Intelligence Failure and Insecurity in Nigeria: An Analysis of the Boko Haram Insurgency

[1]Raimi Lasisi & [2]Ene, W. Robert
Department of Sociology and Anthropology,
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Federal University Otuoke, Bayelsa State, Nigeria

Abstract

Following the numerous heinous activities of the Boko Haram insurgent group in the Northern part of Nigeria, government and academics have been forced to redirect their attention North-ward. A close examination of existing academic works on the Boko Haram insurgency in the country reveals that very little attention has been paid to the understanding of the role of intelligence failure and how this exacerbates insecurity in the country. In light of this, this paper examined the issue of intelligence failure and insecurity in Nigeria focusing on the Boko Haram insurgency in the north. To achieve this broad aim as well as the specific objectives highlighted in the paper, the Marxist Political Economy theory was adopted as the theoretical framework as well as an analytical method. This was further strengthened by the content analysis technique of data gathering and the thematic method which informed the data analysis. Based on the information gathered and analyzed, it is the submission of this paper that the Boko Haram menace thrives under a political economy structure that enables ethnic and religious loyalties to undermine the intelligence gathering system currently being deployed to fight the insurgents. As a result, the insurgents rely on the tacit support of some members of the ruling class to carry on their activities in a sustained manner. Based on this, the paper recommends among others that for effective intelligence gathering system to be successful in the fight against Boko Haram, the federal government of Nigeria should ensure that ethnic and religious loopholes linked to the security agencies are blocked through the use of other oversight agencies.

Keywords: *Intelligence Failure, Insecurity, Boko Haram, Insurgency, Northern Nigeria*

Corresponding Author: Raimi Lasisi

Background to the Study
As social scientists, we examine events that transform the course of social history in such a way that they are recognized in the present as structural-historical facts with regard to their structure, place in history, impact on the statics of the society in which they exist, and most importantly their effect on social dynamics. In light of this, it may not amount to over exaggeration if we liken the extremist activities of Boko Haram to events like the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon bombings in the United States as well as many more allied structures like the ISIS/L, Al Qaeda among others (Raimi & Akubo, 2014). While structural-historical events do not necessarily have to be associated with violence, criminality, insurgency and religious extremism to alter the course of history or even attract the attention of scholars, the activities of Boko Haram and other related extremist movements have accrued to themselves a force of policy and academic gravity that even Isaac Newton himself would worry about.

Following the numerous heinous activities of the Boko Haram group in the Northern part of Nigeria, government and academics have been forced to redirect their attention North-ward. In this sense, the Nigerian government has committed and is still committing funds and military force to ensure that the deadly Boko Haram group is dissipated. Similarly, academics have invested high level intellectual concern on the issue with several empirical results. Yet, the problem still persists. Although the Nigerian government prides itself on the fact (or not) that Boko Haram has been significantly battered and weakened, stories of bomb explosion and the usual trademark of deaths and wailing continue to filter into our daily news.

A close examination of existing academic works on the Boko Haram insurgency in the country reveals that very little attention has been paid to the understanding of the role of intelligence failure and how this exacerbates insecurity in the country. Since the current insurgency in the north-eastern part of Nigeria started in 2009 by the group Boko Haram, it has killed more than 20,000 and displaced about 2.3 million persons from their homes (Associated Press, 2015). The emergence of the Boko Haram heralded a new dimension of insecurity challenge in Nigeria that has hitherto never been experienced.

The broad aim of this paper is to theoretically examine the intelligence gathering structure of public security agencies in Nigeria and how this is deployed in terms of fighting Booko Haram in Northern Nigeria. In an attempt to achieve this broad objective, the paper also examined the nature and dynamics of the Boko Haram menace, the issues associated with the current intelligence processes that have led to failures in addressing the problem of Boko Haram in addition to providing proof that if effective intelligence gathering system is deployed, the Boko Haram crisis can be better managed. In the end, the paper provides some useful suggestions or possible ways of improving on the intelligence gathering framework of the country in the bid to address the terror associated with the Boko Haram group.

Conceptual Clarification and Framework

Three key concepts are associated with this paper and these are intelligence failure, insecurity and insurgency. To provide clarity, these concepts are defined here and a schematic link between them is provided as a way of showing the mutual relationship that they share especially with regard to the operations of Boko Haram in Nigeria.

Intelligence failure: Before delving into the conceptualization of intelligence failure, it is proper to first understand the meaning of intelligence gathering. For this paper, intelligence gathering is the careful collection and analysis of a wide range of information or data that have military value which are further deployed to provide guidance and direction to security formations in support of current or future tactical missions. Hence, intelligence gathering is achieved through rigorous assessment of a wide range of available data from different human and technological sources as part of the mission planning activities. That said, intelligence failure as is used in this paper, refers to any misunderstanding associated with a security or any other situation requiring intelligence information that leads a government or its security forces to take actions that are inappropriate and counter-productive to its own interest in the course of addressing such a situation (Schulsky & Schmitt,2002). In other words, it is the inability of the intelligence community (security agencies) to gather, collate, analyze, record and disseminate information concerning incidence of crime, type of crime in relation to suspected and or identified criminals. However, for the purpose of this paper, intelligence failure refer strictly to the total lack of, inadequate or complete misplacement of information which undermines the capacity of security agencies to effectively curb or mitigate the activities of Boko Haram.

Insecurity: The concept, insecurity, is defined to mean a condition of social being that is characterized by openness to danger and threat that is usually detrimental to life and property in a given society (Raimi, 2017). However, within the context of its usage here, insecurity is the actual or perceived danger occasioned by widespread insurgencies which poses a threat to lives and properties in a recurrent manner.

Insurgency: In his book "Al Qaeda as Insurgency" Morris (2005), first warned that definitions of insurgency may not clearly capture the concept because what is termed insurgent may equally serve a liberation purpose for others. However, as used here, it simply means an unlawful rebellion against constituted authority of a country or parts of it that constitutes a threat to the lives and properties of people within and even outside the sphere of operation of the rebels.

With the emergence of a formidable and organized insurgent group occasioned by the failure to address their formation through effective intelligence gathering and implementation, widespread insecurity becomes the end result.
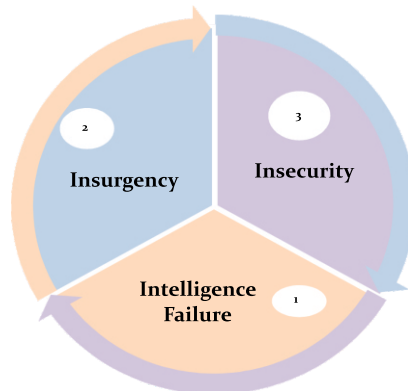
With the proliferation of insurgent activities like the Boko Haram, lives and properties become unsecured. The obvious outcome is massive deaths and loss of properties in a recurrent manner. Interestingly, it only takes further failures in intelligence gathering to allow insurgency and insecurity to be sustained.

The problem begins with the failure of intelligence. Hence, when insurgent groups begin to cluster and a formation emerges, it is at this point that early warning intelligence gathering is required to manage them. When this fails, they grow into a formidable insurgent group.

Fig. 1: Conceptual Framework

It is easy to see from the conceptual framework in Fig. 1.1 above that the three key variables in this paper are significantly linked to one another. For instance, it can be argued that even the emergence of the Boko Haram sect and the progressive expansion of their influence as well as the mayhem associated with them were all enabled by intelligence failure at the unset. In other words, the failure to deal with early warning signals that gave birth to the Boko Haram and the inability of the security agencies to nip the insurgent group in the bud early enough points to failures in the intelligence infrastructure of the country. As a result, it became quite easy for the group to gather social momentum, economic support as well as political patronage to metamorphose into a dreaded insurgent group now turn terrorists. Well, the outcome is now clearer than ever as the country has remained under siege for over a decade following widespread insecurity that has led to massive loss of lives and properties. Interestingly, the cyclic nature of the problem as reflected in the figure above indicates that intelligence failure provide enabling conditions as well as the environment for the Boko Haram scourge to continue in a sustained manner.

Theoretical Framework: The Marxist Political Economy Approach
The Marxist Political Economy (MPE) perspective is adopted here as the theoretical framework for this paper. The theory known as the Marxist Political Economy was developed and nurtured by the German political economist, social thinker and revolutionist, Karl Marx, as an analytical strand of the conflict paradigm to understand the inner workings of society. The whole theoretical architecture of the MPE rests on the basic assumption that there is a structural interface between the economic sub-system and the political sub-system in any society. However, this relationship happens in such a way that the economic sub-system defines the content and character of the political sub-system. As a result, Ryazanskaya (1993), is of the view that this established relationship between the economy and the polity becomes

the unavoidable foundation upon which the overall values as well as culture and norms of any society rest. In this regard, it is the position of the MPE that the social relations of production within any economic sector of society plays itself out in the political sphere and by extension, in all other sub-systems. However, while there is a strong understanding of the fact that Marx clearly held that the economy determines the political behaviour of any society, it is also implied that the political structure also plays a feedback role in influencing the economic sub-structure.

As a result, the Marxist Political Economy approach further presents the argument that the economic sub-structure of society generates its distinctive social classes in relation to the nature of the mode of production of the period and that the interface between these classes is almost always antagonistic especially as a result of the exploitation of those who do not own the means of production by the owners of the means of production. This antagonistic relationship according to Karl Marx, is progressively replicated in all parts of society especially the political sub-system. This is perhaps why Iwarimie-Jaja and Raimi (2018) are of the opinion that Marxist Political Economy theory emphasizes the undercurrents of class relations and class struggle within the mode of production as the major determinant of other sub-systems in society. In other words, the antagonistic relationship between the two dominant classes specific to each historical epoch, is the social infrastructure that provides meaning to other sub-systems such as the polity, education, religion and so on. However, the relationship between this and the political structure is more deep-seated especially because of the strong alliance between the owners of the means of production and the ruling class in terms of using the instrumentality of the state and other sub-systems like religion to subjugate and exploit the poor masses. This is perhaps why Ayodeji (2013) talks of the difference between state and individual terrorism. According to him, the ruling class and its allies always use state terrorism to protect its interest and make society unchanged and unchallenged, while the use of individual terrorism is usually synonymous with the sections of the lumpen class.

In light of the above, Marxist Political Economy theory provides a clear understanding of the fact that insecurity is a product of the character of the exploitation associated with the economic sub-system and its extension with regard to the state as reflected in the political culture of any society. According to Amundsen (2010), the Marxist Political Economy approach provides a structural link between the economy and the polity as well as how these two sub-systems in society interface with each other especially in the context of class relation and the inherent exploitation of one class by another. More importantly, the MPE relies on the dialectical method to explain this interface without losing track of the fact that historically specific social contradictions are at the heart of class struggle, revolutions and change. It is therefore important to stress, that dialectical materialism as presented by Marx represents the theoretical fabric as well as the practical method for deploying the MPE in any kind of societal analysis. This is why Iwarimie-Jaja and Raimi (2018) believes that as a model of social discourse the MPE has moved from just being a theory to becoming a comprehensive method of analysis and that as a theory, the MPE's major assumption is that society oscillates based on the intricate link that exists between the economy and the

political structure. However, as a method of analysis, it relies on the tool of dialectical materialism to prove that all social conflicts in society are a product of the contradictions associated with the economic sub-system in the society.

Therefore, in deploying the Marxist Political Economy approach in this paper, it is easy to see that intelligence failure within the social matrix of the Boko Haram insurgency and the insecurity arising from this are all enabled by the character of the ruling class. This is so because in the struggle to maintain its hold on the economic infrastructure of Nigeria, the ruling elites connive to use separatist movements like the Boko Haram to perpetrate violence while they further exploit the masses and sustain their hold on political power. Hence, Boko Haram stands out as a political tool used to create diversion from the reality of the economic exploitation in the country by the ruling class. This is better appreciated when viewed from the perspective of religion as a tool in the hands of the ruling class as postulated by Marx. Hence, as explained by Haralambos, Holborn and Heald (2004), religion serves as a distortion of the reality which provides many of the deceptions that forms the basis of ruling-class ideology and false class consciousness. However, in the case of the Boko Haram insurgency in the Northern part of Nigeria, religion does not just play the passive role of just acting as an opium that sedates people while the ruling class exploits them, rather religion is deployed as a tool of violence and used to unleash mayhem on the masses as a ferocious decoy in the midst of primitive exploitation of the country's economic resources by the ruling class.

Methodology
By the very nature of their sources and the data used in this paper, it becomes easily clear that the paper is a qualitative one that relied on content analysis as its method. It is, however, necessary to stress that the content analysis or document review method is associated with the process of carrying out in-depth review of extant materials or literature on the subject matter under study. Based on this, information were sourced from published materials such as newspapers, textbooks, articles in print and online journals and other internet materials among others. This review allows a researcher to piece information together in a rigorous manner in order to make sense of the analytical concerns of the research in question. However, to give analytical strength to the qualitative method applied in this paper, the Marxist Political Economy perspective was equally deployed as a tool of analysis (see; Goldfrank, 2005; Amundsen, 2010). This gives the MPE the dual role of a theoretical framework as well as an analytical tool in this paper. Hence, in the course of the use of thematic approach which is one of the methods of qualitative analysis, the Marxist Political Economy approach is further used to support the analysis associated with the issue of intelligence failure within the context of the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria.

The Nature and Dynamics of the Boko Haram Menace
The menace associated with the activities of Islamic religious sects in Nigeria is not new. However, with the emergence of the Boko Haram in 2002 the nature and dynamics of their operation defined a new era in the activities of such insurgent movements in Nigeria. According to Haleru (2011), the official name of the Boko Haram sect is Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna

Lidda'awati Wal Jihad, which means a People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad. It is believed that the group earned its operational title of Boko Haram based on the extreme ideological teachings of its founder Mohammed Yusuf. This adverse Islamic teaching took the form of a peaceful movement around the northeastern city of Maiduguri the capital of Borno state, by some of Yusuf's foot soldiers who went about reorienting the people that Western education, or 'boko,' had brought nothing but poverty and suffering to the region and was therefore forbidden or labeled as 'haram,' in Islam.

However, what started as a peaceful movement (Cook, 2011) to inculcate the ideas of Boko Haram in the people was clearly pregnant with violence and extremist insurgent behaviours only waiting to be born. The birth of violence leading to massive killings and loss of properties finally came when the Nigeria Police Force in Borno State, got the hint that Yusuf's Boko Haram was building an arsenal of weapons. Hence, in 2009, the police clamped down on the sect's members who were ignoring a law requiring motorcyclists to wear helmets. In fact, Raimi and Akubo (2014) rightly captured what followed next when they adduced that this singular act provided the necessary and sufficient trigger for a furious backlash. This led to the burning down of police stations and government offices in Borno State as well as the release of hundreds of criminals in a prison break who later pledged their loyalty to the sect, increasing the spread of its foot-soldiers across northern Nigeria. The violent attacks by the Boko Haram in 2009 and 2010 alone led to the death of over 1,000 people as Nigerian government forces fought the group in Borno, Yobe, Kano and Bauchi States (Cook, 2011).

While previous Islamic extremist groups in the North have operated with what seemed like rudimentary tools using machetes, den guns and openly maiming Christians to death, the emergence of the Boko Haram heralded novel ways that intensified the already problematic religious situation in the north. For instance, the nature of their attack is known to be highly sophisticated and often done using suicide bombers who target places with large crowds. This approach was initially used to target churches alone and later the progressive inclusion of all targets with a significant number of crowds became the new strategy as mosques, communities and even police as well as military barracks were equally not spared.

Since 2009, the Boko Haram terrorist group has continued to unleash mayhem on the country with deleterious consequences that involves massive loss of lives and properties. What is sad, however, is that when one examines the political and economic undercurrents of the terrorist movement, it becomes increasingly clear that the government either at the local or state level in the northern part of the country especially in Maiduguri where it started have romanticized the problem while ensuring that the extremist Islamic group continue to have some economic lifeline that sustains the group's activities. Interestingly, some members of the political class in the Federal Government are believed to be part of the funding structure of the Boko Haram providing further justification for a political economy undertone for the insurgency. While there is no generally held consensus on the total number of deaths, injuries and the cost in terms of the loss of properties associated with the activities of the Boko Haram since 2009, evidence suggest that a significant number of

people have lost their lives to the random suicide bombings as well as armed attacks, with over two million people injured and displaced in addition to the damage to properties running into billions of naira. Although the information may not capture the actual number, a careful compilation of data on the deaths associated with the Boko Haram insurgency from different sources is presented in Fig. 2 below:
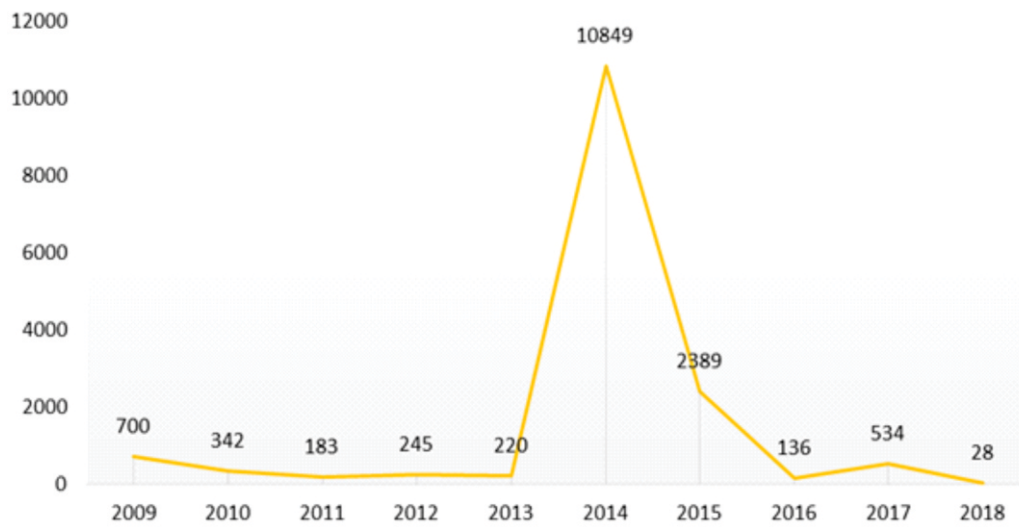
Fig. 2: Human Deaths associated with Boko Haram Insurgency 2009-2018

Source: Compiled from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boko_Haram_insurgency# cite_note-Nigeria_accused_of_ignoring_sect_warnings_before_wave_of_killings-94; https://www.uscirf.gov/sites/default/files/USCIRF_AR_2016_Appendix3.pdf& Boko Haram Fast Facts, CNN Library, 2019

Based on the information provided in Fig. 1.2 above, it is easily deducible that the killings associated with the Boko Haram insurgency began in 2009 and since then, the group has continued to unleash nothing more than sorrow, tears and blood with a significant peak in the loss of human lives in 2014 and 2015 with over 13,000 persons dying as a result of their activities. While the cost in terms of loss of properties is almost impossible to quantify, the statistics on number of people that have died since 2009 are still inconsistent. The data presented in Fig. 1.2 above represent efforts to piece information from different sources, hence, there is a chance that the figure is under-represented. This notwithstanding, it still represents a staggering image of the adverse impact of the Boko Haram insurgency on human lives in the country.

The Boko Haram terrorist group is known for using lethal weapons and sophisticated bombs with a suicidal approach that involve the use of cars, human agency, bags among others. The nature of their attacks follow a pattern of ensuring that they target places that attract crowds

of people such as schools, mosques, churches, communities, barracks and so on. In the words of Salisu, Mohd and Adbullahi (2015), the violent re-emergence of the group in 2010 saw the introduction of new tactics that include suicide bombing, kidnapping, attacking Islamic clerics, Mosques and churches in the country. Despite breaking into various factions, Boko Haram has succeeded in managing a coordinated set of attacks that guaranteed their place as one of the most notorious terror outfit in the world (Pisa & Hume, 2015). The group remains fiercely anti-government, anti-authority and resentful of the decades of corrupt, poor governance that have impoverished its home region. At first, Boko Haram was involved mostly in fermenting sectarian violence. Its adherents participated in simple attacks on Christians using clubs, machetes and small arms. Boko Haram came to international limelight following massive deployment of simple Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) leading to several bombings in most parts of northern Nigeria.

The Boko Haram Insurgency: An Examination of Current Intelligence Failures
From the discussion provided in the section on conceptual clarification above, it is already clear that intelligence gathering is key to addressing any kind of insecurity. However, in the Nigerian context, gathering information to combat any form of insecurity has proven to be a significant challenge. Furthermore, acting on the few information tips provided has also proved difficult given the political economy of corruption, ethnicity and religious fanaticism in the country. All of these indices converge to contribute to intelligence failure when the fight against Boko Haram is taking into account. Salisu, Mohd and Adbullahi (2015), support this view when they argued that the challenge of gathering accurate and timely intelligence and security tips that could assist security organizations has been a significant clog in the wheel of progress with regard to the fight against the Boko Haram insurgency. A report published in Daily Trust (2012) newspaper recounted the opinion of one of the Nigerian Army commanders who pointed out that the incessant incidents of bombing in parts of the country should not be blamed on the military but on failure of the intelligence community to gather adequate information in time to avert attacks. This clearly supports the position of this paper that formative intelligence failure provided the impetus for the initial expansion of the Boko Haram insurgents as well as the sustained mayhem they have continued to mete on parts of the country.

Given the already existing ethnic and religious schisms that have plagued the country over the years, it became quite easy for intelligence gathering and its processing to be undermined. For instance, Boko Haram got its initial refuge from the political class in the north as well as some kind of tacit support from most communities where they operated making it difficult for any kind of meaningful intelligence gathering concerning their activities. What is even sad, even when intelligence gathering on Boko Haram was effective, acting on it was usually problematic given that some section of the military who are mostly Muslims sabotage the effort of the security agencies in this regard. Haleru (2011) points to circumstances when some military raids on the camps of the terrorists where foiled due to the fact that information had leaked to the leaders of the group from top ranking military officers of the Nigerian Army. This shows that the ruling class among the northern states and some top Muslim politicians within the central government provide underground support for the

activities of the insurgents. In light of this, effective security which should ordinarily depend on solid intelligence gathering became really difficult in the fight against Boko Haram. This is the reason why Salisu, Mohd and Adbullahi (2015), came to the conclusion in their study that the terrorist group has really made effective security a difficult task and that this is not unconnected to a high level of corruption within top-ranking officers of the Nigerian security agencies, poor and outdated weapons, problems of logistics and many other internal security issues.

There are several points at which intelligence gathering has not been quite successful in dealing with the Boko Haram problem in Nigeria and this as has been stated above stems from the political and economic support that the group enjoys in the country. At the point of collection, it is expected that the Nigerian security agencies should have relied heavily on all of the intelligence gathering paraphernalia such as the Human Intelligence (HUMINT), Signals Intelligence (SIGINT), Image Intelligence (IMINT), Open Source Intelligence (OSINT) (William & Blum, 2018).This is because many effective intelligent agencies maintain or support groups or individuals whose sole purpose is the collection of information from target areas of interest through interrogations or espionages. Intelligence agencies also eavesdrop continuously on the entire radio spectrum, interpreting it in real time. This is usually done through the use of local military traffic, radar emissions and even microwaved telephone and telegraph traffic, including satellite traffic. A great deal of useful intelligence can also be gathered from photo-interpretation of detailed high-altitude pictures (drone or satellite imagery) of a target area. However, all these have proved difficult in Nigeria due to an interplay of inadequate intelligence facilities and human sabotage. For instance, it is on record that the country has five satellites that have been launched into orbit. Even though they were not built for military purposes, the Nigeria Sat-2 and Nigeria Sat-X seem to have been imbued with a high-resolution earth capture technology that can be used for ground surveillance to monitor the movements of Boko Haram troops.

Sadly, even when this is deployed, political, religious and ethnic schisms in the country tend to provide social lifelines for the Boko Haram terrorist group making it difficult to combat them effectively. In the course of fighting the Boko Haram terrorist group in Nigeria, it has become very clear that the channels of intelligence sharing have significant loopholes leading to the leakage of information to the group's top leaders. Hence, apart from the technical and operational challenges associated with the gathering and dissemination of intelligence information in the course of the fight against Boko Haram, it is now more clearer than ever before that the significant breach in the process especially involving top ranking security officers in the country who are acting on directives from the ruling class is fundamentally responsible for the failure. This intelligence sabotage makes the security agencies incapable of dealing a final blow on the Boko Haram terrorists in the country. IRIN (2017), notes that the Nigerian security agencies are powerless because they lack the operational intelligence to thwart the activities of the Boko Haram terror group. Accordingly, it is believed that the shortage of awareness over both the nature of the threat and how to deal with it is a major incentive for the series of attacks carried out by the group. In fact, there is the understanding that the attack on the United Nation headquarters in Maiduguri was a clear example of woeful intelligence failure.

It would not amount to overemphasis if we state here that the whole intelligence architecture of the country is bedeviled by a political economy of corruption and nepotism which largely undermines its entire process. From intelligence collection to dissemination and implementation, the Nigerian security agencies are shockingly lacking because of the interplay between members of the political ruling class and the Boko Haram leaders. This class-related handshake supported by an economic infrastructure which enables the funding of the terrorist group through patronage and handouts from politicians and other Islamic terror outfits in other parts of the world combine to put the Boko Haram in the global terror map as one of the most intelligent, sophisticated and dreaded terrorist group the world has ever known. The conventional knowledge amongst the general public is that the Boko Haram group often receives cash, possibly large sums of euros paid to criminal "jihadi" factions in the Sahel, from the al-Qaida affiliate in the Maghreb.

Deploying Effective Intelligence System to Combat Boko Haram in Nigeria
Effective intelligence gathering is known to be at the heart of fighting any kind of insurgency and insecurity especially in the age of information that we now find ourselves. As a result, getting the right information which is a reflection of timeliness and usefulness goes a long way to help in the management of insurgencies. While it is clear that the Nigerian government is making progress in terms of combatting the Boko Haram scourge, this progress is often easily reversed due to inadequate and ineffective intelligence gathering. At worse, it can be said that the old way of gathering and handling intelligence information by the security agencies may have been compromised and there is the need for a new approach. This is perhaps why Okpaga, Chijioke and Innocent (2012) opine that the menace of terrorism no doubt calls for a new approach that should be founded on credible intelligence gathering. Any effective approach to intelligence gathering with regard to addressing the insecurity associated with the Boko Haram terrorist group will as a matter of fact be strictly guided by best practice frameworks. As a result, this should basically involve the process of gathering or collecting intelligence information, logically followed by the processing or filtering of such information, then the analysis phase follows and this is a very technical process that requires the highest level of expertise. After this, the point of dissemination comes and this is as crucial as every other aspect of the intelligence gathering framework. Interestingly, the whole process of the intelligence gathering structure is underlined by feedbacks which should ordinarily reflect the outcome in terms of security management. While this sounds like an easy process, the operational environment of security agencies in Nigeria is quite complicated given the political economy of corruption which is further exacerbated by the obvious ethnic and religious leanings of people. It is already an established fact that security agencies themselves sabotage the intelligence gathering process by acting as snitches for the dreaded Boko Haram group, making it difficult to effectively combat the terrorists. This loophole in the intelligence gathering process is likely to be difficult to manage except the government promotes a very tight mechanism for monitoring security information.

Fig. 3 below captures the best practice process for effective intelligence gathering in the courses of fighting any kind of insurgency including the Boko Haram terrorists. While the approach is not cast in stone, it provides the ideal framework while considering the peculiar political economy of the country especially the role that negative ethnicity and religious schisms play in all of these
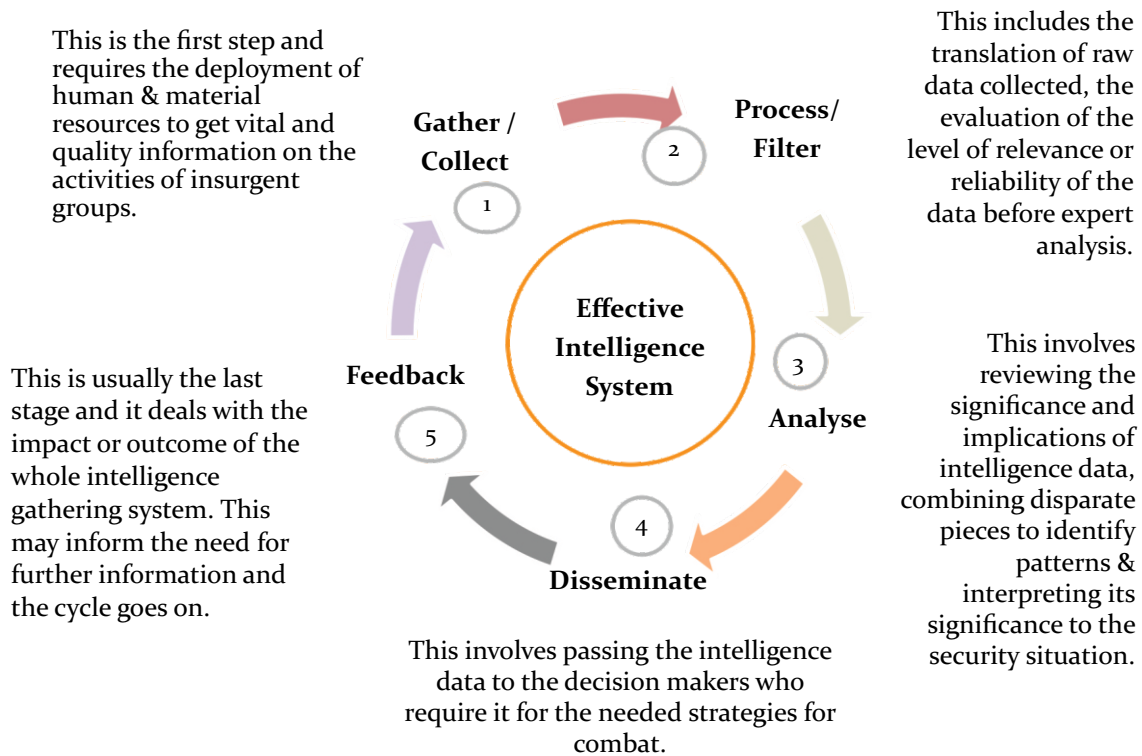
This is the first step and requires the deployment of human & material resources to get vital and quality information on the activities of insurgent groups.

Gather / Collect ①

Process/ Filter ②

This includes the translation of raw data collected, the evaluation of the level of relevance or reliability of the data before expert analysis.

Effective Intelligence System

Feedback ⑤

This is usually the last stage and it deals with the impact or outcome of the whole intelligence gathering system. This may inform the need for further information and the cycle goes on.

③ **Analyse**

This involves reviewing the significance and implications of intelligence data, combining disparate pieces to identify patterns & interpreting its significance to the security situation.

④ **Disseminate**

This involves passing the intelligence data to the decision makers who require it for the needed strategies for combat.

Fig. 3: Effective Intelligence Gathering System

The figure above captures a typical effective intelligence gathering framework or system. However, it is important to note at the onset that timeliness runs through all of the phases highlighted in the diagram. From the point of intelligence data gathering or collection to the final phase of feedback, timeliness is key to the success of the framework. As a result, the effective intelligence system is time sensitive in all ramifications. This is because, if the information collected is time sensitive but not processed or analysed within a timeframe that is required to meet a designated combat target, it will not have the desired effect. This is basically the reason why intelligence gathering frameworks fail. For instance, there were reports of sightings of the Chibok schoolgirls kidnapped by Boko Haram, if this information was processed early enough to the appropriate decision makers; they would have been able to intercept the transport vehicles.

However, it is equally important to understand the peculiar political economy of the Nigerian environment especially how ethnic and religious loyalties may affect the deployment of the effective intelligence gathering system. This is because, the Boko Haram terrorist movement has strong links to highly placed politicians who use them as unfortunate distraction in order for them to continue to exploit the ordinary masses. Much as this is the case, there is also the fact that in return for their patronage, huge funding support is provided to the Boko Haram terrorist group to help sustain their deleterious activities.

In addition to the above, the sharp ethnic and religious schisms in the country may also undermine any form of effective intelligence gathering system deployed by the security forces in the country. This is because most people in the north especially the Muslims tend to provide some kind of tacit support for the terror group who hide under the guise of religion to perpetrate all kinds of heinous crimes against humanity. So, in the deployment of the intelligence gathering framework provided in Fig. 1.3 above, there is need to understand the fact that religion and ethnicity represents major loopholes that have undermined the ability of security agencies in Nigeria to tackle the Boko Haram terrorists.

Conclusion

The paper has proved that the insecurity associated with the Boko Haram insurgents in the Northern part of Nigeria is as a result of the failure of intelligence gathering. However, it also recognizes the peculiar political economy of the country especially the adverse undercurrents of negative ethnicity and extremist religious behaviours especially those linked to Islam as key indices that dovetail to undermine the intelligence gathering system. It is the submission of the paper that the potency of the Boko Haram group is tied to the political, economic, religious and ethnic patronage that they get from mostly state and federal politicians who rely on the terrorist group's heinous activities to perpetuate their stay in power while continuously exploiting the masses.

In light of the above, it is the conclusion of this paper that the Boko Haram terrorist group is able to maintain a sustained level of insurgency in the country because of the failure of the intelligence gathering system. However, this is not because there is no intelligence system at all, but that the current framework is strongly undermined by an adverse political economy structure where a section of the ruling class connive to reduce the potency of the intelligence system in order for them to maintain their hold on to power. In this regard, Boko Haram is a tool in the hands of some of the political office holders who provide economic or financial support to the group to keep them alive for their selfish interest without considering the ungodly damage that the terrorists are causing to the country.

Recommendations

Based on the arguments and conclusions in this paper, the following recommendations have been proffered to facilitate effective intelligence system in the fight against Boko Haram in Nigeria.

i. There is the need for the Nigerian Government to understand that the proper gathering and use of intelligence are the keys to a successful counterterrorism plan of action. The state must be active in its quest to gather the necessary intelligence from deliberately planted field agents and equipment in the bid to combat the Boko Haram terrorist group.

ii. There should be a deliberate attempt by the government to invest in the acquisition of modern intelligence gathering equipment and facilities to boost the country's intelligence gathering capacity. It is imperative that intelligence gathering, processing, analysis and dissemination as well as feedback must be increased and

efficient if the war against Boko Haram is to be won. However, it is equally necessary to ensure that ethnic and religious loopholes that undermine previous intelligence gathering structures should be blocked and this can be done by placing an oversight security on intelligence networks.

iii. Though efforts have been made to work with the civilians that are conversant with the terrain of the affected states, there is need to absolve them as full agents that would be remunerated for the services they provide. By so doing, they would be more committed in the fight against the terrorists. These individuals can also be used to decode the messages transmitted by the insurgents, as they usually transmit these messages in Arabic, which most of the ground forces are not conversant with.

iv. The country's satellites can be used for imagery intelligence collection to conduct round-the-clock surveillance within and around the Boko Haram strongholds, this will give the military an up to date overview on the group's activities.

v. Lastly, the Federal Government should ensure that politicians and religious leaders that are linked to the Boko Haram group as sponsors are tried in a competent court and punished accordingly if found guilty. This would go a long way to deter new entrants into the sponsorship social network of the terror group.

References

Amundsen, I. (2010). *Good governance in Nigeria: A study in political economy and donor support.* Norwegian Agency for Development.

Associated Press (2015). *New York Times. Associated Press. 18 November 2015. Retrieved 18 November 2018.*) from http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/11/17/world/ africa/ap-af-boko-haram.html?_r=0".

Ayodeji, B. O. (2013). Class theory of terrorism: A study of Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences, 3* (1), 27-59.

Cook, D (2011). *The rise of Boko Haram in Nigeria.* New York: Combating Terrorism Centre.

Daily Trust. (2012) *Nigeria: insecurity caused by intelligence failure – Commandant.* from http://allafrica.com/stories/201205030434.html. Retrieved 23/12/2015.

Goldfrank, H. (2005). *Marxism as a methodology,* London: Routledge.

Haleru, S. (2011). *The political and religious drivers of insurgency in Nigeria.* Lagos: Pac Books.

Haralambos, M., Heald, R. M. & Holborn, M. (2004). *Sociology: Themes and perspectives (6th Edition).* New York: HarperCollins.

IRIN (2017). *Boko Haram: The fear, the conspiracy theories, and the deepening crisis.* https://www.refworld.org/docid/59bf7aa14.html REFWORLD, The United Nation Refugee Agency-UNHCR.

Iwarimie-Jaja, D. & Raimi, L. (2018). Governance, social order and development in Nigeria. *Port Harcourt Journal of Social Sciences, 8* (2),110-125.

Morris, M. F. (2005). Al Qaeda *as insurgency*. United States Army War College.

Okpaga, A. Chijioke, U. S. & Innocent, E. O. (2012). Activities of Boko Haram and insecurity question in Nigeria. *Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review, 1* (9), 77-99.

Pisa, K. & Hume, T. (2015). Boko Haram overtakes ISIS as world's deadliest terror group, *CNN report*. Archived from the original on 6 April 2016. Retrieved 23 March 2018.

Raimi, L. & Akubo, A. J. (2014). *Daunting the menace of terrorism in Nigeria. In F. Obayan, P.T Oribiyi & N.J. Chijioke (eds), Conference Proceedings: Terrorism in Nigeria and Strategies for its Remediation*, Salem University, Lokoja, Kogi State, pp 93-98.

Raimi, L. (2017). Poverty, monetization of conflict and insecurity in the Niger Delta region. *International Journal of Operational Research in Management, Social Sciences & Education, 3*(2), 42-51.

Ryazanskaya, S. W. (1993). *Karl Marx's a contribution to the critique of political economy*. On-Line Version: Marx.org Retrieved from: https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/MarxContributiontotheCritiqueofPoliticalEconomy.pdf.

Salisu, S.S., Mohd, A. S. & Abdullahi, Y. S. (2015). The impact of Boko Haram insurgency on Nigerian national security. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences, 5* (6), 254-266.

Schulsky, A. & Schmitt, G. (2002). *Silent warfare*. Washington DC: Brassey's.

William, H. J. & Blum, I. (2018). *Defining second generation open source intelligence (OSINT) for the defense enterprise*. Santa Monica: RAND.