not also a prerequisite for poor development as cases of corrupt countries like South Korea and China which still had sound development and are ranked as one of the most successful developing countries in the World demonstrate. In effect, a benign market or corrupt state explanation as the reason behind Boko Haram insurgency is totally fallacious<sup>107</sup>. The reason for widespread corruption is broad to explain despite the already existing anti-graft agencies like War against Indiscipline in the 1980s, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, Independent and Corrupt Practices Commission saddled with the responsibility of combating corruption. Rather the existence of corruption or corrupt practices is not as a result of too much government but rather a reflection of the broader state formation process imposed on colonial Africa.

The solution to Boko Haram cannot be narrowed down to the simplistic set of technocrat policies or the promotion of limited government and market expansion. Thus, even though good governance literature calls for less government intervention, the government is needed in formulating policies that would benefit the masses, including implementing the minimum wage conditions and creating employment opportunities for the masses which the literature clearly fails to mention. In fact, good governance could be the remote cause, but widespread poverty and continuous sectarian strife within the state created the enabling environment for terrorism to spread to other parts of Nigeria as a result of the fact that a large number of Nigerians are

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<sup>107</sup>Ogunrotifa, B. A. (2012). The Myth about Terrorist: Historical Materialism as a response to Realist approach. *International Journal of Social Science and Education*, 107.



living in abject poverty. While the political elite enjoyed the highest revenue from oil proceeds, the majority of Boko Haram's supporters are from the North which is plagued with severe poverty in addition to the widening gap between the north and south. Besides, lack of good governance cited by authors as the problem of Boko Haram insurgency fails to take into account the problem of marginalization of the Christians against the Muslims, which leads to religious tension within Nigeria. It is imperative to note that the wave of good governance in Africa started in the early 1990s long after the Western led agencies and international organizations led pro-market reforms. However, the problem associated with it is less democratization than economic growth. Indeed, African governments' commitment to the requisite conditions for good governance agenda is diluted in practice.

### **6.3 How Can the rise of Boko Haram be understood from a Historical Materialist perspective**

The focus of terrorism studies is not a recent phenomenon in Nigeria but rather dates back to 1960. The leading literature on terrorism studies in Nigeria laid heavy emphasis on the good governance literature in explaining the rise of terrorism. The theoretical discourse made it difficult to comprehend and the war on winning it in Nigeria also faces uncertainty on the terms it was being waged, especially by the international community. However, due to the violent acts and threats involved, it is difficult to categorize those actually terrorized, what informed the use of terror and the strategic roles of the social class in using terrorist acts against the state. Unlike the literature on good governance which is used to explain the emergence of Boko Haram insurgency, historical materialism takes into consideration history, ideology and the intentions behind terrorism. Thus Marx's (1818-1883) historical materialism is used to explain

the material conditions of life, which is seen as the scientific law guiding human development and the historical succession of the society.

The application of historical materialism to explain Boko Haram insurgency rests on the inevitable consequence of the capitalist mode of production due to the social contradiction arising from the conflict from social relations and productive forces, which creates a new wave of continuous class struggle. It is imperative to note that these social relations of production are exploitative and hierarchical, and guaranteed by the state through the promotion of capitalist social relations encouraged within the capitalist state. Thus, the good governance agenda propagated by the World Bank and IMF led financial institutions in the 1990s did more harm than good as a result of its encouragement of capitalist fostered privatization which made some citizens to own more properties than others. After the dismantling of SAP led programs in 1994, the Abacha led regime as well as Obasanjo led government focused on privatization of public enterprises such as NITEL, NEPA later PHCN, the sale of the Nigerian refineries to private individuals . Thus privatization created an avenue for uneven development which further created societal stratification between the haves and have not. Capitalist agenda of good governance to which Nigeria hitherto conformed created inequality among the social classes and further divided the society between the rich and the poor. It is worthy to note from the research that during the economic crisis of the 1980s, the pre-SAP era as well as the Yar'Adua-Jonathan political dispensation, class antagonism became sharper due to the extreme polarization and economic inequality between the rich and the poor.

Prior to the adoption of structural adjustment policies the Nigerian state adopted an ostentatious economic policy that catered for the welfare of the citizenry. SAP induced

austerity measures reversed the trend. The ruling class and the business class however benefitted from this as exemplified by Babangida whose wealth accumulation during the SAP era was observed could offset Nigeria's debt. The attendant increased gap between the lumpen and ruling class invariably had an effect on the social relations within the capitalist bloc. Thus during Nigeria's economic crisis, austerity measures, less government spending, subsidy removal on agricultural products and fertilizers, devaluation of the naira, cuts on salaries and wages had a prevailing effect on the social relations which created social conflict and class struggle among the classes. It was observed that Nigeria's economic crisis during and after SAP led policies created civil unrest and agitations among the students and working class who were worse hit by these policies. Such agitations manifested as strike actions and disunity between the working class and the ruling class.

Ogunrotifa citing Alan Wood aptly observes that economic manifestations is not the most painful disparity of capitalism crisis, but rather its effects on the family and the individual which eventually lead to break down in family, severe crimes and violence as well as the dismal collapse of old morals and values<sup>108</sup>. Roman Loimeir explains that the rise of Boko Haram is deeply rooted within, in Northern Nigeria's specific economic, religious and political development<sup>109</sup>. Ambibola Adesoji similarly notes that Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria could be ascribed to the prevailing economic

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<sup>108</sup>Ogunrotifa, B. A. (2012). The Myth about Terrorist: Historical Materialism as a response to Realist approach. *International Journal of Social Science and Education*, 107.

<sup>109</sup>Roman, L. (2012). Boko Haram: The development of a Militant religious movement in Nigeria. *African Spectrum*, 47(4-3), p.140.

dislocation in the Nigerian society<sup>110</sup>. Thus D.E Agbiboa opines that as a result of the insurmountable gap between what people wanted and what they could get, violent actions flourished within a context of grievances caused by relative deprivation. Evidence abounds that one of the worst forms of political violence in Nigeria originates from the most socio-economically deprived parts of Nigeria, the North where chronic unemployment and acute poverty is the norm, and where radical Islamist groups have grown to challenge the state. In the Southeast, specifically the oil producing Niger Delta, oil practices have compromised the livelihoods of the indigenous people. These deplorable conditions, amidst plenty fueled ethnic militia groups made-up of unemployed youths who have engaged in all sorts of illegal activities and attacks against the Nigerian state.<sup>111</sup>

Focusing on the Northern part of Nigeria, the effects of poverty on health and education are a national embarrassment. In Borno state, the origin of Boko Haram only 2% of children under 25months have been vaccinated, 83% of young people are illiterate, 45% of children do not attend school<sup>112</sup>. Even evidence abounds from the national statistical data of 2010 that the northeast states have the highest poverty rate in the country at 64.8% (NBS 2010). The five poorest states are located in Northeast Nigeria. Given the forgoing, it is obvious that Boko Haram has a deep-rooted idea of victimhood and sees the state as the main persecutor of 'true' Muslims. The economic disparity with the propensity of individuals to resort to violent political actions can also

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<sup>110</sup>Adesoji, A. (2010b). The Boko Haram uprising and Islamic revivalism in Nigeria. *African spectrum*, 45(2), 95.

<sup>111</sup>Agbiboa, D. E. (2013C). No retreat, no surrender: Understanding the religious terrorism of Boko Haram in Nigeria. *in African study monographs*, 34(2), 77.

<sup>112</sup>Ibid (p. 76)

be linked as the reason for Boko Haram insurgency<sup>113</sup>. Femi Adegbulu however disagrees. He states that terrorism in Nigeria is homegrown, and a creation of the society which smiles at mediocrity, celebrates failure, and adores men (and women) of filthy lucre. He likens the terrorists to monsters created by the inept and corrupt leadership which oversees a rotten system that deprives people of their livelihoods and makes them starve in the land of plenty<sup>114</sup>. Benson Ohihoniboin using a popular quote from Karl Marx's concept of religion, has argued that "religion is the opium of the masses", and likens religion to an analgesic that dulls the senses, thereby inflicting a false sense of satisfaction and preventing the oppressed from revolting against the socioeconomic system<sup>115</sup>. Religion has become an energizing pill to pursue other goals than religion as depicted in the activities of Boko Haram sect. As opposed to Marx, religion has become an amphetamine which excites its members to violence, not only against its perceived political and economic issues, but also targeting the bulk of its attack on the Christians who are equally passing through the same problem.

Daniel Agbibo agrees; in fact, it was Jeffrey Seul, who argued that religious conflicts need not be about religion, and usually have non-religious causes. They are so called because this is the unifying and mobilizing identity. Religion is not the cause of religious conflicts, rather for many (...) it frequently supplies the fault lines along

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<sup>113</sup>Agbibo, D. E. (2014D). Peace at daggers drawn? Boko Haram and the state of emergency in Nigeria. *Studies in conflict and terrorism*, 7.

<sup>114</sup>Adegbulu, F. (2013). Boko Haram: The emergence of a terrorist sect in Nigeria 2009-2013. *African identities*, 11(3), 13.

<sup>115</sup>OhihonIboin, B. (2014). Karl Marx on religion: The perspective of Boko Haram in Nigeria. (E. Weber, Ed.) *Journal of religious culture*, 1.

which intergroup identity and resource competition occurs<sup>116</sup>. Boko Haram is thus partly the resultant effect of chronic poverty and deprivation in Northern Nigeria, having metamorphosed from a strictly religious movement to one espousing a political agenda<sup>117</sup>. Boko Haram trusts that the only way to retrieve and restore the North that is believed to be seized by Northern politicians made up of a group of corrupt, false Muslims is by waging war against the elite and the federal government<sup>118</sup>. Christian opines that inter-religious conflicts in Nigeria defy solutions and seem unending because they are intractable conflicts, sustained by serving the economic interest of certain religious leaders who conceal the economic matrix behind their support for fanatic religious values. These fanatic religious elite seek to advance their economic interest through religious mask at the masses' peril<sup>119</sup>. Also, Hakeem Onapajo and Ufo Okeke Uzodike attribute the emergence of Boko Haram in Nigeria to state failure and not manmade or accidental. They argue that state resources are usually siphoned by the political elites to enrich themselves and oppress the masses, thereby paving the way for increased poverty and unemployment rates in the country. Consequently, the Nigerian discontented class is situated in the army of unemployed youths<sup>120</sup>. Mohammed Sergie and Tonie Johnson therefore suggest that though Boko Haram

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<sup>116</sup>Agbibo, E. (2013). The Nigerian Burden: Religious identity, conflict and the current terrorism of Boko Haram. *Conflict, security and development*, p.403.

<sup>117</sup>Alozieuwa, S. (2012). Contending theories of Nigeria's security challenges in the era of Boko Haram insurgency. *Peace and conflict review*, 7(1), 7.

<sup>118</sup>Walker, A. (2012). *What is Boko Haram*. USA: Institute for Peace.

<sup>119</sup>Ezeibi, C. (2009). Inter religious conflict and crisis of development in Nigeria, who benefits. *International journal of research in Arts and social science*, 1.

<sup>120</sup>Onipajo, H., & Uzodike, U. O. (2012). Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria. *African Security Review*, 9, 10, 26.

could be ascribed to the abusive security forces and widening regional economic disparity, but government should be duty-bound to address the strife between the disaffected Muslim north and Christian south<sup>121</sup>.

Indeed, Don John Omale maintains that pools of unemployed labor, exploitative politicians, radical clerics, and population prone to violence accompanied by weakened national community cohesions have caused a permeable hole on the Nigerian state. The consequence has been the chronic violence of Boko Haram insurgency which is provoked and reproduced by diverse factors such as new patterns of inequality, and disjunctive processes of democratization. There is also this perceived gap among people in developing countries that see themselves as 'social zeroes' or 'second class citizens' or 'social death'.<sup>122</sup> Don John Omoale views the nonexistence of a worthy life as a result of chronic economic and social inequalities. Anthony Adebayo asserts that during its formation days, Boko Haram garnered the support of unemployed youths who were dissatisfied with the unemployment, poverty, corruption and insecurity that characterized the Nigerian state. Nigerians are hungry for change which is needed more in the North as a result of its chronic poverty, and economic underdevelopment. Boko Haram was able to dwell on the economic and political grievances of the people. In fact, the violent uprisings in Nigeria could be ascribed to

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<sup>121</sup>Sergie, M. A., & Johnson, T. (2014, 10 7). Nigeria's Boko Haram and Ansaru. *Boko Haram*, p. 2.

<sup>122</sup>Omale, J. D. (2013). Terrorism and counter terrorism in Nigeria: Theoretical paradigms and lessons for public policy. *Canadian Social Science*, 9(3), 7.

the fallout of frustration with corruption and its attendant social malaise of poverty and unemployment<sup>123</sup>.

In the same vein, Usman Ayegba (2015) x-rays the nexus between terrorism and poverty in Nigeria. Focusing on Boko Haram activities in the North, he identifies poverty, neglect, alienation, underdevelopment and youth unemployment in the region which have invariably created a loophole in the birth of radicalism<sup>124</sup>. In light of this, Lawan Cheri believes that the poverty in the North has created social exclusion and marginalization in such a way that has denied the youth a chance to participate in the economic and political decision making<sup>125</sup>.

The social contradictions mentioned by Karl Marx caused by the capitalist mode of production and government's inability to provide for the lumpen class breed anarchy. It is imperative to note that the bulk of Boko Haram followers are drawn from the unemployed youths who have poured their frustration on the Nigerian government. It is this frustrated section made up of the lumpen class that have formed into criminal and radical Islamic groups, sects and terrorist organization that have posed a serious challenge to Nigeria and her neighbors. Boko Haram in Northeast Nigeria, and MEND in south-south Nigeria have found a common solution to their problem as a social

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<sup>123</sup>Adebayo, A. A. (2014). Implication of Boko Haram terrorism on national development in Nigeria: A critical review. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Science*, 16, 2.

<sup>124</sup>Ayegba, U. (2013). Unemployment and poverty as sources and consequences of insecurity in Nigeria, the Boko Haram insurgency revisited. *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, 9(3), 10.

<sup>125</sup>Cheri, L. (2014). Job creation, poverty reduction and conflict resolution in North Eastern Nigeria. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 19(5), 35.



condition by engaging in terrorism and anarchism against the state. Although in its formative stage, Boko Haram spoke up against the poor governance and neglect of the northeast region, yet it has grown to be a political force whose ideology is supported by a particular section of the Nigerian society made up largely of the frustrated and discontented lumpen class who join such organization as a way to lash out at the society and government. It is imperative to also observe that Boko Haram ideology is really a direct confrontation against successive rulers who mismanaged the northeast region. Thus terrorism for Boko Haram is a way to respond to the frustration and economic hardship faced, as well as to change and influence the behavior of the state and ruling class by the enforcement of Sharia as a penal code of law throughout Nigeria. This however is not a proper reflection of the conditions on ground.

The strategy of terrorism employed by Boko Haram is a tactic to clamp down on government, a tactic employed by all classes during class struggle. Thus terrorism is actually a glaring reflection of the social relations among the various social classes enshrined within modern capitalism. In fact, whenever any class feels its interest is at stake, it employs the use of terrorism. Notable examples are the Maitatsine uprising, the Yan Izala movement, MEND and more recently Boko Haram. However, there is no denying the fact that terrorism by a particular class is not a peculiar phenomenon resigned to the Nigerian society alone; it occurred in the French revolution, the Arab spring, Mali and recently Nigeria<sup>126</sup>. Most of these countries are developing except France during its teething stage. It is less likely for terrorism to occur in a developed country due to less serious tension among the classes, arising from the ability of the state to provide social security benefits such as unemployment stipends, scholarship to

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<sup>126</sup> Ibid (Cheri , 2014, p. 35)

students, single mother benefits, pension and welfare packages for the lumpen and working classes. The financial crisis experienced by the United States and more recently Greece did not lead to class struggle because despite the economic crisis government could still fulfill its social contract to the citizens compared to other less developed countries. Haiti is a glaring example; despite its poor economic conditions and environmental disaster the problem of terrorism is still very strange to that country. Portugal also known as the sick man of Europe has managed perfectly well because it could still give certain economic benefits to the citizens due to the surplus capital nurtured by over exploitation of third world countries via taxes, and incomes from multinational corporations. Thus enough resources are made available to the social classes and the lumpen section in order to reduce antagonism and individual terrorism against the state.

However, developing countries that have witnessed the current wave of terrorism cannot afford these benefits, thus sharpening social antagonism and class divide among the people, especially the lumpen class. Nigeria's Northeast is plagued with chronic and acute poverty, the majority of its people having little access to the outside world as a result of their culture and geography. They have also been the most affected by Nigeria's economic policies; thus terrorism for Boko Haram is the consequence of prolonged years of frustration and neglect. The frustrated and declassed members that make up Boko Haram are found in the lumpen class who, angry with the government and state of neglect of the region, has become prey to groups or terrorist organizations quick to the use of individual terrorism against the Nigerian state.

Historical materialism offers a better explanation to Boko Haram insurgency because it offers an internal explanation from the society and economy rather than good

governance which explains from an external perspective. Historical materialism explains the emergence of Boko Haram from the materialist constellations located in the society or system that produces itself materially via a particular mode of production and social contradictions. Thus social contradictions that led to Boko Haram insurgency are located within the Nigerian society and not good governance which is foreign and a product of the IMF-World Bank led institutions. The understanding of Boko Haram should be done from the context of hierarchically structured relations made visible by the prevalent capitalism in Nigeria.

Historical Materialism of Karl Marx that brings class into terrorism studies gives a better illustration of Boko Haram insurgency because prior to the emergence of Boko Haram, the north was saddled with prevalent poverty and relative deprivation. More than 100 million Nigerians live on less than \$1 a day. In fact statistics of Nigerians in absolute poverty have gone high, the poverty ratio in the country is unevenly distributed with the worst based in the north. In fact, the national bureau of statistics report (2012) placed the poverty level of those in northeast at 70% compared to 50% and 59% for the southwest and southeast. The health survey illustrates that less than 25% of the women and 54% of men in northeast Nigeria could read and write compared to more than 74% of women and 90% of men in the south. The level of malnutrition among the children is also very alarming in the northern part of Nigeria compared to the south, even as the infrastructural development was also in a very poor condition. Thus the emergence of Boko Haram can be explained from the long history of ethnic and sectarian conflict that took into consideration the extreme poverty and deprivation conditions of Northern Nigeria. Nigeria had a per capita income of over \$2,700 and an annual GDP growth of 7% per annum, but she still ranked among the worlds' poorest population, with an alarmingly high rate of economic disparity between the north and

other parts of Nigeria. The percentage of people in Northern Nigeria who lived in abject poverty was placed at 72% compared to 27% in the south. Even the ethnic conflicts that rocked Northern Nigeria prior to Boko Haram are linked to economic inequality<sup>127</sup>

## **6.4 Conclusion**

Historical materialism, even though it is less developed emphasizes two types of terrorism which include individual and state terrorism. Boko Haram aims to actualize specific economic and religious goals. It is however seen as a non-state actor formed by the working or lumpen class as a response to the social contradictions of the Nigerian society. It is important to observe from the research conducted that membership of Boko Haram is drawn from the lumpen class, but have financial supporters among the ruling class that act as sponsors. Prior to Boko Haram insurgency, the Nigeria Bureau of Statistics placed the Northeast of Nigeria as the poorest, thus a fertile ground for terrorism to blossom. Previous terrorism groups prior to Boko Haram had engaged in individual terrorism against the Nigerian government.

There are indeed valid grievances acting as the driving force of Boko Haram but government failures to recognize these led to the escalation of the conflict to other states apart from the initial Northeast states and Nigeria's neighbors, including the republic of Cameroon. In fact, socio-economic variables and ethnicity are a very important structural condition to take note of. That is, the socioeconomic condition mentioned by Marx in his historical materialism is a very important point of Boko Haram insurgency. This includes declining economic opportunities that have increased the ranks of those unemployed, increased citizen impoverishment and limited

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<sup>127</sup>Ugwu, O. L. (2015). Boko Haram and insecurity in Nigeria: The quest for a permanent solution. *International Multidisciplinary Journal*, 9(1), 49.

educational opportunities. Even those educated find it difficult to get lucrative job opportunities despite the huge oil revenue in excess of \$14billion per annum. Despite that, more than half of the vast majority of Nigerians, especially those living in the Northeast fringes live on less than \$1dollar a day and four out of every ten Nigerians are saddled with unemployment. Most regions in Nigeria are faced with lack of clean water, no electricity or education but such sorry conditions are very peculiar to the Northeast of Nigeria. It is therefore within these poor conditions that the founder of Boko Haram Mohammed Yusuf, attracted followers by emphasizing the deteriorating and poor living standards, state corruption, among others.

There is also no gainsaying that Northern Nigeria has been fragile to radical Islamist conflicts and uprisings. It is one of the poorest parts of the country where people live in relative and abject poverty. Whereas the population of Southern Nigerians who live in abject poverty is about 27% compared to 72% for those in the North. In fact, the poor economic conditions witnessed in the North of Nigeria have further deepened due to desert encroachment, recurrent draught and rinderpest pandemic. The poor effects of globalization in which few textile industries in Northern Nigeria have failed to competitively meet up with the cheaper Asian imports have further widened the economic gap between the north and south. To better illustrate this point, majority of Nigerians prefer foreign based materials and fabric because of its better quality, compared to the Nigerian wax which has low quality. These conditions led to the closure of most factories in main towns of Northern Nigeria from 350 in 1987 to 103 in 2014. The deep economic impoverishment has further widened the margin between the political elite and the mass public since 1999. Nigerian politicians have been caught deep in the web of money laundering because the elite sees public office as an avenue

to amass wealth, and this unchallenged corruption has further cut the citizens from the state.

It is in this context that Boko Haram finds a just cause when it states that the Nigerian state has no moral standing, it is evil, even the Western-style state has in all totality failed. An understanding on why Boko Haram's message of social justice has become appealing to the economically vulnerable, especially the poor masses or lumpen class is seen from the sect membership that cuts across a broad spectrum of the society, the majority them deeply rooted among the poorest. Thus Boko Haram's focus to instill Sharia law in all 36 states of the federation should be viewed as a struggle for social justice, even though religion is used as an instrument for mass mobilization. In fact, this approach has a historical precedent in the Maitatsine revolt and the Yan Izala millenarian movement of the 1980s. The history of Nigeria has been clogged by socioeconomic and political challenges that have encouraged politicization of religion and religionisation of politics in Nigeria. However, the emergence of armed struggle in opposition to economic marginalization is not unique to the Northern part of Nigeria alone. In the 1990s, there was the agitation of Ken Saro Wiwa and the 9 Ogoni others that led to their killing by the Abacha led government. The Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta is also a recent example in a situation where economies have been the driving force of conflict because the Niger Delta region is fraught with poverty, unemployment, poor farming or fishing due to the oil exploration that has led to environmental damage<sup>128</sup>. Conflict can also be ethnic motivated. The mass media and the international community view Boko Haram insurgency as a

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<sup>128</sup>Hussein, S. (2014). Nigeria's Boko Haram, beyond the rhetorics. *Africa centre for the constructive resolution of dispute*, 4.

conflict between the Christian south and the Muslim north. Ethnic dimension of conflict has been the fault lines of Nigeria's conflict. This is so because even though the majority of Boko Haram's targets are Christians resident in the northern spheres of Nigeria, the opinion emphasizes the Hausa-Fulani Boko Haram that targets the Igbo ethnic group, thus creating the impression of ethnic cleansing among the Igbos that have felt alienated from Nigeria since Nigeria's independence in 1960, and precipitating a desire to secede from Nigeria<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>129</sup>Unigwe, C. (2012). *Boko Haram is Nigeria's enemy*. United Kingdom: The Guardian. Retrieved 7 23, 2015, from [www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk)

## **Chapter 7**

### **CONCLUSION**

This chapter summarizes the main findings of this thesis. It was underlined that there existed five perspectives on the dynamics behind the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria. The first perspective posits that Boko Haram is the end product of religion and religious identity struggle in Nigeria. The second perspective argued that Boko Haram is a byproduct of the political confusion brought on by the competition among the ruling class. The third perspective identified Boko Haram as an offshoot of the Maitatsine revolt that occurred in the 1980s. The fourth perspective cites economic inequality as the main reason behind the Boko Haram. The fifth school is the good governance literature that was used to explain the rise of Boko Haram.

The thesis first identified the shortcomings of the four perspectives before moving on to engage itself with the good governance literature which is one of the most widespread analyses of the rise of the Boko Haram. It was underlined that the first perspective that explains Boko Haram by referring to religious identity struggle is problematic because Muslims in Nigeria do not form a homogenous entity but are rather divided into smaller movements and groups that show a reflection of the social, political and religious orientation.

The second perspective traced the Boko Haram to the Maitatsine revolt of the 1980s. However, the time lapse over the years cannot sufficiently account as the reason behind the birth and growth of Boko Haram. The third perspective cites economic



inequality between the north and the south which has been the fault lines of the conflict. During the course of my research I identified a fifth perspective known as the good governance literature which is also the dominant literature used in making sense of Boko Haram's actions. Good governance was born out of concern and implications for development which led to a reformation of the Washington consensus, thus the notion of accountability was applied to developing countries because to them Africans suffers from a crisis of governance.

The literature on good governance means “accountability of government, a clear legal framework to embracing the rule of law, citizen access to reliable information and transparent, open government which includes an end to corruption, what this implies is that a government that gives account to its electorate coupled with a constitutional system in which the rule of law is ensured with access to government policies, coupled with an incorruptible government should be the prerequisite for donor countries to issue loans to developing countries.

In this research, I identified problems with the World Bank definitional concept of good governance, the literature failed to address the fundamental power relations and asymmetries of power that exist between classes at the level of the nation state. This is despite the fact that it is the very power relations that needs to be challenged for key development issues to be tackled in a comprehensive manner.

In the second chapter, I answered the research question by looking at it from a historical materialist perspective on terrorism. The research discovered that the dynamics behind the Boko Haram insurgency are complex, thus it cannot be entirely reduced to the economic factors yet the economic policies pursued by successive

administration from independence till date rather than bridge the gap between the rich and the poor created a great margin which led to social dissent especially within the proletariat and the lumpen class especially within the period of Nigeria's adoption of SAP. It saw the first wave of a unified class protesting against government policies, I discovered in my research that the dwindling economy especially in the Northeast of Nigeria served as a reference point for Boko Haram's recruitment.

Thus from my hypothesis I discovered that if you look at the main supporters of Boko Haram we can see that the sect is mainly supported by the lumpen proletariat and the poor of the periphery( The majority of Boko Haram supporters comprise of the poor or have not, the unemployed graduate, the girl child, mothers whose sons are members of Boko Haram and all those who are disappointed by the Nigerian state, class struggle is further heightened as a result of the socioeconomic decline of the lumpen proletariat and this further leads to the employment of state terrorism which pretty much summarizes what is going on in Nigeria regarding the rise of Boko Haram. With the case of the Boko Haram insurgency, the working and lumpen class represent non-state actors' use of terrorism, while the government represents the use of terrorism by state actors. Thus government and the ruling class in the society employ state terrorism to suppress dissent and induce fear in the citizens while certain individual(s), group(s) or organization(s) use individual terrorism to achieve political objectives, express grievances and lash out at societal injustice. I also observed a link between Boko Haram and historical materialist account to terrorism studies because of the support structure of the organization. The majority of Boko Haram supporters are comprised of the poor in the society, women, unemployed graduates, the almajiri's who are promised better standard of living by this Islamic sect, all of them fall prey to their promise.

In the third chapter, I discovered that on Nigeria's independence, prior to the military coup of January 1966, the government was nothing more than an alliance between tribally based parties in the east and the north on the one hand, and a tribally based opposition in the west. The marriage of convenience paved the way for an alliance between the North and the West against the East. The focus deviated from national interest to regional interest. Nigeria witnessed a turbulent life, before the military intervention. The present state of Boko Haram insurgency could be linked to the colonial legacies bequeathed from Britain because Nigeria's independence was achieved by Nigerians who had merely coexisted as mutually antagonistic ethnic groups, the consciousness of which had been instilled in them by their colonial rulers. It has been shown that the British in their African colonies infused common identities and solidarity in their newly created ethnic groups, but did much afterwards to exaggerate their differences and separateness, their own interests which were defined in political terms vis-à-vis other competing groups. Thus the issue of tribe became more pronounced during the colonial era, the Nigerian state at independence did not help in this scenario with the creation of regional based parties to represent their interest at the federal level. Ethnic identity is therefore a colonial twentieth century phenomenon which has posed serious problems because it encouraged an uneven development, educational gap and the struggle for dominance. The new constitution of Nigeria at independence was a reflection of these feelings; also colonialism sowed the seed of conflict on many fronts. Politically, colonial rule alienated the ruled from the rulers; it also excluded different segments of people from one another. Even the educational policies adopted created a bridge between the North and South, with a strong consequence for leadership struggle in the government and economy of the Nigerian state

In the fourth chapter, which focuses on the economic policies and historical development of Nigeria, I highlighted that the issue of inequality and class consciousness became stressed during structural adjustment period. It was made visible in structured inequality. The bulk of the Nigerian population were losers of SAP due to the unprecedented opposition and antigovernment criticism and riot from the displaced economic class comprising students, workers, agricultural farmers and business oriented class who felt the impact of SAP policies. Be that as it may, it is not entirely justifiable to attribute most of Nigeria's economic problem to SAP because of other economic problems, such as mismanagement of fund, corruption, political instability and the pluralistic nature of Nigeria which encouraged ethnic. In the literature on structural adjustment policies in Nigeria, authors agreed that the IMF/World Bank led SAP failed the vast majority of Nigerians because of the mass unemployment it created. I observed that the most hit by SAP implementation in Nigeria were those already at risk, that is the poor and women in the society because, by cutting the needed social subsidies and support system, the Nigerian government succeeded in marginalizing the vulnerable population. The currency devaluation that was a necessary precondition for SAP loan, made the wages inefficient to meet the basic standards of the people. Thus the middle class people found themselves in the lower class during the SAP policies unable to meet their pre-SAP life standard. The main focus for structural adjustment policy was ignored as a result of the failure to properly initiate dialogue with the common citizenry who needed these funds the most. Their inability to adapt such policies in favor of the unique African society created a dissent among a disaffected class who felt government policies had brought nothing but economic hardship on them as a result of massive poverty and inequality. Such poverty in the midst of plenty created ethnic dissent within a group of people in the

North worst hit due to their unique economic and religious background that made it difficult for them to focus on other means of sustenance aside from agricultural produce and livestock farming

Therefore, one will not be far from the truth if she states that even though the working class and those in the agricultural sector were the worst hit by structural adjustment policies, those located in Northern Nigeria felt the enormous impact of SAP. They had a very high population due to high childbirth rate. Thus the income reduction by the federal government had significant impact on households in Northern Nigeria which was hitherto an agrarian economy in nature. The removal of subsidies on agricultural products and fertilizers which they were heavily dependent on severely adversely affected their ability to afford such necessary products needed for the development of the agricultural sector. It also created a situation in which families were focused on producing for their needs. In other words, the outcry from the north on the impacts of structural adjustment and unfavorable government policies on that region is unique and justifiable.

In the fifth and sixth chapter, I noticed that the time lapse between Boko Haram and this crisis has been fraught with less socioeconomic advancement in Northern Nigeria, thus leading to a feeling of alienation, which acted as a precipitating factor in the acceptance of Boko Haram. One unison observed in explaining Boko Haram origin by the five perspectives of thought lies in the fact that the poor socioeconomic contradictions between the North and the South provided the fertile ground for the birth and manifestation of Boko Haram.

There are indeed valid grievances acting as the driving force of Boko Haram but government failures to recognize these led to the escalation of the conflict to other states apart from the initial Northeast states and Nigeria's neighbors, including the republic of Cameroon. In fact, socio-economic variables and ethnicity are a very important structural condition to take note of. That is, the socioeconomic condition mentioned by Marx in his historical materialism is a very important point of Boko Haram insurgency. This includes declining economic opportunities that have increased the ranks of those unemployed, increased citizen impoverishment and limited educational opportunities. Even those educated find it difficult to get lucrative job opportunities despite the huge oil revenue in excess of \$14billion per annum. Despite that, more than half of the vast majority of Nigerians, especially those living in the Northeast fringes live on less than \$1dollar a day and four out of every ten Nigerians are saddled with unemployment. Most regions in Nigeria are faced with lack of clean water, no electricity or education but such sorry conditions are very peculiar to the Northeast of Nigeria. It is therefore within these poor conditions that the founder of Boko Haram Mohammed Yusuf, attracted followers by emphasizing the deteriorating and poor living standards, state corruption, among others. An understanding of why Boko Haram's message of social justice has become appealing to the economically vulnerable, especially the poor masses or lumpen class is seen from the sect membership that cuts across a broad spectrum of the society, the majority of them deeply rooted among the poorest. Thus Boko Haram's focus to instill Sharia law in all 36 states of the federation should be viewed as a struggle for social justice, even though religion is used as an instrument for mass mobilization. In fact, this approach has a historical precedent in the Maitatsine revolt and the Yan Izala millenarian movement of the 1980s. The history of Nigeria has been clogged by socioeconomic and political

challenges that have encouraged politicization of religion and religionisation of politics in Nigeria.

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