



EXPANDING ROLE-EFFECT OF BOKO HARAM ON NIGERIA'S ECONOMY

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ABSTRACT

The accelerated rate of decline in Nigerian's economy has been attributed to a number of factors ranging from corruption, misappropriation of fund, maladministration etc. to Boko Haram activities. However, highlight of the concepts and beliefs of Boko Haram were discussed. Furthermore, the central thesis studied how the expanded role-effect, otherwise activities of Boko Haram have affected the country's economy, and concludes that Boko Haram is a thorn in the flesh of Nigeria's economy.

KEYWORDS: Boko Haram, Insurgency, Activities, Economy, Role-effect

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria perhaps is one of the countries in West African region that is endowed with abundant human and material resources. These resources include high skilled manpower in which many of them are working in some African states through a signed treaty (that is exchange programmes). Also crude oil, palm oil, cocoa, onions, groundnut, among other agricultural proceeds are part of the mineral resources. However, these resources are differently located in various parts of the country ranging from the North-East, North-Central, North-West, South-West, South-South, to South-East of geo-political zones of this country (Nigeria). Regardless of these locations, the growing consequence of white collar jobs and population with ethnic cleavages and socio-economic and political groupings and re-groupings based on diverse interests gave birth to formation of various group names. Thus, these groups according to Olaide (2013) cited in Dialoke (2014) had arisen in Nigeria with little or real militancy approach in prosecuting their different objectives. Among them according to Olaide (2013) are Oodua people's congress (OPC) within Yorubas; Bakassi Boys,

Movement for Actualization of Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) among Igbo's; Niger Delta Militants and now Boko Haram which is the subject of public discuss among others that are in the northern part of this country without particular identity. Nevertheless, the expanding role-effect such as destruction of lives and properties among others by Boko Haram has a consequential impact on nation building ranging from political to socio-economic in Nigeria. Consequently, Boko Haram as a term came from a Hausa word Boko, which is originally derived from an Hausa word with meaning such as "fraud" and "unauthenticated", the Arabic word meaning Haram figuratively meaning sin (literally forbidden) (BBC News, 2009) quoted in Dialoke (2014). However Murphy (2014) asserted that the name may be meant to convey, that bogus education is sinful. Dialoke (2014) quoting Newman (2013), asserted that the residents of the town of Maiduguri where the group was formed dubbed it "Boko Haram". Also Olaide (2013) quoting DCCN (2009) stated that Boko Haram has also been defined to mean that evangelism deceptively camouflaged as western education is unacceptable by Islam.

BELIEFS OF BOKO HARAM AS A TERRORIST GROUP IN NIGERIA

People organize themselves within the framework of certain beliefs which will certainly help such group to match towards achieving goals based on established principles. Certainly, it is established fact according to Murtada (2014) Quoted in Dialoke (2014) while conducting research on Muhammed Yusuf and the terrorist group, affirmed that the principal beliefs of Boko Haram are an emphasis on hakimiyyah (sovereignty to Gods law); a belief that they are the "saved sect" mentioned in the prophetic tradition of Islam, prohibiting studying in Western Educational Centers of learning, because they considered them to be based on non-Islamic traditions and colonialism. However, these beliefs are what Boko Haram made us (Nigerians) to believe they are fighting for. But any ordinary, average or layman in the society would think that Boko Haram conception of their principles is more, when corroborated with their activities in Nigeria.

EXPANDING ROLE-EFFECT OF BOKO HARAM ON NIGERIA'S ECONOMY

It is a thing of concern to government, individuals and groups that Boko Haram activities has expanded from its original conception that interaction with Western world is forbidden to that of terrorism in which the group has resolved to continue unwholesome destruction of lives and properties of government as well as innocent citizens of Nigeria state. No wonder Olaide (2014) cited in Onuoha (2014) and Bartolotta (2011), when discussing the ideology of the group asserted that Boko Haram was founded as a local Salafi movement and turned into a Jihad Group which proposes that interaction with Western World is forbidden and also supports opposition to the Muslim establishment and the government of Nigeria. However, there had been a number of recorded incidences raging from loss of lives to destruction of properties of people in Nigeria. Thus, attesting to the fact that, the role of Boko Haram sect has moved from the confines of its principles and practices to that of terrorism and abuse of constitutional privileges and rights of freedom of association among others. Instances are bound, but the present incidence in Baga town in January 3rd 2015 according to daily sun news paper 29th January 2015 and Aljazeera news (2015) that onslaught against Baga Town by Boko Haram feared to have killed hundreds if not more, and destroyed thousands of homes. This appears to be very horrendous in a developing economy where men and material resources are needed for optimum socio-economic and political growth. The reason for this attack on Baga Town according to the spokes person of the group, Abu Musab Abul-Barnawi was for strategic economic reasons. If this is to be accepted as true, why resorting to destruction and counter-

destruction of lives and properties: instead of adopting the use of dialogue or constitutional process? These horrible activities of Boko Haram sect in Nigeria, had contributed significant consequential effects to the economy. Therefore, Olaide (2013) in his text oration about the economic effects of Boko Haram activities stated that the economic effects of militancy insurgency in Nigeria simply connotes consequential effects on people and government's life which according to him can be viewed from two (2) different perspectives. He further stated that they are the effect on the state that is Nigeria, and individual member of the state that is Nigerians, particularly residents of Bauchi, Borno, Yobe and neighbouring states. The militant not limited to Boko Haram, but by their nature are used to cripple the economic activities of any place they spread their tentacles as well as led to migration of people from affected place due to restiveness. No wonder Olaide (2013) quoting the nation newspaper (2013) reported about the activities of Boko Haram as thus: Borno and neighboring states, the epicenter of the activities of the sect have been crippled economically. In addition, thousands of people have died in the sect's bloody campaign. However, according to the author (Olaide, 2013), it must be noted that Boko Haram have not only led to closure and or abandonment of peoples' business activities within affected region, but also led to migration of people from the affected region as well as reduction of peoples patronage of products from Northern region, because of rumour that members of Boko Haram are planning to send poisonous product from their region to other parts of Nigeria. This suggests why Olaide (2013) quoting Umar Ibrahim Yakubu (leadership newspaper, 2012) opined thus: in respect of Boko Haram, we discovered 97 percent of businesses were negatively affected by the security problem. Some of them have to close down, retrench their workers and others had to cut down in the number of hours of operation. Some of these activities emanating from Boko Haram has destabilized, dehumanized, destroyed and crippled the road network for successful optimum economic growth in a mixed economy such as Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATIONS

With the growing level of Boko Haram activities or insurgency in Nigeria, this paper suggests the following recommendations. Boko Haram group should lay down their arms and seek a proper channel of addressing their interests. This could be done through the use of constitution or any available legal document that can help to address their aggrieved issues (if any). After its attack on Baga town, the African union chief Nkosazana Dlamini-zuma according to Daily Sun News Paper of 29th January 2015 had on Monday said, she was "deeply horrified" at the rise of Boko Haram, warning that the group is not just a threat to some countries, it is a threat to a

whole continent. Therefore Nigerian government should intensify her measures in combating the sorrow and awful activities of this group, so as to reduce both the effects on the economy and continental image. Although its principles or beliefs are explicit, but the group's pragmatic approach in achieving these beliefs is confusing, misconceived, misplaced and has diverse effects, hence, the high death toll and loss of properties recorded. This eventful act is dolorous and as such government should establish a credible committee that shall look into the assiduous activities of Boko Haram, with the aim of determining who are supporting and sponsoring the group. Finally, government should assist the displaced persons through financial grants and monitor such disbursement in line with equity theory of fairness.

CONCLUSION

The growing controversy arising from divergent interest of ethnic groups in Nigeria relating to socio-economic and political imbalance perhaps gave rise to formation of various groups, including Boko Haram. Unfortunately the expanded role-effect (negatively) of this group is colossal and will continuously affect the economy, unless something radical and positive is done by government, individuals, and groups to curb increasing activities of the terrorist group in Nigeria.

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