



PHILOSOPHICAL DOCTRINES AND IDEOLOGY OF BOKO HARAM SECT AND ITS IMPACTS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

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ABSTRACT: *Terrorism is a phenomenon that is becoming a pervasive, often dominant, influence in our lives. It constitutes one of the most serious threats to global security. Nigeria had a full blown taste of long time terrorism since 2009 founded by Mohammed Yusuf. The group Jama'atu ahlis sunna lidda'awati wal-jihad has continued to carry out acts of terror which has resulted to loss of over twenty thousand lives, kidnap of several school girls and women as sex slaves, the displacement of more than two million people and the destruction of properties worth billions. It is clear that the activities of Boko Haram represent the greatest threat to Nigerian state. The above situation has triggered a suspicion among Christian and Muslims in Nigeria. The situation had also divided Nigerians along religious lines. For example, Ibrahim observed that apart from academic views concerning the teaching of the group, there is also a huge debate and conflicting conspiracy theories going on among Nigerians concerning Boko Haram and its activities. Many southern commentators saw Boko Haram as conspiracy of northern politicians to destabilize the government of the president Godluck Jonathan and vis visa.*

KEYWORDS: Doctrine, Ideology, Boko Haram, Impact, Relations.



INTRODUCTION

The Boko Haram Sect was founded by Mohammed Yusuf, who served as its leader until his death in July, 2009. Yusuf was born on 29th January, 1970 and hailed from Girgir Village in the Jakusko Local Government Area of Yobe State, Nigeria. He had four wives and 12 children. The young Yusuf was a secondary school drop-out who received Quranic education in the Chad and Niger republics, where he imbibed his radical ideology. His radical stance generated friction between himself and other moderate Islamic scholars like the Late Jafar Adam, Sheikh Abba Aji and Yahaya Jingir. He had two deputies (*Naib Amir ul-Aam* I & II). Also, each State where they exist has its own *Amir* (Commander or Leader), and each Local Government Area where they operate also has an *Amir*; then all others are followers. They also organised themselves according to various roles, such as soldiers and police, among others. Although Mohammed Yusuf was killed in 2009, his deputy, Abubakar Shekau, who was initially thought to also have been killed, appeared on a video in 2010 and claimed leadership of the group. They recruit their members by various means, including force, preaching and hypnosis. It is believed that the sect receives funding from highly educated, affluent and influential people such as contractors, university dons, businessmen, former retired force officers and politicians who have sympathy for the sect (Oyebuchi & Chigozie, 212).

LITERATURE/THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING

One of the theories used in this research is Juergensmeyer's theory of the logic of religious violence, which is also called "the just war theory". In his theory, he itemised the following as the Logic of Religious Violence; the Theatre of Terror, Performance Violence, Cosmic War and Martyrdom as the major variables for terrorism. He believed that for theatre of terror, terrorists engage in purposeful violence in order to elicit anger, while for performance violence, it is believed that terrorists stage a performance to create impact on the general audience. For cosmic war, divine images are involved so that terrorists in this category believe they are fighting for the divine and not for any human interest. Martyrdom refers to a process where terrorists offer themselves to be killed strictly for the purpose of dying for one's religion with an expectation of direct access to a place of eternal rest. Another theory considered is Huntington's Clash of Civilisations theory since Boko Haram is totally against Western civilisation.

When the insurgency started in 2009, the researcher looked at the poverty level in Nigeria within that period, as of 2010 in particular. The table below shows the poverty level then.

Table 1: Poverty Distribution in Nigeria as at December 2010

S/N	Geo-political Zone	Rate (%)	Projection for 2011	Ranking
1.	North-West (Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto and Zamfara States).	70%	73.5%	1 st
2.	North-East (Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe States)	69%	71.7%	2 nd
3.	North-Central (Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau and Federal Territory)	65%	68.8%	3 rd



4.	South-South (Bayelsa, Rivers, Akwa-Ibom, Cross River, Edo and Delta (BRACED) States.	63%	66%	4 th
5.	South-East (Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Osun and Oyo States)	55.9%	59.3%	5 th
6.	South-West (Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun and Oyo States).	49.8%	52%	6 th

Source: “Salt and Light or Salt and Pepper”, March 2, 2012.

Though poverty seems to contribute a lot to terrorism, religion, as earlier mentioned, has a significant role too, that is why McCain, Gaiya and Korb, in their paper “Salt and light or Salt and Pepper”, showed the high percentage religion plays in violence, especially as viewed among the Nigerian Christians.

PHILOSOPHICAL DOCTRINE AND IDEOLOGY OF “BOKO HARAM” SECT

The leader of the Boko Haram movement, Mohammed Yusuf, was a secondary school drop-out who went to Chad and Niger Republic to study Qur'anic studies. It was there he developed radical views that were abhorrent to Westernisation and modernisation, like other terrorist leaders across the globe. Yusuf got back to Nigeria and settled in Maiduguri and established a sectarian group in 2001 known as the *Yusufiyya*, named after him. The sect was able to attract more than 280,000 members across Northern Nigeria (Danjibo 7).

The philosophy of the sect as described by Onuoha emanated from orthodox Islamic teachings resembling those of the Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan, which treat anything western as completely un-Islamic. It considers western influence on Islamic society as the basis of the religion's weakness (409).

Non-members were therefore considered as *kafir* (disbelievers, those who deny the truth) or *fasiqun* (wrong-doers). It is reported that members wore long beards and red or black headscarves and rejected the use of certain modern (purportedly western) goods, such as wristwatches and safety helmets (409). The irony, however, is that they do not abhor the use of technological products such as bicycles, motorcycles, cars, cellular phones, AK-47 guns and other innovations that are derived from western civilization which have aided their violent operations.

The ideology and philosophy of the movement can best be understood by explicating the two words – “Boko” and “Haram”. In the Hausa language, the word “boko” is an equivocal term which means either “Western” or “foreign” (Danjibo 8), but for Mohammed Kabir, he said “Boko” means “inauthentic” or “fake” (BBC Hausa). If we are agreeing with Danjibo, then the Hausa meaning could slightly change to “bako”, meaning “alien”; both Danjibo and Kabir definitions portray “boko” as alien, therefore making it unoriginal. According to Danjibo, the word “haram” is an Arabic derivation meaning “forbidden”. Piecing the two words together, “boko haram” will therefore mean to forbid everything western and western education. For Yusuf, the intent of his sect is to replace modern state formation with the traditional Islamic state because western values run contrary to Islamic values. *Ummah Muhammadiyah* (Muslim faithful) and *Dar'ul-Islam* (Islamic community) cannot be compromised in the face of western influence. For him evil in the society is as a result of the embrace of western civilization, and in order to curb such evil an Islamic society must be entrenched by destroying modern state



institutions. The philosophy goes hand in hand with the entrenchment of the Shari'a law in the society. This is the reason the sect started destroying police and military formations as well as government establishments and properties (Danjibo 15). His position led Islamic scholars to invite him several times to debate, which is called *the Muqabala* competition. He was invited several times, and he won most of the time because it is believed that Yusuf was a very intelligent man, a great orator and gifted, as Baana Bulama, an ex-member of the sect, will describe him. He was even invited to Saudi Arabia to debate over the matter of "Boko Haram" and Bulama said he was defeated several times.

In Northern Nigeria there is often a distinction between *Makarantan boko* (schools providing "Western" education) and *Makarantan addini* (schools for religious instruction) or *Makarantar allo* (schools of the state understood to be Koranic schools). There is no gainsaying that even among Muslim elites in Northern Nigeria, preference is usually given to the Islamic slate type of education over Western education but today some encourage their children to go for both (Sanusi 181).

Nothing good is seen in Western education and this was the Boko Haram ideological philosophy. Ohadike blamed the late Sardauna of Sokoto, Sir Ahmadu Bello, and the colonial authorities for shielding the Muslim north from being exposed to Western education and culture (Ohadike 92). Furthermore, Umar argues that this lack of education brought about the growing concerns of external influences that are impinging on and shaping religions and religious organisations in sub-Saharan Africa. Nigerian Muslim organisations and their Christian counterparts have links to the Middle East and the West. While the Christians are seen to tilt towards the Euro-American pole, the Muslims look up to the Arab world for religious alliance. He said the Iranian revolution of 1989, anti-Western imperialism, has gained acceptance amongst the Muslim community in Nigeria, while Christian evangelism and even academic research sponsored by the international community other than from Islamic countries are perceived to be part of the agenda of Western imperialism which Yusuf and his sect called for its total rejection.

But Paul Lubeck of the University of California at Santa Cruz argues differently; he said Yusuf received instruction in Salafism and was influenced by Ibn Taymiyya. In a 2009 BBC interview, Yusuf stated his belief that the concept of a spherical Earth is contrary to Islamic teaching and should be rejected, along with Darwinian evolution theory and the concept of rain originating from water evaporated by the sun. These are Yusuf's words:

"There are prominent Islamic preachers who have seen and understood that the present Western-style education is mixed with issues that run contrary to our beliefs in Islam",

"Like rain. We believe it is a creation of God rather than an evaporation caused by the sun that condenses and becomes rain." "Like saying the world is a sphere. If it runs contrary to the teachings of Allah, we reject it. We also reject the theory of Darwinism." (Lübeck no page).

Ahmed Murtada of the Department of Islamic Studies, Bayero University Kano, also agreed with the two arguments above. He added that Boko Haram was founded as a local, salafi movement and turned into salafi jihad group in 2009 when it proposed that interaction with the Western world is forbidden and also supports opposition to the Muslim establishment and the Local Muslim Population. This is expressed in their assassination of anyone who criticised them, including Muslim clerics. Murtada noted in his research into Muhammed Yusuf and



Boko Haram that the core principles of the group are: an emphasis on *Hakimiyyah* (Sovereignty to God's law); a belief that they are the "Save Sect" mentioned in the prophetic Tradition of Islamic; prohibiting studying in Western educational centre of learning because they consider them to be based on non-Islamic traditions and colonialism, thus, criticizing Saudi Arabia for its usage of "Western" educational methods; prohibiting working in any governmental institution or civil service role; a contorted interpretation of the edicts of scholars from the classical tradition such as Ibn Taymiyyah to support their rebellions and use of violence (Murtada 64). Influences include the writings of Ibn Abizayd, Muhammed Ibn Abdul-Wahhad, Sheikh al-Abani, and Shaykh Fawzan. Boko Haram's enslavement of captured women, looting, rampant killings, bank breakages as noticed in most of the captured communities, etc., are a clear abandonment of true Islamic tradition, which led to several Nigerian Muslim authorities to condemn the group and its ideology.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology for the study is the cross-sectional survey research design. Cross-sectional survey design allows the researcher to elicit data once from a representative sample of a population and to use the data obtained to generalise the results on the entire population. However, this design recognises the fact that data obtained may change after sometime.

The choice of the cross-sectional survey design is necessitated by the fact that the present study elicited data from a sample of Christians and Muslims that were selected in the study area and used their responses and the results to draw conclusions on the entire population regarding the impact of Boko Haram violent campaigns on the perceptions of Christians and Muslims in North-East Nigeria.

The population for the study comprised all residents of three states (Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe). The choice of these three states is because they were badly attacked by Boko Haram and provided detailed descriptions and explanations of how Christians and Muslims perceived and responded to all the acts of terror perpetrated by Boko Haram.

Sample for this study consists of 12 respondents. Using this sample is proper since it represented a fraction of the population. A total of 12 respondents were interviewed. These persons are drawn essentially from across the three states namely; Adamawa, Borno and Yobe. These 12 respondents are carefully chosen to represent all genders, ages and statuses in the society being studied. The researcher met with five Imams of Mosques and five Pastors of churches in the affected communities to find out their experiences and take on Boko Haram as a group. Some leaders of the two faiths were also interviewed since some of their Churches and Mosques were used as refugee camps at the beginning of Boko Haram attacks.



RESULTS/FINDINGS

Religious Response to Boko Haram Terrorism: A Shift in Perception

During the researcher's fieldwork in Northern Nigeria, he had personal contacts with many people across religious faiths who were directly or indirectly affected by the Boko Haram insurgency. He interviewed some abducted men and women who had gained their freedom from them. He also interacted with those who were in various villages and towns that were taken over and occupied by the group. The researcher visited some churches and mosques to listen to their sermons in response to Boko Haram. He also contacted those who watched the activities of the group from afar with the aim of having divergent religious responses about the group. This approach has helped to provide adequate answers to the theories earlier raised about the group. The researcher is now better placed to respond to the conspiracy theory that Boko Haram was a product of Northern leaders to destabilise President Goodluck Jonathan's administration and the argument that Boko Haram was the invention of the government to destroy the North, as analysed by Adesoji in his book, *Against the Run of Play* (98). The position that many Nigerian scholars held was that Boko Haram was the outcome of a political play (Adesoji 95-100), which we described as drama in our theoretical framework. All the research questions earlier raised were answered to some extent by those interviewed in this section.

The understanding of the Boko Haram concept varies among different people; for example, the academics and clergies of both religions (Christians and Muslims) resident in Adamawa, Borno, Yobe, and other parts of northern Nigeria see Boko Haram as a manipulation of the people's ignorance about religion. Dauda Muhammed Bello, the chief Imam of the *Jama'atul Izalatul Nasril Islam* in Yola town, insists that Boko Haram leaders were:

Either misinterpreting the Qur'anic verses or they are deliberately misquoting the scriptures to justify their heinous acts because there is nowhere in the Quran that states that they must fight the way they are doing (Interviewed Bello). He said they are normally used by politicians (Interview).

Bishop Ransome Stephen agrees with Bello that most of their members accepted Boko Haram as a result of ignorance. In his words: The society is completely ignorant of sufficient knowledge of the scriptures, hence the negative impact of egocentrism and self-centeredness that has to do with religious activities in gathering its way into the society (Interview). Ignorance is hereby identified as a key factor by the two clerics: Bello and Ransom.



DISCUSSION

Christian Response to Boko Haram

The Boko Haram attacks divided the thoughts of Christians concerning Muslims not only in Northern Nigeria but in Nigeria as a whole. Some hold to the first school of thought as postulated by Dickson. They see all Muslims as either terrorists or those who support it. Others see the Boko Haram terrorist group as a new brand of Islam other than the one they know. Some Christians interviewed in the north-eastern part of Nigeria confirmed that they were living in peace with Muslims before the coming of Boko Haram. The activities of the group brought a radical change in perception, especially among those who were directly affected by their attacks. When the researcher started this research, he met one Habila Isa from Potiskum on 21:03:2014, who was shot at close range with an AK-47 rifle in the presence of his wife and child but survived after receiving treatment in a hospital in Jos.

For Isa, Boko Haram was only targeting Christians and sparing Muslims. He said when they came to Potiskum, they were selective in their attacks. He asserts:

I remember when Boko Haram visited Potiskum. Muslims in our area were showing them our (Christian) houses so that we would be killed. When they entered my house, I was hiding somewhere in the ceiling but they threatened to kill my wife and child if I did not come out. So I availed myself. They preached to me and said if I say the *kalman shahada* (accept Islam), they will not kill me, but I said, I will not change my religion; whatever they want to do, let them do it. They became angry and one of them shot me in the head at close range and thought I was dead. To the glory of God, I was found alive after a whole night by security personnel and was taken to Evangel hospital in Jos for treatment (Interview).

He further explained that they did that to so many Christians not only in Potiskum but in many towns and villages throughout Adamawa, Borno and Yobe States. Many Christians confirmed that Boko Haram started with selective killings of Christians, and many Muslims saw nothing wrong with it. Gambo Jika, a lecturer with the American University of Nigeria (AUN), Yola, who is also the University Imam said, Christians can be right to think Muslims were supporting Boko Haram. He said from the beginning Muslim clerics were silent and not condemning the activities of the group, though it was for fear of being killed (Jika, Interview).

The researcher interviewed one Ayuba in SS Vabura in Madagali on 22:10:2016 who agreed with Isa when he narrated how Boko Haram came to attack their village. These are his words:

They attacked the house of Bulus, who is the younger brother of the then Adamawa State acting governor. They raided his house, killed him and some of his security men and took away one of his vehicles. From there, they killed every target that met their list, except three who were badly injured. They killed twenty-four people and they were all Christians (Ayuba, Interview).

Therefore, it was difficult to convince Ayuba that Boko Haram was not only anti-Christian. He believes that the group was formed to kill Christians and to take away their properties and territories.

The researcher asked Deborah Yakubu, a 30 year old woman from Gwoza, on 27:10:2016 whether she thinks all Muslims in Gwoza accepted the teachings of Boko Haram and she said 'yes'. This was her answer:



Honestly, based on everything I saw and all they did to us. They all seemed to accept Boko Haram's way of teaching because they make utter threatening statements whenever they see us passing by. Also, whenever a Christian is killed and we are mourning, they form groups and say, 'see these infidels'? they will soon be finished (Interview)

He further asked her whether, after all Christians fled from Gwoza, there was a story of Marsodie Muslims that she said yes; even the Emir of Gwoza was said to be killed by Boko Haram and other Muslims who refused to join them in their camps were also killed.

Ishaku Bimba from Walla village in Gwoza also said when their village was attacked on 12th January, 2014, forty (40) people were killed and only three (3) were Muslims; the rest were Christians. So to him, their main target was Christians. He added that even when they ran to take refuge on a mountain called Dutsen Walla, the Boko Haram terrorists still followed them on the 30th of October, 2014 and attacked them. He said they seized their properties, captured their women and killed ten of their men. Also, the next day they carted away their flocks, 2500 goats and 500 cattle. For Bimba, therefore, Boko Haram is only against Christians.

Philip Dauda, a twenty-five-year-old young man, said in Gombi on 02:03:2015 thus: I have come face to face with them (Boko Haram) before some of them caught me and threatened to kill me if I do not renounce my faith, but one of their leaders asked them to let me go. He said they killed so many people when they visited their village in Gwoza. When I asked him whether they killed both Christians and Muslims on the day they came to attack the village, he said no Muslim was killed. Dauda insisted that Muslims in his village were aware of the imminent attack on that very day but refused to tell them. Therefore, Boko Haram is a conspiracy of the entire Muslims. But I insisted on knowing if all the Muslims in his village joined Boko Haram or some fled together with the Christians. He said most of the Muslims stayed back in the village and joined Boko Haram; I think only about thirty-five of them refused. Therefore, Dauda's claim that all Muslims were in support of Boko Haram cannot stand to be absolutely true since a few of them ran away with the Christians.

One will keep wondering whether those attacks were centrally planned by the commanders of Boko Haram or whether some were using the period for self-gains. We came to realise that most attacks were carried out by the "Lone-Wolf" terrorists because the experiences being shared by those affected are quite varied. Cynthia C. Combs said that several types of domestic terrorism have generated so-called lone-wolf terrorists, individuals who shared an ideological or philosophical identification with an extremist group but do not necessarily communicate with the group about the terrorist's act(s) he or she takes. While the motivation of the lone wolf's actions may be to advance the group's goals, the methods and tactics to achieve the goals are generally conceived and implemented by the individual, without any command or control by the group (209). This type of terrorism is more unstructured, as seen in the numerous attacks carried out by Boko Haram terrorists. Some might have just carried out an attack for specific reasons in most of the villages that were discussed above. For example, Bimba said 2,500 goats and 500 cattle were stolen from the attack in their village, Walla, in the Gwoza Local Government Area. We saw in almost all the places attacked that people were killed and properties stolen. Almost all the respondents said the inhabitants of most of the villages remained there, even after the attacks, showing that some of the acts were done without the knowledge of the central command. In many of their organised attacks, they do move in groups of convoys using motorcycles, hilux jeeps and cars with assorted weapons to create fear and panic among the people, but the Lone-Wolf attacks were mostly carried out in the villages.



Sarah Daniel, a 36 year old lady interviewed on 15:04:2015 in Mubi, was categorical about Boko Haram, insisting that they came to attack Christians only. In her account she said:

They burnt all churches in and around Mubi numbering three hundred and sixty-seven (367), as counted by the Christian Association of Nigeria, but the *Ekklesia Yan Uwa* a Nigeria (Church of the Brethren) Headquarters and the Pastors school in Mararaba Mubi were not burnt. The Boko Haram members used it as their operational hub. The house of the then Chief of Army Staff, Alex Bade, was also occupied by the sect members at Vimtim village in Mubi but was bombed by the air strike to stop them from releasing a video showing them in the house of the Army Chief. After a critical review, it was found that no single Mosque was burnt.

The researcher visited Mubi town in Adamawa State a few weeks after the Nigerian Army had retaken the town from the Boko Haram terrorists and was able to interview Sarah Daniel, Lydia Hassan and 19 other women who were abducted by the sect members. He questioned Sarah's claim that all churches were burnt because he saw a church that was still standing close to the Emir's house in Mubi North and asked her why the church was still standing. She said it was because the church was close to the Emir's palace, where the Boko Haram *Amir* (Commander) who was the Local Cell Operational Commander also used to live. If they had set it ablaze, it would have also affected their leaders' residence. But she confirmed that they brought out all the seats, musical instruments and any movable item found in the church outside and burnt them.

Muslims Response to Boko Haram

Whenever you ask terrorists for the justification of their action, they will say they are in a *Jihad* (working for Allah). But Shaikh Muhammed Ali Assabumi, a well-known Islamic scholar and a professor at Umulkurah University in Mecca, says in a *Hajj* monthly, if we refer to the word *Jihad* in the light of *Al Kitabu Sunnah*, its concept very largely is completely different from what people understand it to be, Muslims and non-Muslims alike. When *Jihad* is mentioned, what comes to their mind for the first time is something that has to do with war, killing and destruction of properties. He queried that war brings evil and sin, so how could Islam be a religion of killing and war, whereas it is a religion of peace (*Salam*) (Assabumi 8)? Boko Haram members see themselves working for Allah in the same light. They kill, destroy and loot properties of those who refuse to do the "work of Allah" with them.

Boko Haram started as a group who were interested in listening to Islamic teaching and their activities were not frowned upon. The sudden change in their behaviour triggered a shift in perception about the group. The researcher interviewed Islamic scholars, clerics and Muslim adherents to get their views about the Boko Haram group. Mallam Gambo Jika, the deputy secretary general of *Jama'atu Nasarul Islam* (JNI) in Yola, said what the group is doing is not what Islam teaches; you find out what they are doing is far apart from Islamic teaching. When asked whether the JNI is able to find out what the actual motive/motivation was in forming the group, he answered thus:

I really do not know what their motives are. But it is clear that their activities resemble that of a cult because you do not see them preaching. I have never met anybody before the advent of Boko Haram who actually said he attended their band of preaching. Secondly, Boko Haram didn't only destroy Christians but also Muslims. If you go through the statistics of casualties, Muslims had more in terms of lives lost, properties and so on... they also killed so many Islamic



scholars, destroying a lot of knowledge. If you don't belong to their sect, you are seen as a non-Muslim even if you are one. So I can say they are clearly anti-Islam (Interview).

Boko Haram therefore was clearly rejected by most notable Islamic preachers across Nigeria and beyond. The killing of many Islamic preachers who were against the group across Nigeria, as earlier mentioned in this work, is a pointer that their brand of Islam was unacceptable to other scholars of Islam.

Halilu Mamman from Guyeku, a hunter interviewed, said, "We both ran away from our village together with Christians for fear of Boko Haram and we returned together, which clearly shows our disapproval for the kind of Islam Boko Haram practices." Another respondent, Umaru Yerima in Telabala, said, "Boko Haram slaughters everybody who does not believe in their own brand of teaching, so how can I call them Muslims? No, they are not Muslims. I believe they are a bloodsucking group". Haruna Musa was interviewed in Mubi and he sees Boko Haram as a band of looters and thieves and added by saying, "if they can kill the Emir of Gwoza and Askira Uba, both in Gadan Zur, then how can they be Muslims? They have no selection in their killings, so I don't believe they are Muslims." The researcher interviewed Saidu Adamu in Jimeta Yola and he simply described Boko Haram members as "a bunch of spoilt and wayward people". Adamu reported how his 18 family members were abducted by Boko Haram from Madagali to the forest but 17 later gained their freedom by escaping from various locations and are reunited again. He said he is a Muslim but had to run together with his friend, who is a Christian from their village. However, his family decided to stay back, thinking they would be spared because they were Muslims but they were all abducted to the forest. When asked why he ran away since he was a Muslim, he answered:

I would not have run if I agreed with their kind of teaching. I am alive because I run. All my children were captured by Boko Haram members. It was God that saved them all. Out of the 28 members of my family, 18 were abducted but I thank God that all have returned except one of my wives. They did that to provoke me to run away from true Islam, as they claim. If one commits himself to their course, he will not be hurt, and if they ask you to do something like going with them to fight or steal and you cooperate, you will be spared, but if you refuse, you will not live to see the next day (Adamu Interview).

IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

Even though the origin of Boko Haram, as construed by many scholars, is tied to the salafi response, our findings show that poverty and political thuggery are largely responsible for the origin and development of Boko Haram in Northeast Nigeria.

Boko Haram's main ideology was to establish a total Islamic state with the intent to wipe out any trace of western culture among the people. The insurgents began with "Dawa", preaching their way of life, after which it graduated to attacks on churches and mosques on worship days with the aim of recruiting new members. They also attacked police, military and prison formations in order to add to their weaponry. While the Christians perceive them as enemies of the gospel whose plot is to take over their territories, Muslims, on the other hand, see the sect as fraudulent minorities without much understanding of Islam.



It was discovered that Muslim and Christian leaders were united in action to form an interfaith group through which they chart a course for religious understanding by providing sufficient knowledge along religious lines. This is so because they believe Boko Haram exploited the ignorance of the people. Government agencies and non-governmental organisations also help in providing palliative services to internally displaced persons.

Christians feel this group is against them since they burnt their churches and houses and forced them out of their ancestral lands, also capturing their daughters and wives as sex slaves. Muslims, on the other hand, see Boko Haram as a secret cult that is thirsty for blood since they also bomb and attack mosques, killing Muslims and many Islamic clerics who preach against them. Also, interpersonal relations between the adherents of the two religions became sour.

Mohammed Yusuf, the founder of Boko Haram, was indoctrinated by an extremist Islamic theologian in Niger Republic. This work found out that some of their top commanders were also trained by the Islamic state.

CONCLUSION

The study and findings of Boko Haram activities and impact in Northeastern Nigeria are overwhelming. The Boko Harams' ideology is essentially anti-western, anti-government and anti-religious institutions. Muslim and Christian leaders, governments and non-governmental organisations are united in action both in taming and mitigating the impact of Boko Haram activities in the northeast region. Based on the findings, Christians and Muslims differ in their perspectives on the Boko Haram sects, which in turn affect their responses to Boko Haram activities.

The hitherto cordial relationship enjoyed by the Christian and Muslim communities in the northeast was interrupted by the onslaught of Boko Haram activities in the region. Christians in the northeast see Islam as a bloody religion since the sect that massacres them claims to be doing so in the name of practising true Islamic faith. Many Muslims perceived Boko Haram as cultists who are thirsty for blood and who are also victims of heretic preachers. Boko Haram is internationally connected to the Islamic state and other terrorist organisations around the world.

FUTURE RESEARCH

The recent mass repentance of Boko Haram members is an area that needs further investigation so as to ascertain the ingenuity or otherwise of their repentance and the view of Nigerians concerning it.



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Respondents

Ayuba	40yrs	Businessman	MizoYola	22:10:2016
Deborah Yakubu	30yrs	Housewife	Gwoza	27:10:2016
Gambo Jika	54yrs	JNI	Yola	21:10:2015
Habila Isa	37yrs	Civil Servant	Potiskum	21:03:2014
Halilu Mamman		Adult Hunter	GidanZur	27:10:2016
Haruna Musa		Adult Civil Servant	Mubi	14:03:2016
Ishaku Bimba		Adult Teacher	Gwoza	23:10:2016
Lydia Hassan (not real name)	34yrs	Civil Servant	Nubi	16:04:2015
Philip Dauda	25yrs	Student	Valle	27:10:2016
Saidu Adamu	76yrs	Farmer	Yola	23:10:2016
Sarah Daniel	36yrs	Senior Staff Fed. Pol.	Mubi	15:04:2015
Umaru Yerima	55yrs	Hunter	Telebala	30:03:2016