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## Political Instability and Infrastructural Development in Nigeria: A Perspective from the Boko Haram Insurgency

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### Abstract

A stable polity is a sine qua non for progress in any given society. This study examined the consequences of the political instability occasioned by the menace of the Boko Haram insurgency in some parts of northern Nigeria. Specifically, the study interrogated the effect of the insurgency on infrastructural development in the area. Data was obtained from secondary sources which include books, journals, magazines, periodicals, newspapers, the internet, etc. The Conflict Breed Poverty Theory (Kanbur, 2007) was adopted as the theoretical framework while content analysis was employed as the mode of analysis. Results of the data analysis showed that the Boko Haram insurgency has not only caused a devastating effect on the existing infrastructural facilities in the zone but has reduced and slowed the prospects of further development. This is due to the fact that the vandalized infrastructure has to be replaced before new ones can be put in place. The study suggested that everything be done to bring the insurgency to an early end.

**Keywords:** *Political instability, Infrastructural development, Boko Haram insurgency, Prospects, Devastating blow*

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### **Background to the Study**

It is inconceivable for a society to choose political instability in preference to stability and peaceful coexistence amongst its citizens or residents. Thus, whichever way and in whatever form, political instability can never be an option. This is so because so much destruction of lives and property are often associated with instability. The Boko Haram Insurgency has been identified as one factor which facilitated various levels of destruction of physical, economic and social infrastructures particularly educational infrastructures in most parts of Northern Nigeria. An official of the Ministry of Education lamented that, 85 schools were closed down in Borno state, affecting about 120, 000 students after a frequent attack by Islamic militants in areas which have the country's highest illiteracy rate, and more than 200 school girls were kidnapped on the night of April, 2014 (the Guardian, March 18, 2014)

In the words of Odinkalu (2014), "the closing down of schools have far reaching consequences, including ending the education of many students and the opportunity to get to high education". It was also reported that, From the beginning of 2012 about 70 teachers and more than 1000 school children have been killed while some were wounded; 50 schools were burnt and more than 60 others have been forced to close. Many children were forced out of school across communities -in Yobe, Kaduna, Adamawa and Borno States. Many teachers were forced to migrate to other locations for safety (The Guardian, March 18, 2014).

The above activities of the insurgents, as well as other activities in places like Abuja and elsewhere, have triggered so many enquiries about the sect. As a result, there are various views on the causes and modus operandi of the group. According to Blanchard (2014:10), Understanding Boko Haram's appeal among some citizens in Nigeria's far north requires an examination of underlying development challenges facing northern Nigeria, while high rates of poverty and unemployment are exacerbated by extreme population growth and low level of literacy. These factors combined weak governance, rampant corruption and inadequate public service delivery, have contributed to the widespread disaffection that some suggest may facilitate Boko Haram recruitment.

Umar (2013), observed that, a country with legacies of economic stagnation, high level of unemployment and uneven economic development would certainly provide a fertile ground on which terrorist activities can thrive.

### **Statement of the Research Problem**

Since the return to democracy in 1999, the Nigerian polity has been bedeviled by ethno-religious and all manner of violence "The Boko Haram Insurgency has continued to pose a serious threat to the country's security system and corporate political entity" (Zenn, 2014). The Federal Government is known to have claimed that Boko Haram has been defeated and decimated. It is worrisome that the sect has increased its modus operandi. Anyadike (2014) laments that, "the changing dynamics of the operations and tactics of the group has confused many scholars and analysts. This study seeks to examine the effect of Boko Haram Insurgency on infrastructural development in some parts of northern Nigeria.

## Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to assess the effect of Boko Haram insurgency on infrastructural development in parts of Northern Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to:

- a. Ascertain the effect of Boko Haram insurgency on educational infrastructure in parts of the North.
- b. Examine the impact of the insurgency on health infrastructure in parts of the north.

## Research Questions

This study will provide answers to two questions. They include:

- a. What is the effect of the Boko Haram insurgency on the educational infrastructural development in parts of northern Nigeria?
- b. To what extent has the insurgency affected the development of health infrastructure?

## Literature Review

### Conceptual Literature

**Political instability:** Lipset (1960), defines democratic stability as, “uninterrupted continuation of political democracy” and “the absence of a major political movement opposed to the democratic rules of the game”. Morrison and Stevenson (1971), used a similar definition which conceptualized political instability as “a condition in political systems in which the institutionalized patterns of authority breakdown”, but added that, “the expected compliance to political authorities is replaced by political violence, Sandors (1981) provides a more refined definition as he views political instability as “the extent to which the occurrence or non-occurrence of changes in and challenges to the government, regime or community deviates from the previous system specific normal pattern”. Similarly, political stability is defined in the broadest sense in terms of changes in or challenges to the political system.

**Infrastructure:** Tinbergen (1962) introduces the distinction between infrastructure (eg. Roads and education) and superstructure (comprising manufacturing, agricultural and mining activities). He tries to make his clarification in the field of economics. In this case, hard can one find precise definitions of the term. In these present times, Nijkamp (2000) speaks about infrastructure as material public capital (roads, railways, (air) ports, pipelines etc.) and superstructure meaning immaterial public capital (knowledge networks, communication, education, culture etc.), again without specifying the proposed terms in sufficient detail.

Infrastructural development is synonymous with infrastructure investment which consists of capital intensive projects which in most countries are largely publicly owned, regulated and provides the backbone of the production and distribution system.

**Boko Haram/Insurgency:** This is a jihadist militant organization based in northern Nigeria, also active in Chad, Niger and northern Cameroon. The group was founded by Mohammed Yusuf in 2002; however Abubakar Shekau has led the group since 2009.

When it was initially formed, the activities of the group were to purify Islam in northern Nigeria". From March 2015 to August 2016, the group was aligned with the Islamic state of Iraq and the Levant. The Boko Haram/insurgency began in 2009 "when the jihadist group Boko Haram started an armed rebellion against the government of Nigeria" (Mossiter, 2009). The conflict takes place within the context of long standing issues of religious violence between Nigeria's Muslim and Christian communities, and the insurgents, ultimate aim is to establish an Islamic state in the region.

The term 'insurgency' may be defined as, "an organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through the use of subversion and armed conflict" (GPO, 2001). The U.S Army Field Manual (1986), opines that, "Insurgency movements traditionally find their roots in a desire for social and/or political change and utilize guerrilla warfare to accomplish their goals".

### Empirical Literature

This section reviews some past and current works on the subject matter. This act is presented in a tabular form as follows:

**Table 1.**

Name of Researcher (s) Time/year of study Time frame of research	Geographical/content and scope covered	Data and analytical tools	Results/findings/ conclusion
Mohammed, Ibrahim and Suleiman (2017). Analysis of the Impact of Boko Haram insurgency on Education in Adamawa State.	Nigeria: Boko haram, education, Adamawa state-school enrolment, school attendance and school infrastructure	Primary data sourced through the distribution of 372 questionnaires to the affected area. Structural equation model was used in analyzing the data collected	Findings indicate that educational output, (human capital investment) is affected by school enrolment, school attendance and school infrastructure by 71%, 84% and 82% as a result of any 1% increase in Boko Haram. It also revealed that extreme religious beliefs, unemployment and illiteracy contributed to the occurrence of Boko Haram Insurgency. The study concluded that Boko Insurgency indirectly and significantly affects human capital investment through school enrolments, school attendance and school infrastructure.
Adebisi, Azeez and Oyediji (2017). Appraising the effects of Boko Haram Insurgency on Agricultural sector of Nigerian Business Environment.	Nigeria: Boko Haram Insurgency, Agricultural sector, the Nigerian Business environment	Time series research method analysis method was used; while descriptive statistics and t-test were employed to analyze the secondary data before and during the insurgency.	Result show that agricultural value addition to GDP was high before Boko Haram disruption and has reduced during the period of insurgency. The study recommends that government takes actions to recover agricultural losses occasioned by Boko Haram and also encourage farmers to increase productivity.
Awojobi (2014). The socio-economic implication of Boko Haram Insurgency in the north-east of Nigeria	Nigeria: Bombings, killings, kidnappings and destruction of property economy and the people.	Secondary data were used from the internet. It was a qualitative research.	Results reveal that the atrocities of Boko Haram have severe adverse implications on the economy and social lives of the people of the north east where the activities of the sect are concentrated.

### Theoretical Framework

Poverty Breeds conflict hypothesis, (Kanbur, 2007). This study adopts the poverty breeds conflict hypothesis as its theoretical framework. Kanbur (2007), believes that, “there is causality from high poverty rate to conflict”. The theory explains why the youths are always taking to violence. According to the deprivation theory, “aggression is always a consequence of frustration” and “frustration always leads to aggression” (Leeds, 1978).

“The poor are led to violence owing to their relative deprivation and needs” (Odumosu, 1999 cited in Awojobi, 2014). “Frustration, lack of income, unemployment have prompted the youths in Northern Nigeria to become foot soldiers of Boko Haram” (Awojobi, 2014). Sarmiento and Bacerra (1998), and Sarmiento (1999) are leading scholars on the poverty breeds conflict hypothesis.

### Research Methodology

In this qualitative research, data obtained from secondary materials were analyzed through the use of content analysis. The analysis ran in the following sequence:

**Research Question One (1):** What is the effect of the Boko Haram Insurgency on the development of educational infrastructure in the north east of Nigeria?

The education sector in Nigeria especially the North-eastern part of the country is confronted with challenges of Boko Haram insurgency. This is due to the fact the insurgents have destroyed many schools in the affected states. It has low school enrolment, especially for girls coupled with a high number of out-of-school children. A statistical data on the population of 9 affected local governments in Adamawa shows a low population of school enrolment as follows:

**Table 2:** School enrolment for selected 9 schools in Adamawa

Senatorial zone	Affected Local Govt. Areas	Total number of schools/Tertiary Institutions (population)
Central	Gombi	43
	Hong	70
North	Mubi north	35
	Mubi south	30
	Madagali	36
	Michika	53
	Maiha	22
South	Qanye	29
	Mayo-Belnea	42
Total	09	360

**Source:** Generated from secondary schools statistical, Data, Adamawa State, Yola (2017).

A study by Mohammed (2015) which examined the effect of insurgency on girl's education in North eastern Nigeria, revealed that, "the insurgency has affected girl-child education negatively in north eastern Nigeria, because school girls have been hurt in the presence of other fellow students during attack in their schools; as such female students are afraid to go to school.

Boko Haram groups have claimed many attacks on schools in northern Nigeria since 2009. The attacks have been more worrisome since 2014 as they appear too deadly to recall. The first was on February 18, 2014 when the insurgents set ablaze the Federal Government, Buniyadi in Yobe state. The boys boarding and all teachers' apartments were completely razed. It is sad to recall that 24 school boys were burnt beyond recognition while 127 students were seriously injured.

The second most disturbing attack on school facilities occurred on April 14, 2014 when the group abducted 200 girls writing the West African School Certificate Examination at the Government Secondary School, Chibok in Borno state. These girls were forcefully taken from their dormitories at midnight to Sambisa forest near the Cameroon border where they were kept as shield against the bombardment of the federal forces

A third senseless attack on school facility took place on September 17, 2014. The insurgents jumped over the school fence and began to shoot sporadically to scare the student. 15 students were killed and another 34 seriously wounded including a lecturer. This was right inside a lecture hall at the Federal College of Education in Kano where a suicide bomber blew up himself.

The fourth and most deadly attack on school pupils/students in the history of the insurgency took place at the Government Secondary School, Potiskum in Yobe state on November 10, 2014. At the school morning general assembly, a suicide bomber disguising as one of the students ran into other students killing 49 students and badly injuring 71 others. Source: (European Centre for Research Training and Development, UK).

In a study on "Empirical analyses of Boko Haram insurgency on educational management in northern Nigeria, Olowaselu, Bello and Onuseluogun (2014), presented the challenges of education management in Northern Nigeria and recommended that the federal government should show more commitment in protecting school facilities by posting more armed security personnel to safeguard such infrastructures.

**Research question two (2):** To what extent has the Boko Haram insurgency affected the development of health infrastructure in the north east geo-political zone of Nigeria?

Over the past decades, the north eastern states of Nigeria have not benefited from the same levels of development and investment as other states in the country (notably the oil-rich states in the south). This is partly due to the structure of the regional economy,



characterized by sub-optimal productivity, endemic poverty and chronic unemployment, as well as historical under-investment in economic infrastructure, basic social service provision and governance. These structural constraints meant that the ability of the population and social and economic systems to cope with conflict-induced disruptions was already eroded, weak and susceptible to collapse. There is therefore, no surprises that the conflict has significantly impacted on the provision of essential social services such as health, water/sanitation and education through deliberate targeting and destruction of infrastructures, facilities and equipment. In the health sector, 45 percent of all health facilities including 21 hospitals have been destroyed while 75 percent of all water and sanitation infrastructures are estimated to have been destroyed. The result is that less than half of the population has access to safe drinking water. The table below provides an overview of losses to the social service sector broken down by state.

**Table 3:** Estimated damages to social services, by state (in US and millions)

Sectors	Adamawa	Borno	Yobe	Gombe	Taraba	Bauchi	Total
Education	58	143.8	47.3	2.1	10.2	11.6	273
Health/sanitation	21.1	59	32.9	0.4	6.5	27.8	147.7
Water/sanitation	7.3	35	3.6				45.9
Totals	86.4	237.8	83.8	2.5	16.7	39.4	466.6

**Source:** Federal Government of Nigeria, North East Nigeria Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessment, (2015).

The scenario and extent of losses occasioned by the insurgency presented above can be buttressed via costs estimated in the context of the intervention Assessment Needs for Recovery by the Federal Government of Nigeria. Again, the recovery needs are quoted in US dollars state by state for the period 2011-2015.

**Table 4:** Overview of Recovery Needs for selected Infrastructure and services by state (2011-2015, in US\$)

Sector	COST (USD)							Total
	Adamawa	Borno	Yobe	Gombe	Taraba	Bauchi	Federal	
Agriculture	141,109,690	485,443,689	170,029,316	18,487,489	29,700,262	36,602,990	-	88,373,435
Energy	31,852,500	15,938,500	3,318,000	-	3,391,250	-	92,477,500	146,977,750
Health	50,636,400	481,690,400	86,168,000	4,047,600	12,744,800	29,286,000	2,202,500	666,775,700
Social protection	93,764,839	180,263,768	69,565,531	34,290,979	30,556,069	91,080,398	-	499,521,583
Transport	74,531,000	337,522,671	126,711,650	37,001,900	-	-	-	575,767,221
Water & sanitation	25,890,554	115,323,061	17,211,969	2,955,809	4,682,627	5,788,496	-	171,852,516
Total	417,784,983	1,616,182,088	473,004,466	96,783,777	81,075,007	162,757,884	94,680,000	2942,268,205

**Source:** Federal Government of Nigeria, North East Nigeria Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessment: Component Reports, 2015.

The table above shows the recovery needs for selected infrastructures state by state. Thus, it presents the extent of devastation for social services including the health sector where a

total recovery cost has been estimated at 666,775,700 US dollars for the states of Adamawa, Borno, Yobe, Gombe, Taraba, and Bauchi. A more overview of humanitarian needs for selected clusters based on 2017 appeal makes the extent of devastation clearer.

**Table 5:** Overview of Humanitarian Needs for Selected Clusters based on 2017 Appeal

Cluster/sector	2017 Appeal (US \$)	4 years projected (US \$)
Early Recovery and livelihoods	44,553,589	178,214,356
Food security	480,260,433	1,921,041,732
Health	93, 827,598	375,310,392
Nutrition	88, 274,151	353,096,604
Protection		
Water and sanitation	49,736,246	198,944,984
Total	866,920,685	3,467, 682,740

**Source:** OCHA, Financial Tracking System.

For an economy as battered as the Nigerian economy, raising the colossal sum of US \$ 375,310,392 to replace infrastructural facilities in the health sector is no mean task particularly for the North east geopolitical zone which lacks the economic potentials to sustain such infrastructures. The situation is even worse as one recalls to memory, the fact that the north east suffered severe infrastructural deficits when compared to the southern oil rich state ever before the inception of Boko haram insurgency. An empirical investigation by Bilyaminu, Iya, and Purokayo (2017) confirmed in its findings that educational output (human capital investment is affected by school enrolment, attendance and social infrastructure by 71%, 84% and 82% as a result of any 10% increase in Boko haram activities.) The National Human Development Report (2018) observed that, “the impact of the insurgency on all the basic Human development indices is colossal”. Continuing, the report (2018) maintains that, “not only has more than two million people been displaced and tens and thousands killed in the last decade alone, but the sheer destruction of the basic economic and social infrastructure will take a long time to rebuild.”

### Findings

The analyses in this study revealed a number of facts:

1. The education sector in Nigeria especially in the north east is confronted with a number challenges following the activities of the Boko Haram insurgents.
2. The north east states in Nigeria had been backward in terms of social and economic infrastructure even before the advent of Boko Haram insurgency
3. The insurgents have specifically targeted education infrastructures especially schools killing pupils, students, teachers and abducting school girls thus affecting adversely school enrolments. School girls in particular are the most affected as such girls are now afraid to be in school.
4. The 200 school girls from Chibok were the first set of female students to be abducted and taken to Sambisa forest near Cameroon.



5. The attacks have been more worrisome since 2014 as they appear too deadly to recall.
6. On February 2014, the insurgents set ablaze the Federal Government College, Buniyadi in Yobe state. The boys boarding and teacher's apartment were completely razed with 24 boys burnt beyond recognition while 127 others sustained serious injuries.
7. Health facilities have not been spared from the vandalism of the insurgents. Hospitals, water/sanitary equipments are also known to be the deliberate targets of the insurgency in the north east.
8. A recovery assessment needs for selected infrastructure reveals the total of 666,750 US dollars is needed for recovery from health facilities vandalism occasioned by Boko Haram. This will take a long time to materialize.

### **Conclusion**

The North East geopolitical zone have been taking the back seat in terms of infrastructural development even before the inception of Boko Haram insurgency. The insurgents in their activities have worsened the situation which will take a long time to recover from. Thus, schools facilities have been destroyed which are estimated to worth hundreds and millions of US dollars, pupils and students are known to have been killed along with their teachers while health facilities have not been spared. The situation is quite worrisome in view of the consequences and socio economic implications of the degree of vandalism. Worthy of mention is the abysmal plummeting of school enrolment in the zone particularly for the girl child as well as the widespread epidemics and diseases in out of the camps of the internally displaced.

### **Recommendations**

The findings of the study has necessitated the following recommendations:

1. The Federal Government of Nigeria should do all it takes to stop the insurgency in the country especially the north east geopolitical zone.
2. Efforts should be intensified to recover the remaining Chibok and other adoptees of the insurgents.
3. The collaboration of the international community should be sought.
4. Heavily armed security personnel should be posted to educational and health institutions to ensure the safety of lives of students, teachers, health workers and the facilities.
5. Government should seek financial assistance from international donors and financial institutions to ensure speedy reconstruction of the infrastructures destroyed as no efforts should be spared to forestall further vandalism by the insurgents.

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