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DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LETTERS AND LANGUAGE**

## **The Impact of Boko Haram on the Nigerian Education System (2009 - 2022)**

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Degree in Literature and Civilization**

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## **Dedication**

To my beloved mother who has always supported me to be who I am,

to the loving memory of my father,

this thesis is dedicated.

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First and foremost, I would like to thank Allah for giving me the strength to stand again, despite all the difficulties I have experienced.

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## **Abstract**

The evolution of the Nigerian educational system went through two important stages, the colonial and post-colonial eras. Throughout the process of educational evolution, the disparity between the North and South has been widened because of the military coups, Nigerian Biafra war, and the recent conflict of Boko Haram. terrorizing schooling which is a very dangerous phenomenon has threatened Nigeria's educational system during the conflict between Boko Haram and the government. The conflict has affected the educational system, and it has also widened the educational gap between the North and South of the country. Although the Nigerian educational system has witnessed many improvements attempts since the colonial era, the Boko Haram insurgency only worsens the system. Boko Haram appeared in Nigeria's northeast which is a poor area in terms of educational outcomes, comparing to the south. The ideology of Boko Haram which is considered as a terrorist group, focuses on attacking education to disconcert Nigeria's democracy and constitution. The so-called Jihadist movement is against the Western education. So Boko Haram the so-called "an extremist Islamist movement" since 2009 has destroyed schools, kidnapped pupils and students, and killed thousands of them, making schools a risky place. Therefore, this research answers several questions: How was the Nigerian educational system working from 1960 to 2009? What is the Boko Haram and what are the reasons behind its insurgency? How has Boko Haram affected the Nigerian education? Finally, how does the Nigerian government react to the actions and movement of Boko Haram? This research aims to describe the evolution of the Nigerian educational system and investigates the impact and the effect of Boko Haram on Nigeria's education in modern Africa. Furthermore, this research highlights

how the Nigerian government has dealt with this threat, and how it has negotiated with Boko Haram to lessen the risk of a bloody conflict.

**Keywords:**

Education, Nigeria, Boko Haram insurgency, terrorizing schooling.

## الملخص

مر تطور النظام التعليمي النيجيري بمرحلتين مهمتين، حقبة الاستعمار وما بعد الاستعمار. خلال عملية التطور التعليمي، اتسع التفاوت بين الشمال والجنوب بسبب الانقلابات العسكرية، حرب بيافرا النيجيرية، والصراع الأخير لبوكو حرام. ترهيب التعليم وهي ظاهرة في غاية الخطورة هددت النظام التعليمي في نيجيريا خلال الصراع بين بوكو حرام والحكومة. لقد أثر الصراع على النظام التعليمي، كما أدى إلى توسيع الفجوة التعليمية بين شمال وجنوب البلاد. على الرغم من أن النظام التعليمي النيجيري شهد العديد من محاولات التحسين منذ الحقبة الاستعمارية، إلا أن تمرد بوكو حرام زاد النظام سوءًا. ظهرت بوكو حرام في شمال شرق نيجيريا وهي منطقة فقيرة من حيث النتائج التعليمية، مقارنة بالجنوب. تركز أيديولوجية بوكو حرام، والتي تعتبر جماعة إرهابية، على مهاجمة التعليم لإرباك الديمقراطية في نيجيريا ودستورها. إن ما يسمى بالحركة الجهادية ضد التعليم الغربي. لذا دمرت جماعة بوكو حرام، المعروفة باسم "الحركة الإسلامية المتطرفة" منذ عام 2009، المدارس وخطفت التلاميذ والطلاب وقتلت الآلاف منهم، فأصبح التواجد في المدارس خطوة محفوفة بالمخاطر. لذا فهذا البحث يهدف إلى الإجابة عن عدة أسئلة: كيف كان نظام التعليم النيجيري يعمل من 1960 إلى 2009؟ ما هي ماهية جماعة بوكو حرام وماهي الأسباب الخلفية من وراء تشكلها وتمرداتها؟ كيف أثرت جماعة بوكو حرام على التعليم النيجيري؟ وبالأخير كيف كان رد فعل الحكومة النيجيرية عن أفعال وحركة بوكو حرام؟ بالإضافة على كون هذا البحث يقدم وصفا عن تطور النظام التعليمي النيجيري والتحقيق في تأثير بوكو حرام عليه في إفريقيا الحديثة. فإنه أيضا يسلط الضوء على كيفية تعامل الحكومة النيجيرية مع هذا التهديد وكيف تجري التفاوض مع بوكو حرام للتقليل من مخاطر الصراع الدموي.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** التعليم، نيجيريا، تمرد بوكو حرام، ترهيب التعليم.



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## **List of Acronyms and Abbreviations**

<b>AG:</b>	Action Group
<b>CMS:</b>	Church Missionary Society
<b>CNF:</b>	Cameroon People's Congress
<b>CDD:</b>	Centre of Democracy and Development
<b>CJTF:</b>	Civilian Joint Task Force
<b>ISWAP:</b>	Islamic State in West Africa Province
<b>JSSC:</b>	Junior Secondary School Certificate
<b>JSS:</b>	Junior Secondary School
<b>KUNC:</b>	Kameron United National Congress
<b>MJTF:</b>	Military Joint Task Force
<b>MSM:</b>	Methodist Society Missionary
<b>NCNC:</b>	National Council of Nigeria and Cameroon
<b>NERDC:</b>	National Educational Research and Development Council
<b>NPC:</b>	Northern People's Congress
<b>NPE:</b>	National Policy on Education
<b>SSS:</b>	Senior Secondary School
<b>SSC:</b>	Secondary School Certificate
<b>UBE:</b>	Universal Basic Education

**UME:** Universities Matriculation Examination

**UNESCO:** United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

**UNICEF:** United Nations Internationally Children's Emergency Fund

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## **General Introduction**

Nigeria is the most populated country in Africa with an incredible cultural diversity. The country gained its independence from Britain in 1960, and it became a federal republic with a presidential system. The post-colonial Nigerian era from 1966 to 2022 has witnessed a series of military coups d'état, the Nigerian Biafra civil war, and the Boko Haram insurgency. As a result, Nigeria has been in a state of internal conflict (Onyemelukwe-Waziri 8). Throughout these frenzy years, Nigeria suffered many setbacks socially, economically and especially educationally (Onyemelukwe-Waziri 8). Thus, the educational gap between the North and South has been widened.

This dissertation is about the impact of Boko Haram's actions on the Nigerian educational system. It attempts to examine the evolution of the post-colonial Nigerian educational system, with a special focus on the disparity between the North and the South of the country. This research then is divided into two chapters to cover the most important events that had led to the establishment of the system of education in Nigeria, the factors behind the Boko Haram insurgency and its impact on the Nigerian educational system.

This research aims to examine the Nigerian educational system in post-colonial Nigeria era, and also it highlights the educational gap between the North and South in order to draw people's attention to the risk of this problem. Another aim of this study is to highlight the main factors causing the disparity between the two regions.

The main objective of this research is to confirm the risk of Boko Haram insurgency and its hideous effects on the Nigerian educational system through terrorizing and destroying schools. It is worth noting that this topic has always been a



debate during the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century between scientists and researchers who are interested in the educational process in Nigeria.

The research methodology is based on a descriptive analytical approach to closely describe and investigate the Nigerian educational system, the rise of Boko Haram, and its influence on the Nigerian educational system in the modern era. The thesis of this research aims to answer the following questions: how does the Nigerian educational system work? What is Boko Haram? What are the causes behind the Boko Haram insurgency? How has Boko Haram affected the Nigerian educational system? How has the Nigerian Government responded to Boko Haram?

The first chapter defines education and highlights the main events in the history of the Nigerian educational system, and how it was established even during the colonial period. Moreover, the second section studies the changes the National Policy on Education had made after the Biafra war.

The second chapter focuses on the historical background to the Boko Haram insurgency as a contemporary conflict that the Nigerian government has been dealing with, and the activities of Boko Haram. It also investigates the causes and the impact of Boko Haram on the educational development in Nigeria. Finally, this chapter highlights the Nigerian government's response to Boko Haram.

# **Chapter One**

## **The Post-Colonial Educational System in Nigeria 1960-2009**

## **Introduction**

The history of the Nigerian educational system had witnessed and undergone structural changes throughout the previous century. The first half of the twentieth century marked a shift from traditional education to a formal modern system under British colonial rule from 1916 to 1952. During that period, the governors of the unified colony, Fredrick Lugard, Arthur Richard, and Macpherson made some reforms which paved the way for great changes in the Nigerian educational system and political system. Yet, in 1982 the first National Policy on Education adopted the American educational system. However, there have been some issues which negatively affected the educational system of Nigeria and the society itself until nowadays.

### **1. The Definition of Education**

Before tackling the history of education in Nigeria, it is necessary to understand the concept of education. There are flexible definitions of this concept coming up as a result of observing and analysing the process of learning by different scholars and experts. Fafunwa explained in his book the word education from different perspectives of different nations and how each nation viewed the word education:

The Greek idea of an educated man was one who was mentally and physically well-balanced.... During the Middle Ages in England the knight, the lord and the priest was considered classical examples of a well-educated elite.... In Old Africa, the warrior, the hunter, the nobleman, the man of character or anyone who combined the latter feature with a specific skill was adjudged to be a well-educated and well-integrated citizen of his community. (15)

Education is a process all humans went through by collecting information, developing personal character, abilities, attitudes and learning specific skills to be a valuable person, so they can contribute to the development of their nation.

Furthermore, education is very important as it is a process of transmission of knowledge, values, heritage and history from one generation to another.

Education expands the horizon of educated people and it enlightens them to view issues and problems from different standpoints. Therefore, education was a potent factor used by Nigerian politicians. They knew how high-quality education could help raise political consciousness among people, “one definite contribution made by education has been political enlightenment of the people, particularly the educated elite” (Fafunwa 156). This means enlightened citizens are a blessing as they can liberate their country and make it peaceful and prosperous. For that reason, the leaders of the political parties in Nigeria introduced many proposals and schemes to make sure education is universal and free.

## **2. Post-Colonial Education in Nigeria 1960-2009**

One of the radical issues Nigeria had struggled with after the independence was British colonial educational legacy. Nigeria inherited the British educational system that had lasted until 1982 when the National Policy on Education (NPE) saw that some reforms to the system were necessary. Nevertheless, the effects of the so-called Western education spilt the country into two parts: The South that encouraged the Western education, and the North which preferred the prevailing Islamic system.

### **2.1. Background to the Emergence of Political Parties 1945-1960**

During the period from 1944 to independence in 1960, the history of Nigeria had taken a turn to realise self-determination and educational expansion. There are two important stages that the educational policy in Nigeria had passed through: the colonial period and the post-independence one. In order to understand the educational system of Nigeria after independence, it is important to have a look at the two decades after 1945. By the end of the Second World War, Nigeria had gone through two

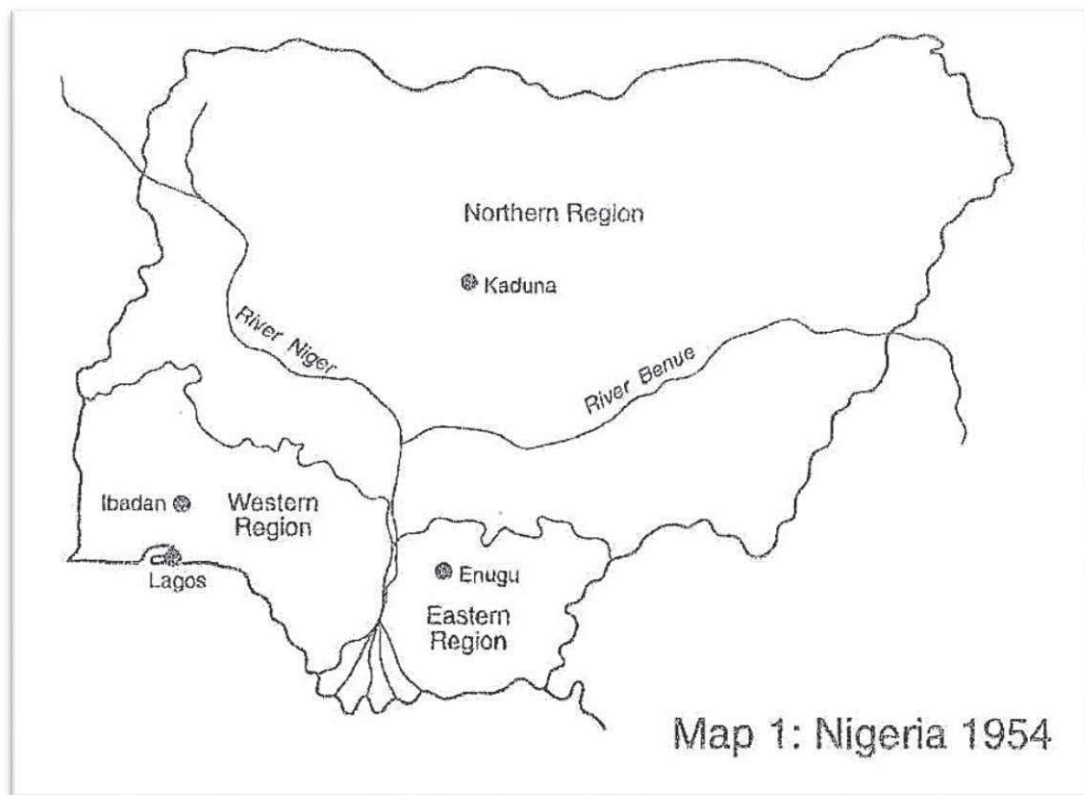
decades of exceptional political and educational transformations. During that period, the country witnessed the most phenomenal expansion in the history of Nigerian education, and it had extended beyond independence. For that reason, Fafunwa described it as “the era of self-determination in education (1950-1970)” (166).

## **2.2. Richard's Constitution**

In the aftermath of the Second World War, the British colonial administration faced strong resistance from the Nigerian political movements and workers. In 1945, around 17 labour unions struck for 37 days in a row. The strike was called off only after the government agreed to address workers' demands (Falola and Heaton 145). Furthermore, not only did the successful strike encourage the leaders of political parties but also the local people who wanted to have a bigger role in the affairs of their country. The increase of nationalist movements, the strikes, and the fear of communist ideology to spread among the unions led the colonial authority to introduce the Richard's Constitution.

The Richard's Constitution (so-named after the Governor-General of Nigeria, Arthur Richards) was a landmark political development preparing for a new era in the history of Nigeria. In 1945, governor Arthur Richards proposed a constitution which was introduced in 1946. This constitution was applied until 1948 during Sir John Macpherson's period of rule. According to this constitution, Nigeria was divided into three regions: east, west and north, each one having a regional assembly and its own governmental system. Through a decade the three regions in addition to Lagos put their efforts to improve the educational system by passing proposals and reforms, but the universality of primary education was the main goal.

**Map 1: Map of Nigeria 1954 Showing the Three Regions**



**Source:** "Changing bodies, degenerating output: phases of Basic Education in Nigeria from 1914-2014". Journal of Administrative Sciences and Policy Studies. June 2014, Vol 2, No. 1, pp, 21-38.

### **2.2.1. The Rise of Political Parties in Nigeria**

There were three tribal political parties responsible for each one of the three regions: Firstly, for the east region was the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons (N.C.N.C) led by Herbert Macaulay and Nnamdi Azikiwe. By 1952 two political parties had emerged. For the west, there was the Action Group (A.G.) led by Obafemi Awolowo while for the north, there was the Northern People's Congress (N.P.C). These three political parties had contributed significantly to the development of the Nigerian education system for almost two decades by passing laws and reforms. Moreover, they played a significant role until the military coup d'état of 1966.

The decade before Nigerian independence was the most politically tumultuous in Nigerian history. The British colonial administration started handing over the power to Nigerians by introducing a new constitution in 1951 (Fafunwa 1967). The Macpherson Constitution gave more power to the three political parties by providing the right to be elected democratically (Fafunwa 1967). Moreover, this constitution set the stage for Nigeria to start a new era of self-determination. The democratic election of regional houses of assembly led to empowering each region to raise a loan and appropriate funds, and most importantly, to have the power to pass laws concerning education, health, agriculture, and local government. This new step of self-determination helped the three political parties to improve social amenities for their area of control (Fafunwa 1967).

### **2.2.2. The Universality of Primary Education**

Primary education has always been regarded as a crucial stage of any educational system in the world. It is also a basic foundation of education, and thus the three political parties were motivated by this recognition for a whole decade to



make primary education free and universal. The movement toward the universality of primary education in Nigeria dates back to the 1950s when most of the political parties gained more power because of the Macpherson's Constitution. Therefore, there was a competition between the political parties which concentrated on improving the educational system of the crown colony.

Firstly, in the western region of Nigeria, the Action Group (A.G.) was mainly controlled by the Yoruba ethnic group. The A.G. was a nationalist political party. In 1952, Obafemi Awolowo won the first leadership election and became the A.G. first leader (Fafunwa 167). He made sure to give priority to health and education. Therefore, the west minister of education, chief S.O. Awokoya clearly said: “Educational development is imperative and urgent. It must be treated as a national emergency, second only to war. It must move with the momentum of a revolution” (Fafunwa 168). From this perspective, he introduced an important proposal provided that education must be compulsory, universal and free. By January 1955, the western government trained teachers and built hundreds of schools. The same year marked the beginning of a revolution in Nigerian educational history. Fafunwa documented how the enrolment in primary school dramatically increased

...in January 1955, some 811,000 children turned up. These figures represented a jump from 35 per cent to 61 per cent of the 5-14 year olds. By 1958 more than one million children were enrolled. The government officials under-estimated the figures expected at the initial stages: it was originally estimated that some 492,000 would be enrolled in 1955 rising by 100,000 annually, but more than 800,000 were registered.... (168)

It was a big jump which caused the fear among parents of not being able to enrol their children in schools. For that reason, the West government fixed the problem by building more schools, and hence “the number of primary school teachers rose from 17,000 in 1954 to 27,000 in 1955” (Fafunwa 168).

Secondly, the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroon party (NCNC) was primarily associated with the Igbo tribe. It was formed in 1944 by Herbert Macaulay. In 1948, Nnamdi Azikiwe was elected to the Nigerian Legislative Council and then he held the position as the premier of the Eastern region (1954-1959).

The year 1953 witnessed a crisis within the NCNC. The crisis came as a result of an explosion of the anti-Nigerian feelings of Southern Cameroonians and reconciliation between Endeley's Cameroon National Federation (CNF) and Dibonge's Kamerun United National Congress (KUNC) (Nicodemus 99). This crisis in the NCNC led to disband the party exactly after the election of the party where nine out of thirteen delegates were from the Southern Cameroons. Another reason behind the crisis was the dismissal of S.T. Muna as the only Cameroonian in the Eastern Executive Council. This decision only deteriorated the political situation of the NCNC (Nicodemus 99). As a result, the leader of the Cameroon bloc in the Eastern House suggested that separation was the only suitable solution to the crisis (Nicodemus 99).

Despite the crisis of 1953 among the NCNC, the east minister of education Mr. R.I. Uzoma before resigning, introduced a proposal that included free primary education. However, the local government would pay only 45% of the cost of a free junior primary education (Fafunwa 170). As the crisis led to major changes, Nnamdi Azikiwe became the leader of the East region, while Mr. I.U. Kapadia became the minister of education as well. On the contrary to the West Region, the Eastern Region government had not enough time to plan its own scheme. However, universal primary education was not launched until February 1957 (Fafunwa 171). Due to the lack of funds and the poor management, the government achieved nothing but “new schools were staffed by untrained teachers as there was not enough time to train them” (Fafunwa 171).

Thirdly, in the northern part of Nigeria the Northern People's Congress (NPC) party was mainly controlled by Hausa and Fulani's ethnic groups. The development of education in the north moved slowly comparing to the eastern and western regions because of many issues (Fafunwa 174). The northern region was not able to launch universality of primary education due to the enormity of pupils. Furthermore, most leaders in the north were hesitated about the modern educational system, preferring "the bless of Islamic system" (Fafunwa 174). In 1958, the northern government decided not to apply the universality of primary education, but rather to plan primary education on provisional basis. Nevertheless, the result practically was acceptable, the northern schools had qualified teachers unlike the south (Fafunwa 175).

Lagos was the political capital of Nigeria and it became a federal territory after being separated from the West in 1954 (Fafunwa 173). It was supposed to follow the same scheme of the Western region; therefore, the universal primary education was not introduced until January 1957. The government of Lagos took the whole responsibility to offer free education and even welfare service (Fafunwa 174).

### **3. The British Educational System of 6-5-4**

Even after the British left Nigeria, the British educational system had continued to exist until 1982. However, it is important to highlight that education in Nigeria did not start with the invasion of the British Empire. There were two fundamentally distinct educational systems before the Europeans brought their western forms of education: The Indigenous system and the Quranic system. The period between 1842 to 1882 witnessed an extensive missionary activities and expansion in Southern Nigeria (Fafunwa 92). Initially, one of the main motives of missionaries was to convert the Nigerians to Christianity. Up to 1882, the Western education had spread in Nigeria by the Christian missionaries. There were two organizations to set up

schools: The Church Missionary Society (CMS) and the Methodist Missionary Society (MMS). Most of their schools were associated in the Southern part of Nigeria. The colonial education laid particular stress on the 4rs (Reading, Writing, Arithmetic and Religion). Moreover, this new type of education facilitated the way to students for the job opportunities (Gabra 66).

The colonial government provided education for the Nigerians through the missionaries. Subsequently, it adopted a unified education system, the 6-5-4 which means the pupils should spend six years in primary school, five years in secondary school, and four years in tertiary education (Olaniyan 153).

The educational progress was slow, there was also a disparity between the North and South throughout the colonial era. However, in 1950, Nigeria as a colonial country witnessed a decade of educational expansion starting from developing a three-tiered system of primary, secondary, and higher education based on the British model, to the universality of primary education (Karugu *et al.* 206). The British model was fundamentally based on a broad participation which meant that all children are expected to attend primary education, then classifying the students into an academic and vocational training at secondary school. Moreover, higher education was only for elites who were destined for leadership (Karugu *et al.* 206). This system functioned even after the independence. In 1982, the National Educational Policy introduced 6-3-3-4 system (Karugu *et al.* 207).

#### **4. Post-Colonial Nigeria and the Biafra War (1967-70)**

Nigeria gained its independence from Britain in October 1960. Benjamin Nnamdi Azikiwe an Igbo man, became the first general-governor of the federation chosen by British Parliament. He later became the first president of Nigeria. During the post-colonial period, Nigeria has witnessed a series of military coups and conflicts

between political parties and ethnic tribes. These coups and conflicts raised the tension that immediately caused the bloodiest civil war in West Africa.

#### **4.1. Pre-Biafra War's Events**

One of the important concerns here is not dealing with the details that took place during 1966, but rather overviewing the main events that shaped the contemporary Nigeria-Biafra civil war. The years following Nigeria's independence were a sensitive period before the country went through one of the bloodiest conflicts in Nigerian history, the Nigeria-Biafra War. The two territorial and ethnic groups that shaped Nigerian colonial society became a federation of three main regions, each dominated by one or two ethnic groups: Yoruba in the West, Hausa-Fulani in the North, and the Igbos in the East (Dirk and Lasse 6). The division into three regions was seen also as a religious divide that split the country into two dominant religions: Christianity was mainly dominated in the south, while, the north was extensively Islamic-dominated (Dirk and Lasse 6).

The image of the post-colonial democracy became clear by the mid-1960s. The three tribes contended for state resources, this act deepened the rift between the south and the northern regions (Dirk and Lasse 7). However, the southeast region was particularly isolated from any attempt to reach the state. Furthermore, political corruption was widespread throughout the country where all forms of manipulation were omnipresent during the federal and national elections (Dirk and Lasse 7).

Nigeria witnessed a new era of conflict and violence between the ethnic groups during 1960 and 1966. In 1966, the Nigerian government system was wracked because of the inter-communal violence and the war that followed. The fears of the violence's results of 1966 bulked large in the Biafran thoughts and they understood the war was ahead (Dirk and Lasse 54). The first attempt was on 29 May, the former

Northern politicians and administrators, feudal rulers and the Muslim elite conspired with each other against the Easterners and planned to massacre all of them (Dirk and Herteen 53). The other three genocides, which took place on 29 July, 29 September, and 29 October 1966, resulted in killing over 30,000 Igbo men, women, and children (Korieh 10).

Nigeria had also experienced political convulsion and witnessed three military coups that wracked the system in 1966 (Dirk and Herteen 47). On January 15, 1966 a coup d'état in Nigeria overthrew the government. The military officers were initially against all types of corruption and hailed as messiah who would save Nigeria from further political crisis (Obi-Ani 16). The second coup was in the late of July 1966, in northern Nigeria, the troops mutinied against the state of Nigeria ("Biafra: From the first Coup to Final Defeat"). The coups came after two months of a series of riots. The last coup took place on the first October of 1966. It was literally a week of violence where most of the victims were from eastern Nigeria ("Biafra: From the first Coup to Final Defeat").

The Nigerian political crisis was deepened because of the pogroms in the country by the end of 1966. Therefore, Lieutenant Colonel Yakubu Gowon, Nigerian head of state, announced the end of the regional structure (Dirk and Herteen 54). This decision broke up the Eastern Region which caused the separation of the Igbo heartland from two populous coastal states (Dirk and Herteen 54). Consequently, three days later, exactly on 30 May 1967, Biafra declared itself independent from Nigeria and claimed that the entire Eastern Region was an integral part of Biafra (Dirk and Herteen 54).

## **4.2. Biafra War**

In the post-colonial period, the leaders of the northern region became extremely worried about southern dominations. The Igbos and the Yoruba at that time had courageous nationalist leaders, such as Azikiwe and Awolowo, who encouraged and embraced western education and pressed for independence. However, the political elite of the north adamantly refused western education, ideology, and rhetoric.

One of the challenges Nigeria has gone through since its emergence as an independent country is to coalesce the numerous ethnic nationalities into one united nation. Nigeria is a unified territory that had been created since 1914 through the amalgamation of Britain. Therefore, Nigeria's state had struggled with social differences, political tension, economic competition, and ethnic imbalances. The amalgamation of different ethnic and religious groups into one federation created internal tension after the independence. Thus, Biafra was one of the major problems of decolonization and it was considered as Africa's most devastating genocide of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Biafra war commenced in 1967, in the same year, the population of Biafra was approximately 14 million living in the south. The Biafrans wanted to secede from Nigeria as they felt that their political and cultural beliefs were undermined and repressed by the northern dominated federal government. Nigeria had been at war for three years with Biafra between 1967 and 1970, and it was the first "black-on-black genocide in post-colonial Africa" (qtd. in Onyemelukwe-Waziri 6).

### **4.2.1. The Impact of the Biafra War on Education**

Civil wars have been major threats to educational development all over the world. During the Biafra-Nigeria war, education in the south-eastern part reached an impasse (Onyemelukwe-Waziri 7). It was completely at a standstill because of the government



policy to blockade Biafra. Under these circumstances, many Biafran pupils were affected as they were unable to attend classes. Furthermore, when the war reached its heights, most schools were used as triage units for the injuries (Onyemelukwe-Waziri 7).

## **5. Education in Post-Colonial Nigeria: The Aftermath of the Biafra War**

After the war, the Nigerian government realized the need to launch the National Policy on Education in 1977 in order to improve the educational system. Truly, the development of any country depends on the high quality of education. Therefore, the National Policy on Education focused on student's self-realization, individual and national efficiency, and national unity.

### **5.1. The National Policy**

Nigeria inherited an educational policy from Britain. This policy was not able to satisfy the needs of the country after independence. Therefore, in 1969 a National Curriculum Conference (NCC) was organised. The first step of the NCC was to review the inherited curriculum and propose new national goals for Nigeria's education. In 1973, the National Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) organized a National Seminar under the chairmanship of Chief S.O. Adebo. This move encouraged the National Policy on Education (NPE) to be established in 1977 (Okorona 249).

### **5.2. Adoption of the American Educational System 1982**

After independence, Nigeria was roughly estimated at 45 million (Nigeria Population Growth Rate 1950-2022). With this population, the government tried to underpin the educational system by passing reforms. While the education system was

expanded to cover large areas, the economic crisis restrained the development of education. It is noteworthy that the Biafra-Nigeria war and the several military coups had affected negatively the economy of the country. By 1972, the National Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) was established to encourage educational research programs in Nigeria (Karugu *et al.* 213).

In 1982, Nigeria switched to the American system. Education in Nigeria was based on a 6-3-3-4, which involved three levels of the institutional learning process (Karugu *et al.* 207). In other words, the formal system was 6 years in primary, 3 years in junior secondary, 3 years in senior secondary, and 4 years of university education to obtain a Bachelor's degree. The new policy of education in Nigeria kept education free but it was no longer compulsory at any level except at primary level (Karugu *et al.* 207). The educational system in Nigeria consisted of the following stages:

Firstly, kindergarten preceded primary education for 2 years but it was not compulsory. However, primary education was free and compulsory (Karugu *et al.* 207). In Nigeria, children started attending elementary schools when they are 6 years old spending the next 6 years at the primary level. The primary school curriculum generally included subjects like Mathematics, English, Social studies, Home Economics and Agriculture (Karugu *et al.* 207). In 2008, the curriculum had been reviewed and modified. The updated curriculum incorporated several new subjects like Information Communication Technology, French language, and Civic education (Karugu *et al.* 207).

In 1999, the new government led by President Olusegun Obasanjo introduced Universal Basic Education (UBE). The scheme aimed to provide free, universal and basic education for every Nigerian child between 6 to 15 years old.

Secondly, secondary school was the second stage and it is divided into three years in junior secondary and three years in senior education. At the junior secondary school level (JSS), there were two streams: pre-vocational and academic. Moreover, the curriculum included English, mathematics, French, integrated science, social studies and introduction to technology (Karugu *et al.* 208). Pre-vocational electives comprised agriculture, business studies, crafts and computer education. However, non-pre-vocational electives comprised of creative art, religious and moral education and Arabic (Karugu *et al.* 208). Generally, students took around ten to thirteen subjects including core subjects. By the end of the junior phase, students passed the Junior Secondary School Certificate (JSSC). This exam was necessary to pass to the next level. After the JSS, students could progress to senior secondary school and technical colleges, or enrolled in training centres and apprenticeships to learn crafts (Karugu *et al.* 208).

The Senior Secondary School (SSS) also lasted 3 years, students at this level took eight subjects from an assorted curriculum that contained six core subjects: English, Mathematics, one major Nigerian language. One optional of Biology, Chemistry, Physics, or integrated science. They also could take one optional of English literature, history, geography, or social studies, agriculture science (Karugu *et al.* 208). By the end of the SSC level, students should sit for the Senior School Certificate (SSC). The SSC was considered one of the important requirements for undergraduate admission into a Nigerian university. The second requirement was for entering higher education after passing Universities Matriculation Examination (UME) (Karugu *et al.* 208).

Finally, higher education and training. The Nigerian system of higher education consisted of universities and a non-university sector made up of polytechnics,

monotechnics and colleges of education (Karugu *et al.* 212). Higher education in Nigeria consisted of three stages; bachelor's, master's degree, and doctorate. The first stage was a Bachelor's programme that lasts for 4 years, but for other cases of many professional degrees like medicine, dentistry, and veterinary science took between 5 to 6 years depending on the institution (Karugu *et al.* 212). The second stage of higher education took from one to two years. It is literary a continuation of the first stage. A Postgraduate Diploma (PhD) paved the way to study for a Doctorate. The last stage was the Doctorate of Philosophy (PhD). A PhD is a doctoral research degree and the highest level of academic qualification a student could achieve. It was awarded upon completing two or three years of studying and researching following a master's degree. By the end of this third stage, students present their thesis orally (Karugu *et al.* 212).

## **6. The Educational Gap between the North and South of Nigeria**

The conflict between the South and the North of Nigeria had a historical origin. The amalgamation in 1914 immediately had provoked various ethnic groups against one another. One of the destructive effects of the imbalance between the two regions is the educational gap between the North and South of Nigeria. On the other hand, there is another historical origin that education imbalance in Nigeria came from the “rejection-acceptance” dichotomy, by the North and South separately, of the external influence of the western education system (Okobiah 1).

The emirs had controlled the Northern until the creation of the Northern Regional House Assembly in 1947. During their reign, the Northern part lagged far behind the southern as a result of refusing the so-called western education, the emirs caused a developmental delay and growth retardation (Tibenderana 517). Moreover,

the British government undoubtedly emphasized that during its rule in northern Nigeria (1900-1960), no emir solicited the British Administration for a fund for the development of education lest that it would negatively affect their faith (Tibenderana 517). Moreover, the emirs and Muslim elite were unwilling to send their children to the colonial administration schools. They feared their sons would be vulnerable to conversion to Christianity (Tibenderana 518).

The educational imbalance between the north and south is not a recent issue that Nigeria struggled with. According to the statistics collected by Professor Okobiah, the origin of the educational gap was created during the colonial period. The following two tables shows the disparity and the huge educational difference between the north and south from 1913 to 1998.

According to the table below (see table 1), the primary school's enrolment in the southern state during the colonial era (1913) was around 7.9% compared to 92.1% in the southern states (Okobiah 13). In 1960, after independence, the situation did not change, the disparity remained the same, the enrolment in the north reached 9.9% while the South recorded about 90.1% (Okobiah 13). By the end of the twentieth century, in 1998, there was a slight difference, primary school enrolment reached only 44.5% in the North while in the south, primary school enrolment was 55.5% (Okobiah 13).

**Table 01: Trends in primary enrolment disparity between the North and South**

PERIOD	PARAMETERS	NORTH		SOUTH	
		Number	% Nation	Number	%Nation
1913	Population	8,487,000	51.6	791,000	48.4
	Population enrolled	25,000	7.9	313,000	92.1
	Enrolment rate (%)	1.8		22.1	
1960	Population	26,854,000	55.7	3,801,546	44.3
	Population enrolled	282,849	9.9	2,629,770	90.1
	Enrolment rate (%)	5.6		68.2	
1998	Population	57,656,000	53.4	50,314,00	46.6
	Population enrolled	7,984,368		9,958,032	55.5
	Enrolment rate (%)	77.8		111.2	

**Source:** Okobiah, Omamurhomu Solomon. "The Educational Imbalance between the Northern and Southern States of Nigeria: A Re-direction of Educational Policies." March 13, 2002. P 10.

The educational gap between the northern and southern states was not only at primary level but it increased at each successive levels of the educational institution. In 1942, secondary school's enrolment in the north was 25.9% comparing to 74.1% in the southern states (Okobiah 14) (see table 2). However, in 1960 when Nigeria gained its independence, it was supposed to increase, but according to the data, the enrolment in the north reduced to 11.3% as against 88.7% in the south of Nigeria (Okobiah 14). By the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup>, in 2000, there were about 34.4% northern students who enrolled in secondary school comparing to 65.5% southern students (Okobiah 14).

**Table 02: Trends in secondary enrolment disparity between the North and South**

PERIOD	PARAMETERS	NORTH		SOUTH	
		Number	% Nation	Number	%Nation
1942	Population size	26,685,000	55.7	21,337,000	44.3
	Population enrolled	1,570	25.9	6,700	74.1
	Enrolment rate (%)	0.1		0.4	
1960	Population size	37,424,000	53.5	32,527,000	46.5
	Population enrolled	6,264	11.3	48,971	88.7
	Enrolment rate (%)	0.2		1.6	
2000	Population size				
	Population enrolled	2,081,700	34.4	3,975,000	65.6
	Enrolment rate (%)	23.4		51.2	

**Source:** Okobiah, Omamurhomu Solomon. “The Educational Imbalance between the Northern and Southern States of Nigeria: A Re-direction of Educational Policies.” March 13, 2002. P 14.

## Conclusion

This chapter traces the post-colonial Nigerian educational system from 1960 to 2009 with some historical events from the colonial period that inevitably had influenced the Nigerian educational policies. Due to the political instability that Nigeria went through during the Biafra civil war and the several military coups, the Nigerian educational system underwent major structural changes to improve the system all over the country. However, the educational gap between the North and the South of Nigeria still existed. As a result, Boko Haram emerged in 2009 as a reaction against Western influence.



## **Chapter Two**

### **The Emergence of Boko Haram and Its Influence on the Nigerian Educational System**

## **Introduction**

The conflict between the Muslims and Christians led to one of the bloodiest civil wars in Africa. The disastrous effects of the Biafra-Nigeria war still exist nowadays in Nigerian society. The first two decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century in the history of Nigeria were characterized by the emergence of Boko Haram, as a terrorist group and its attacks on schools. Terrorizing schooling which is a dangerous phenomenon has threatened Nigeria's educational system during the conflict between Boko Haram and the Nigerian government.

### **1. Historical Background to Boko Haram**

Many studies and research on the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria have made invaluable contributions to the literature. Most of the studies have particularly emphasized that economic crisis, poverty, religious ideology, and the historical north-south identity are the reasons behind the Boko Haram insurgency. From the historical review that preceded this chapter from 1960 to 2009, it is possible to trace the shreds of evidences that helped Boko Haram to have emerged as an organization in the northeast of Nigeria, then to be one of the deadliest terrorist groups.

#### **1.1. Boko Haram**

Terrorism is a phenomenon which has always existed in world history. Terrorism, arguably, is a very serious and dangerous threat to global peace and stability in contemporary societies. According to the United States, Boko Haram has been listed in 2013 among the world's terrorist organizations (Akubo and Okolo).

Boko Haram in Hausa language means "Western education is forbidden" (Afzal 1). There are many detailed accounts of Boko Haram's movement. For

instance, Anugwom stated that the history of Boko Haram is without undoubtedly contradictory because of the different interpretations (45). It has recently emerged after long decades of civil war between the Salafi and Sufi movements within Islam. Radical reformers who are Boko Haram's members claimed that the previous Muslim leaders were infidels. This direct statement clearly shows the conflict between Salafi fundamentalists and the Sufis who dominate the traditional Nigerian Muslim community. Thus, Boko Haram directly threatens the traditional Islamic establishment (Campbell 2). Moreover, the word “infidel” is a term often used by extremist groups like Boko Haram to ostracize other Muslims from Islam. According to Hassan, “*Takfir* is a theological declaration that a Muslim has become an apostate or a person is an infidel” (3). Hassan stated in his article the danger of misusing the Takfiri ideology and how Boko Haram does oppress liberties to use the meaning according to their purposes (Hassan 4). The word kufr is used in many situations to denote ungratefulness and this does not mean being excluded from Islam (Hassan 4).

Boko haram as an Islamist group considers itself “Jama'atu Ahl As-Sunnah li Da'awati wal Jihad” (Afzal 2). According to Special Report, Walker documented the interview of BBC Hausa with Muhammed Yusuf. Muhammed Yusuf is the founder of the Boko Haram movement in 2002 in Borno state (Olufemi 1). The latter declared before his death many senseless arguments that the earth is flat and the natural circle of the rain was not caused by evaporation from the ground (Walker 7). His statements were met with hoots of derision. Therefore, the movement was not taken seriously enough to examine its real origin and aims. As a matter of fact, Boko Haram as a name was clear and concise, it indicated the rejection of western education. Ironically, Boko Haram as a group used western inventions like mobiles, YouTube, automatic

weapons and chemical explosives. Boko Haram ambivalently “uses the fruits of western education when it suits them” (Walker 7).

Abeeb Olufemi stated that Boko Haram meaning “is derived from a combination of the Hausa word meaning book and the Arabic word haram, which means something sacrilegious or sinful” (1). Boko Haram also emerged against what is known as “Yan Boko” in northern Nigeria. Yan Boko is literally translated as "child of the book". It is referred to as the northern Muslims who sent their children to schools in contrast to the Emirs and elite Muslims who totally refused to send their children to colonial schools (Tibenderana 4). Moreover, according to Boko Haram, to be Yan Boko meant to be spiritually and morally corrupt and religionless (Walker 7).

According to Campbell's opinion, Boko Haram is a radical Islamist movement. This movement is a reflection of how Nigeria is a poor and politically unstable society (1). He also stated that Boko Haram combines a sectarian, radical Islamic agenda with violence and oppression (1). Moreover, it has only one goal which is to establish a sharia state, giving little attention to the economic development in the north region. Moreover, Campbell noted that Boko Haram; “is based on the fundamentalist Wahhabi theological system and opposes the Islam of the traditional northern Nigerian establishment, which is broadly tolerant” (1).

## **1.2. The Origins of Boko Haram**

Nigeria had witnessed a series of ruthless military coups and dictatorships from its independence in 1960 until 1999. On February 20<sup>th</sup>, 1999, a general election was held and marked the end of military rule and the beginning of civilian rule based on democracy. During the post-colonial period (1960-1999) ethno-religious conflicts were the main causes of the civil war (1967-1970). By 1980 in Kano, the conflict

reached a new high level of violence where the Muslim fundamentalist sect Yan Tatsine (the followers of Mohammed Marwa 1927-1980 who was known by Maitatsine) rioted, the riot resulted in around five thousand deaths (Tatah 1). During the military crackdown, Maitatsine was killed. As a result, his death provoked his followers, and it was a backlash of increased violence over northern cities for the next 20 years (Tatah 01).

The tragic confrontation between the north and south regions all over the previous years has generated a partisan debate and a deep conflict that immediately wracked the Nigerian government several times. Boko Haram was formed in 2002 by Muhammed Yusuf in Maiduguri the capital of the north-eastern state of Borno (Tatah 1). The educational gap between the north and south created a major problem which is ignorance. Therefore, Muhammed found educational inequality as a solid ground to establish religious schools to attract poor families. Moreover, the goal was to create an Islamic state, where unemployed followers were recruited into the so-called Islamic state as a reaction against the police and state corruption (Tatah 2).

Muhammed Yusuf declared that the existence of Izala society was the motive behind forming his own faction (Tatah 2). Izala society was the Jama'at Izalat al-Bid'a wa-Iqamat al-Sunna. It was established in 1978 in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria by Shaykh Ismaila Idris. Furthermore, it was a reform movement in West Africa as well as within the context of the Sufi and the anti-Sufi struggle over the power (Ben Amara 74).

Boko Haram as a movement has a historical background to rely on. Yusuf capitalized on grievances about the existed situation of education in northern Nigeria since the colonial era (Afzal 2). Other several factors were a further source of

grievance and motives for Boko Haram to be established and to fight for their rights. Firstly, western education has always been seen as a symbol of corruption, even though most of the Nigerian politicians and elite were western-educated (Afzal 2). Secondly, many northern Muslims see the western education system as ideologically congruous with their beliefs and not sufficiently representative (Afzal 2). Thirdly, by virtue of the educational gap between the north and south, the western system is seen as the only responsible for the problems that the north is facing like poverty, unemployment, and illiteracy (Afzal 2).

Boko Haram is not the only so-called terrorist group, but there are other groups like Ansaru and the Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP). On the one hand, the Ansaru is a break-up of Boko Haram. According to Campbell, the leadership is ambiguous, Abu Usama al Ansari is often named as the leader (Campbell 02). One of the main distinguishing features of Ansaru from Boko Haram, is that the latter kills Muslims while Ansaru attacks Christian churches and government officials (Campbell 2). On the other hand, the ISAWAP had settled itself as the stronger section. Furthermore, it has separated itself from the violence that Boko Haram commits against Muslims (Husted 01).

## **2. The Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria**

Boko Haram did not emerge from a void. Since the amalgamation in 1914, Nigeria has witnessed several crises that wracked the system. Then, Boko Haram is not a new problem, but it is an unsolved one. Moreover, there are historical causes that helped Boko Haram to emerge.

## **2.1. The Causes of Boko Haram Insurgency**

The growing insurgency of Boko Haram in the north came as a result of accumulations. Many studies on Boko Haram emphasized unemployment, economic poverty, religious ideology, political instability, ignorance, the educational gap in the Nigerian system, and the historical north-south identity struggle are some of the reasons behind the emergence of Boko Haram and why individuals had chosen to join the so-called “terrorist” organization. Since the advent of Boko Haram, it has become one of the contentious subject to be analyzed.

Firstly, unemployment and poverty as sources of Boko Haram insurgency are considered endemic among the Third World countries in Africa. Furthermore, the worst case of unemployment and poverty is in Nigeria. Tragically, the youth generation between the age of 14 to 50 years old is the worst affected (Usman 91). The crisis of unemployment in Nigeria has become one of the major problems. That is why Boko Haram as an organization targeted easily northern Nigerians to join it. Usman agreed with a point that was reinforced by Danjibo, who held the opinion that the “Boko Haram crisis broke out due to failure of governance in Nigeria to halt extreme poverty, especially among the youths of northern extraction” (Usman 91). Youth unemployment is devastating, it has created a gap in the Nigerian society causing increased militancy, violent crimes, kidnappings, restiveness, and socially delinquent behavior.

In the same vein, Usman also cited a quote by an Islamic cleric, Mallam Hussaini Salisu, to clarify the danger of being unemployed: The level of frustration and poverty among youths in the country is a fertile ground for activities of such groups; their conduct is totally un-Islamic but the whole problem boils down the

welfare of the citizenry a priority. A nation that allows its youths to be idle is sitting on a time bomb because frustrated people seek relief in religion. (Usman 92)

Then, frustration is a motive that forces men to act aggressively. Thereby, Richardson argued that aggression resulted in terrorism due to the link between high unemployment rates and poverty with terrorism (Usman 92).

Secondly, religious ideology and the historical north-south identity struggle are considered among the main reasons behind the insurgency of Boko Haram. Nigeria of today was two separated protectorates; it was founded in 1914 by the first governor Frederick Lugard through the amalgamation of the northern and southern regions. To coalesce numerous ethnic groups into one united nation is a tough challenge the Nigerian government is still working on. Thus, the history of the Islamic-Christian conflict is long and complicated.

Agbibo highlights the nexus between religion and terrorism starting by identifying what is religion. According to McGuire “Religion remains a powerful source of individual and group social identity” (Agbibo 5). In other words, religion is the real motive behind any movement insurgency to define itself. Furthermore, it is a ubiquitous phenomenon that has a deep impact on human behaviour. According to Stanley Eitzen and Maxine Baca Zinn, “religion is a normative system defining immorality and sin as well as righteousness” (Agbibo 5). From this point, it could be easier to trace the conflict between Muslims and Christians.

The modern history of Nigeria is characterized by religious conflict and violence between the Muslim and Christian communities. The conflict can be traced back to the Kano riot of 1953. The riot lasted four days and resulted in the damage and death of many southerners and northerners. In 1966, the Igbo massacre in the



north raised the tension between the Igbos and the local Muslims. It was also a sign of a bloody civil war coming up. The year 1980 witnessed an upsurge in violence before and after the death of Mohammed Marwa (Maitatsine), this serious outbreak between Christians and Muslims resulted in the death of thousands of Nigerians. Moreover, in 1990, there was another violent clash between Muslims and Christians when the German evangelist Reinhard Bonnke tried a crusade in Kano. This attempt engendered a lot of anger, causing a religious riot. The riot resulted in the death of more than a dozen people (“Religious violence in Nigeria”).

The violence between the two communities did not stop at this point. Today, religious conflict has continued to erupt resulting in thousands of victims on both sides. Since 2009, the so-called Boko Haram has fought against the Nigerian government military, kidnapping, sacking towns and killing thousands of lives in massacres against Christians (“Religious violence in Nigeria”). Meanwhile, Boko Haram as an organization sought to establish an Islamic state in Nigeria to limit westernizing the Nigerian society (Tatah 3).

Thirdly, ignorance is one of the danger threats to the societies, Nigeria is one of them. The educational gap between the north and south has widened since the amalgamation in 1914. Through tracing the situation of education in the northern region in the first chapter, it would be easier to recognize that the reaction of Boko Haram against Western education is not a new problem. The British educational system was rejected during the colonial period by the Emirs who feared the influence of western education on their beliefs. Furthermore, the lack of schools has badly affected the current situation of education in the north. The imbalance of education helped Boko Haram to spread their ideas unconditionally and control the minds of northern people.

### **3. Boko Haram's Attacks 2009-2022**

Nigeria is continuing the battle against Boko Haram. The current situation shakes the stability and political integrity of Nigeria. Since 2009, Boko Haram has managed terrorist attacks against religious and political groups, police and military, as well as indiscriminate attacks on civilians. According to Carsten; “More than 20.000 people have been killed and some two million forced to leave their homes since 2009” (Carsten and Akwagyiram). In other words, the Nigerians' right of living has been stolen by Boko Haram.

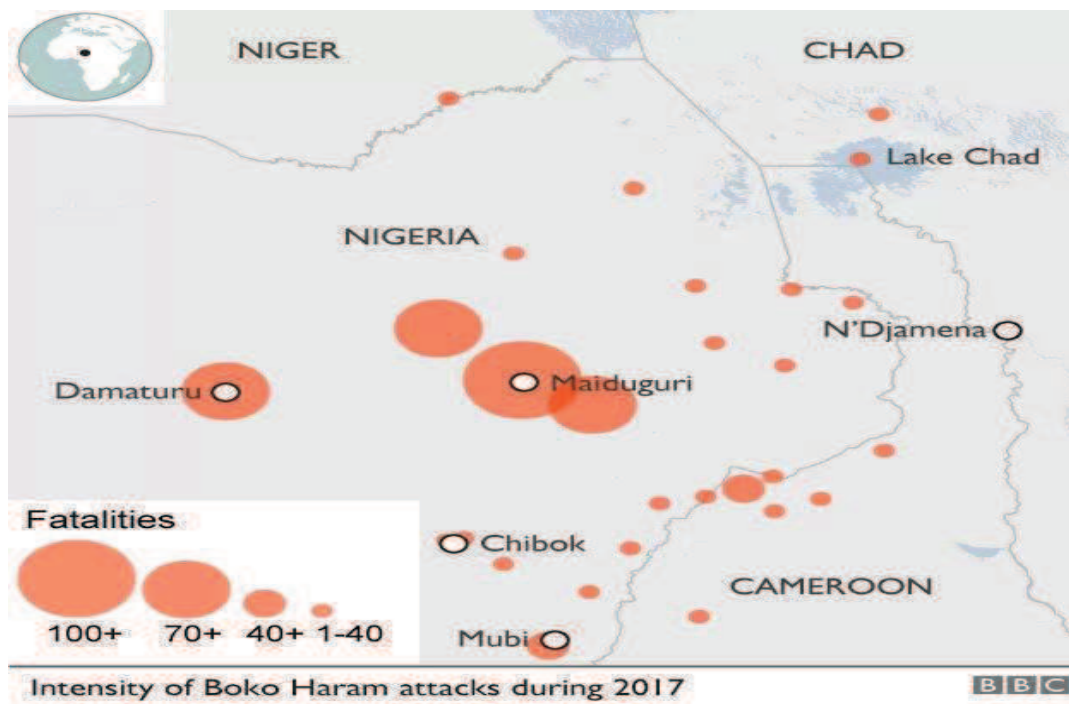
Boko Haram was founded in 2002 by Muhammed Yusuf in Maiduguri. It was completely allowed to function (Afzal 4). The so-called Islamic organization was supported under political cover by the state's president Ali Modu Sheriff (Afzal 4). However, in 2009, security forces attacked Boko Haram and killed over 700 of its members, including Muhammed Yusuf. As a result, Boko Haram immediately became a radical group seeking revenge (Afzal 4). The period from 2009 to 2022 has witnessed several attacks not only from Boko Haram but other terrorist groups like Ansaru and Islamic State's West Africa Province (ISWAP). The following events are some of the major and famous attacks.

The first attack took place on July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2009. It was the beginning of the conflict and violent clash. Boko Haram set up a series of attacks in Maiduguri, targeting several churches and police stations, and they killed about 75 people (“Boko Haram”). Three days later, Boko Haram's founder, Muhammed Yusuf, was arrested and killed by the government. After the death of Muhammed Yusuf, his deputy, Abubakar Shekau became the leader of Boko Haram.

On January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012, Boko Haram arranged a series of bomb attacks in Kano city. The attack targeted police stations killing 187 people and approximately 50 wounded (“Boko Haram”). Another attack took place on December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016, when two females attempted to be suicide bombers attacking a market in a small village called Madagali. the Nigerian military officials reported that 30 people died and 68 wounded (“Boko Haram”)

The hideous attacks of Boko Haram have been in a progress, on November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017, Boko Haram used a teenage suicide to explode a mosque in Mubi. The attack resulted approximately in 50 people died (“Boko Haram”).

**Map 2: The Intensity of Boko Haram Attacks during 2017**



**Source:** Augustyn, Adam, editor. "Boko Haram Activity". Encyclopaedia Britannica. October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

For over a decade, the Nigerian government has been still fighting the so-called terrorist groups like Boko Haram, Ansaru, the ISWAP, and other terrorist groups. The violence that Nigeria has witnessed from 2009 to 2022 engenders only violence in a constant way. By the death of Abubakar Shekau on May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021, the vision of the conflict in northeast Nigeria has changed (Husted 1). The position of the ISWAP was strengthened over Boko Haram. Killing Abubakar Shekau was premediated by the ISWAP and encouraged thousands of people from Boko Haram fighters, their families and civilians to escape and to surrender to the Nigerian and Cameroonian authorities (Husted 1).

According to Aljazeera, the ISWAP armed group declared that they were responsible for the explosion that killed and injured around 30 Nigerians in Taraba state. The attack took place on Tuesday, April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022 (“ISWAP claims the Nigeria bombing, says about 30 were killed or hurt”). On the other hand, on April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022 the ISWAP posted on a Telegram messaging channel stating and expressing the satisfaction after the attack that had killed the Christians. Although these radical attacks have wracked the national security system, the Nigerian government tries to stabilize the current situation in the country.

#### **4. The Impact of Boko Haram on Education**

Education is a key essence to create a modern society. However, the name Boko Haram literary means western education is forbidden. Thus, the group has targeted the Nigerian education system by terrorizing and destroying schools, assaulting students and teachers, and kidnapping school girls. Boko Haram also has disrupted access to education threatening teachers and even killing them (Molini *et*

*al.*). Insecurity in Nigeria has drastically affected Nigeria's educational system, particularly in the Northeast of the country.

The education system in the northeast region was already unstable even before the conflict between Boko Haram and the government began. According to the figures and facts that were collected by Okobiah (see the tables on pages 19 and 20), there was a noticeable regional imbalance concerning the enrolment. The growing disparity and the imbalance of education in Nigeria have created a social and economic gap between the north and south. In the same context, prior to the insurgency of Boko Haram, children from the north were significantly less to attend school. Furthermore, there was an imbalance between urban and rural areas and gender disparities in educational enrolment, according to the data from 2011, about 34% of primary-age rural girls did not attend school as compared to 25% of boys (Holy 16).

In the light of this background, it is predictably that years of conflict have had disastrous consequences and serious impacts on education in north-eastern Nigeria, especially after terrorizing schooling as an act to prevent northern children from attending schools. The security state in the northern region has deteriorated rapidly. Therefore, most schools in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states were closed. In September 2017, UNICEF reported that the conflict had destroyed 1400 schools. The conflict did not only deprive children from their right to education but also has had a dire consequence for teachers. According to UNICEF, 2295 teachers were killed by Boko Haram between 2009 and 2017 as well as 19000 teachers escaped the region (Holy 16-17). Through analyzing the data, the intentions of Boko Haram were not only to prevent western education but rather to terrorize schooling, waste childhood, and widen the educational gap between the north and south of Nigeria.

#### 4.1. Terrorizing Schooling

Boko Haram has recently been in the spotlight recently, after the kidnapping attacks. It became internationally notorious when all the mainstream media discussed the breaking news. On April 14th, 2014, Boko Haram carried out a daring raid on the Chibok Government Secondary School and seized 276 girls (Onyemelukwe-Waziri 13). Amina F., one of the students at the school, described what happened: “Boko Haram fighters arrived on motorcycles around 11:30 or 12. They told us they were the police and had to protect us from the fighting going on in the town .... We started hearing them shouting “Allahu Akbar [God is Greatest]” and then we knew they were Boko Haram” (Holly 23).

Boko Haram's members gathered all the girls, plundered the food, and burned the classrooms. Similarly, Patience K narrated: “they told us that if we want to die, we should stay, but if we want to live, we should get into the big truck” (Holly 23). The school was immediately closed. This was not only an attempt to attack schools but there has been an increase in terrorizing schooling.

The second attack was on November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014. Boko Haram fighters got in the town and quickly occupied the Zanna Mobarti Primary school (Holly 23). They enmeshed over 300 students and teachers inside. The latter had been captivated for over three months. One of the teachers called Sadiya S. narrated how dreadful were the three months being held in the school: “They separated the teachers from the children and asked us what we had been teaching them. They said: “We told you not to teach in secular schools”. They threatened to shoot us .... When the food ran out, they brought beans. Many children died from eating those beans. I know of at least 10 who died from beans” (Holly 23).

In mid-march 2015, the teachers and students were freed. This kind of attack on the Nigerian education system in the north obstructed educational development.

The third attempt at terrorizing schooling took place on February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018. Boko haram attacked the Government Girls Science and Technical College that is located in Yobe state. The Boko haram fighters abducted 111 school girls. The Nigerian government commented on this terrorist attack that was similar to the first one in 2014. According to an unknown witness, he narrated that the fighters insisted that they were searching for the school girls. As soon as they found the schools, they obliged 111 girls and two boys to get into the trucks (Holly 23). A month later in captivity, Boko Haram freed 106 girls and one boy on March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2018 after negotiating with the government (Holly 23).

#### **4.2. The Student Enrolment Rate during the Conflict**

Children in the developing countries like Nigeria face enormous risks, especially when there is a conflict within the country. The Boko Haram conflict has had deleterious effects on both child health and educational side in Northeast Nigeria. Although the history of educational gap between the north and south dates back to the colonial era, the National Policy on Education passes many laws to improve the educational system in all regions of Nigeria, but the uprising of Boko Haram has led more to the growing disparity since 2009.

According to a UNESCO report, since 2009 the number of children enrolled in the world unfairly has increased to 64% (UNESCO 59). Although there is a great progress in term of universalizing primary education, in 2012, 58 million children of primary school were out of school because of the demographic pressures and conflicts the countries are facing like Nigeria and Pakistan (UNESCO 77). In Northern Nigeria,



the current conflict of Boko Haram is one of the crucial reasons why 60% of 10,5 million children are out of the school which is the highest rate in the world (UNESCO 77). Moreover, girls form the majority of nonparticipants because of the culture of “second-class citizen”. This culture considers the role of the female is to take care of children and to do housework (Onyemelukwe-Waziri 19).

In Abuja, January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022, the world celebrated the International Day of Education. UNICEF appreciated the Nigerian government's pledge to develop education. Peter Hawkins is a UNICEF representative in Nigeria said “The Nigerian Government has committed to increasing funding for education, which is a very important step – far too many Nigerians are not getting a solid education that can translate into good prospect for their future” (Njuku). Hawkins also insisted on the need to provide safety for children referring to the 25 attacks on schools during 2021, when 1440 children were kidnaped and 16 children killed. As a result, 618 schools were closed in northern states (Njuku).

## **5. The Government's Response to Boko Haram**

Boko Haram, the so-called a violent Nigerian Islamist movement, has spread widely and rapidly in the last decade causing years of blood and fear. Moreover, Boko Haram has shaken the political and security situation of the country. As a reaction, the Nigerian government on the one hand considered Boko Haram as a terrorist movement and therefore the state security forces have reacted violently in order to eradicate the movement. On the other hand, the northeast community took a brave step to protect the region from Boko Haram.

## **5.1. The Rise of Civilian Joint Task Force**

On May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013, the Nigerian government declared that the country was in a state of emergency, as Boko Haram insurgency became a pandemic to the Nigerian society, especially when the group started attacking public places. The Nigerian community, particularly in Borno state, was in need to protect itself from the threat and quell the terrorizing problem. Subsequently, a Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) rose up against the Boko Haram (Yusuf 26). The group is known as Yan Gora (Nagarajan 3). Most of the group members were being victimized and angry about the situation they are in because of Boko Haram.

The civilian JTF was formed in 2013, and it went through two phases (Yusuf 26). Firstly, the civilian JTF was an instinctive reaction. It rose within youth generation spontaneously to defend the northeast from the Boko Haram's attacks. Secondly, it turned to be a Military Joint Task Force (MJTF). In other word, it became an organization with government support (Yusuf 26).

## **5.2. Conflict Resolution**

Post-colonial era of Nigeria witnessed corruption, a series of military coups, civil war, and Boko Haram's conflict. All these events created gaps between the north and south, and an instability in many domains. Nigeria has marked an instable and mostly the lowest enrolment rate in the whole continent since the independence. In fact, the unstable security and political situation has had a pernicious effect on education system (Onyemelukwe-Waziri 21).

The Nigerian government endeavors a substantial solution to lessen the risks behind the conflict with Boko Haram. The first step Nigeria currently works on is to regard education as a key. Providing free education in the Northeast would make a

significant impact on the whole system of education (Onyemelukwe-Waziri 21). The Nigerian educational policy needs to invest and establish new schools. Furthermore, it needs to strengthen the relationship between the ethnic groups by involving courses like peace education in order to divert children and youth generation on the necessity to live peacefully and accept the differentiation of the Nigerian society (Onyemelukwe-Waziri 22).

Peace Education is a “holistic” approach to education. Implementing peace education is about transmitting knowledge, removing obstacles, and learning many possibilities to achieve and maintain peace (Reardon 07). Moreover, it includes the process of developing skills, attitudes, and behaviors to create a suitable and unified society to live in (Reardon 07). The purpose behind peace education is to give a chance for children to be a part of making peace into practice within education (Onyemelukwe-Waziri 22).

Generally, the Nigerian government system has certainly been affected by Boko Haram. However, the conflict has a great impact on children and youth generation. During the conflict, many children lost the right to be educated. Thus, the second step is relying on Boko Haram's role in making peace. The effort of Boko Haram members is important to create a solid foundation for constructing a unified society without conflicts (Onyemelukwe-Waziri 23). Providing a peaceful environment is what the Nigerian students need to be able to join school and study in a safe school. Peace is one of reconciliation's element that Nigeria must apply to resolve the conflict.

### **5.3. Reconciliation with Boko Haram**

Nigeria has suffered from a bloody conflict with Boko Haram for over a decade. The so-called militant Islamic group convicted for committing massacres and displacing people from their homes. Although the Nigerian security with the help of the MJTF tried to limit the insurgency of Boko Haram, the group still exists. The current situation challenges the Nigerian government to take the next step which is reconciliation. The reconciliation is an important concept that is based on justice and peace (Idayat and Benson 422). In Africa, many countries like Algeria, Uganda, and Rwanda had witnessed decades of civil war. They negotiated to bring about a reconciliation with this terrorist groups, will Nigeria follow suit?

The Centre of Democracy and Development (CDD) examined the local conflict in Borno state and proposed local conflict resolution mechanisms. The characteristics of these mechanisms include oath-taking, exile and excommunication, obligation to forgive and forbearance, consultation and dialogue, and sulhu (Idayat and Justin 20). Sulhu is one of the important solutions to live in a harmonious society regardless of the religious diversity. In other words, Sulhu is “an Islamic reconciliation or mediation” (Idayat and Justin 22). According to Aljazeera, on March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022, roughly 7,000 Boko Haram and ISWAP members gave up in Northeast Nigeria. These individuals who gave up would immediately be rehabilitated. Furthermore, according to the interview between Kurtzer (a director of Humanitarian agenda) and Anyadike (a senior in Humanitarian agenda), the increase of the conflict had serious repercussion in Northeast Nigeria. Therefore, The Nigerian security service somehow reconciles with the Boko Haram members through the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) program which is a good step so far (Anyadike).

## **Conclusion**

This chapter attempted to cover the insurgency of Boko Haram in the Northeast Nigeria and its negative impact on the educational system. The Islamist terrorist group internationally is a phenomenon affecting most countries of the Third World. In Nigeria, the struggle is real, over a decade the conflict between Boko Haram and the Nigerian government resulted in thousands of deaths and displaced from their home. Furthermore, the second chapter highlights how Boko Haram does negatively affect the educational system. As a reaction against the current situation, the Nigerian government attempts to resolve the conflict through reconciliation.

## **General Conclusion**

In post-colonial Nigeria, the state of the country was unstable because of the series of events. The poor experience of the leadership had given rise to the tension which resulted in political instability, military coups, disparity between the North and South, and the Nigerian-Biafra Civil War. During these events, the educational system was affected. Moreover, by the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the emergence of Boko Haram, which is against the western education, adversely impacted the Nigerian educational system through terrorizing and destroying schools to forbid the western education.

The current situation in Nigeria clearly shows how Boko Haram impacts the society. According to the data provided in this research, the educational sector has been impacted as a result of the current Boko Haram insurgency. The negative impact of Boko Haram has widened the educational gap between the North and the South of the country, which will undoubtedly generate more social evils in the future.

The in-depth analyses of the Nigerian educational system and the impact's result of terrorizing schooling in a modern Nigeria, then Boko Haram insurgency is endemic which destroys the Nigerian educational system and the society itself.

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