

BOKO HARAM INSURGENCY AND GENDER DIFFERENTIALS ON HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IN NORTH EAST NIGERIA

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Abstract

Empowering women is crucial for human development. By supporting and amplifying their roles, we can achieve the potential for growth, resilience and positive change in the region, even in the face of adversity like insurgency. Therefore, the study examines Boko Haram insurgency and Gender Differentials on Human Development in North East Nigeria. Key informants' interview and focused group discussion was used for data collection. Three conflict heated states were selected from the region for convenient reason. Sample of twelve (12) respondents were selected for interview and sixty-three (63) for focused group discussion in line with the inclusion and exclusion criteria. The data were analyzed using code, coding system based on thematic principle. Findings revealed that literacy development of female gender was deeply affected as many dropped out of school while others refused to be enrolled, lives were lost before the expected living time with male gender suffering more loss, maternal mortality was at alarming rate. The study revealed that poverty level among male gender was tensed than the female gender and poor access to health facilities as well as high level of hunger and starvation among others. The study concludes that Boko Haram insurgency has effect on male than a female gender. Therefore, the study recommends that synergy between private and public institutions are necessary in other to uplift standard of living for the female, the community should also create a local channel of protection and there should be a sensitization for self-protection and avoidance of conflict.

Key Words: Boko Haram, Insurgency, Differentials and Human Development

INTRODUCTION

It is widely acknowledged that women make significant contributions to the development of society, and their impact is evident across

various sectors of human endeavor. The importance of women's roles in shaping human progress is a notion that has gained widespread acceptance. Indeed, both traditional and modern

societies have witnessed the roles of women towards its success, particularly in the African societies they are referred to as the back bone of the family with whom achievement or failure relies upon. Although, they are sometimes seen as weak due to the traditional or religious affiliation of an average African man, yet their immense role in building the family and the community at large cannot be relegated. The first teacher one encounters in the journey of life is woman through the process of socialization as such education is attributed to women. They are also seen as the first medical care givers at both curative and preventive level; hence woman folk is considered as primary health care givers. Consequently, they are enterprising for income generation in order to complement the upkeep of the household. (Setterson and Richard A., 2002)

However, many women are found in agriculture, working as unpaid family labor, or in the non-agricultural, informal economy, running micro-enterprises or toiling as home-based workers, sewing parts of garments, or producing other goods as part of export-oriented value chains. However, the aforementioned position of an average women is found not without some constraints which might be natural or artificial, ranging from flooding, fire outbreak, and pandemic such as covid-19, HIV Aids, Bird flu, ethno-religious conflict, land disputes, political crises and Boko Haram insurgency among other issues. As such it is bound to have influences over gender imbalance on human development and other endeavors of life.

Boko haram insurgency has caused a lot of destructions and loss of human and material things across the entire north east Nigeria, it's very difficult to ascertain the number of household or person that has not been affected by the calamity. According to Akinbi (2015), the activities of the sect especially since 2009 have constituted a major security threat to the nation

and have made Northern Nigeria, particularly the Northeast, which is the epicenter of Boko Haram activities, the most dangerous region in the country. Available records from international organization for migration (2015) revealed that over a million people are displaced from their homes in Nigeria. These give a room for out-growing number of vulnerable persons in the region especially women and children and as such human development is affected.

Therefore, studies were carried out by many scholars to ascertain the level of damages caused by Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria. Among these studies are conducted by Eme and Ibeitan (2012), Maxwell (2013), Mohammed (2015), Ezeoha (2016), Silas (2019) and Granville (2020) none of these was able to identify the gender imbalance on human development as created by the insurgency in north east Nigeria. This study aims to address a significant knowledge gap by developing a comprehensive framework for adaptation, which can be utilized by government to address the issue of insurgency. Specifically, this study examined the impact of Boko Haram insurgency on education and health care development among gender differential; and identified impact of Boko Haram insurgency on personal income and poverty levels among gender differentials

LITERATURE REVIEW

Economic opportunities for women differ widely based on society and education level. Research indicates that better-educated women often hold higher-level positions such as professional, technical, executive, and administrative roles. According to Illo (1997), women outnumber men in ICT-based industries; however, they frequently occupy lower-paid, lower-tier jobs in electronic assembly, call centers, or data entry. The Asian Development Bank of the Philippines (2008) noted that more women are entering

higher-paid roles in design and content processing. Similarly, the National Commission on the Role of the Filipino Women (2004) reported that women's contributions to household income from various economic activities are significant, with about one-third of poor households' income coming from these activities. Additionally, the ADB (2008) suggested that the preference for informal and micro-scale work is partly due to the gender division of labor, where women are expected to manage household and childcare responsibilities alongside their other jobs.

Education trends by Gender

The gender parity ratio in literacy rates has shown a notable increase over the years. In simple literacy, the ratio widened from 0.3 percentage points in 1994 to 0.4 in 2000 and then to 1.7 in 2003. A similar trend was observed in functional literacy, where the gap grew from 1.7 in 1994 to 4.4 in 2003. For individuals with no completed grade, the gender parity ratio significantly declined from 1.02 in 1990 to 0.84 in 2000. In contrast, the ratio among college graduates also increased, though less dramatically. Dropout rates at the basic education level remain higher for boys compared to girls. Despite these shifts favoring women, other education indicators raise concerns. Persistent gender role stereotyping in tertiary courses is one issue. More troubling are the rising dropout rates since at least the 2002-2003 school year. Boys often leave school to work on farms or seek other employment, likely more now than in the past. Girls, on the other hand, typically leave school to assist with housework and childcare, but there is also significant evidence that many girls drop out due to pregnancy or being recruited for work in the city.

Health care trends by Gender

In the realm of health, high maternal mortality rate (MMR) remains a significant issue. The

2006 Family Planning Survey by the National Statistics Office (NSO) reported that 162 women per 100,000 live births die during pregnancy, childbirth, or shortly thereafter in the Philippines. Although this figure is an improvement from the 1998 estimate of 172 deaths and the 1993 estimate of 209 deaths, it is still far from the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target of 53 by 2015, as noted by NCRFW (2009) and NEDA (2007). A study by the Philippine Population Commission highlighted that high MMR is part of a broader issue of high population growth and the lack of an effective population control program. Time-use studies have indicated that women, especially those with children aged five and below, dedicate a significant portion of their time to childcare. Research by Domingo and Cabegin (1994) and Illo (2009) revealed that mothers' time spent on childcare increases substantially with the presence of additional young children—from nine percent to 21 percent in rural areas, and from 12 percent to 15 percent in urban areas. Fathers, however, spend no more than six percent of their time with young children, regardless of living in rural or urban settings.

Women with infants or toddlers often step back from economic activities that require them to leave home. However, they continue with home-based enterprises and typically resume outside economic activities once their children start school or when older siblings can care for the younger ones.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework employed in this study is the relative deprivation theory. Gurr (1970), in his work "Why Men Rebel," posited that relative deprivation illustrates a significant gap between the socioeconomic and political opportunities people expect and those they actually achieve. He identified various forms of

political insurgencies as outcomes of collective dissatisfaction tied to feelings of relative deprivation. This concept is relevant to understanding the current situation in Nigeria, where the Boko Haram insurgency can be partially attributed to the country's conditions of relative deprivation. Relative deprivation, as defined by Gurr (1970), is the disparity between what people believe they are entitled to and what they perceive they can attain. This feeling of deprivation arises when individuals compare themselves to others and realize they have less, regardless of how slight the difference might be (Bayertz, 1999; Bourgignon, 1999; Morrison, 1971; Runciman, 1966; Schaefer, 2008; Walker & Smith, 2012). Schaefer (2008) described it as the conscious awareness of a negative gap between legitimate expectations and current realities. When people or groups feel their legitimate rights are denied or marginalized, this can lead to anger, hostility, and distrust towards the responsible parties (Ewetan, 2014). To regain a sense of social satisfaction, the marginalized individuals or groups may resort to any necessary means (Morrison, 1971).

Relative deprivation highlights the disconnect between anticipated and actual socioeconomic and political opportunities, which also creates gender gaps in human development. This framework underscores the experiences of women during and after insurgency activities, reflecting how these events exacerbate existing disparities.

METHODOLOGY

The paper focus on qualitative research study delves into the devastating impact of Boko Haram insurgency on education, healthcare, income, and poverty levels among gender differentials in the conflict-affected regions of Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa. Employing a

judgmental sampling technique, 75 respondents were carefully selected from diverse categories, including officials from the Ministry of Education, Hospital Management Board, and Market Associations, as well as representatives from civil societies and NGOs, and youth and women leaders from the affected areas. In-depth data collection involved 12 key informant interviews and 63 focus group discussion participants, divided into syndicate groups of three in each state, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the conflict's effects on vulnerable populations. Thematic analysis was utilized to identify patterns and themes in the data, providing a nuanced understanding of the complex issues surrounding the Boko Haram insurgency. The study's findings will contribute significantly to the existing body of knowledge on the effects of conflict, informing policy and intervention strategies to mitigate the negative impacts and promote sustainable development in the region. By amplifying the voices and experiences of those most affected, this research aims to promote evidence-based solutions and support the development of effective responses to the crisis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher's careful analysis and interpretation of the data led to the identification of these themes, which provide a comprehensive understanding of the research questions and objectives, and offer valuable insights into the effects of the conflict on vulnerable populations in the region. The research themes that emerged from the data analysis are; gender inequality in educational development, poor girl child school enrollment and attendance, weak financial earning and lack of capital, pregnancy-related issues and rape/abduction, depression and extra-marital affairs, impact of Boko Haram

insurgency on healthcare development, difficulty in accessing healthcare facilities, shortage of health personnel, destruction of health centers and truncated life expectancy among females. These themes address the research questions and objectives by providing insights into the impact of Boko Haram insurgency on education, healthcare, income, and poverty levels among gender differentials in the affected regions.

Impact of Boko Haram insurgency on Gender differentials

There were many findings regarding to responses on Boko Haram insurgency and gender differential human development among people in the study area. Because of its frequent repetition and emphasis by the respondents' gender inequality on educational development, life expectancy and income generation became the emerging theme, while poor girl child school enrolment and attendants, weak financial earning, lack of capital, pregnancy related issues, rape abduction, depression and extra-marital affairs among other issues constitute the sub-theme of findings.

Boko Haram Insurgency and Gender Differentials on Educational Advancement

The girl child received a significant attention of the world leaders over the years which culminated into the establishment of agreements and conventions. This includes a universal declaration on human rights; international convention on rights of children; international covenant on civil and political rights; international covenant on economic, social and cultural rights; and convention rights of people living with disabilities, etc. Essentially, the global agenda (EFA, MDGs and SDGs) through national policies (NPE and UBE) in Nigeria provides the architecture for the education development platform that emphasized GCE at sub national levels. Therefore, this development expands opportunities for enhancing school enrolment especially among the girl child. However, with the activities of Boko Haram

insurgency respondents in this study mentioned that school enrolment and attendants of the girl child suffered a serious setback because parents were so skeptical about girl child education especially in the rural community. Respondents KII2 asserts that

“Parents have weak perception over their female child and as such they see them as very delicate that the best place for them is their husband's house, because of that they sound weak on girl child education coupled with the chibok girl's episode”.

The activities of the insurgents have added more fear for parents to enroll or send their wards to school, this made the male child dominant in most schools than the female pupils/student's enrolment or attendants. This claim is justified by Ibrahim and Mali (2017) that Yobe state in particular since creation in 1991, female population seriously lags behind its male counterpart in education net enrolment over the years. For instance, the state's education resources center revealed that during the 2018 academic session, enrolments of boys and girls in primary schools were 2,372, 550 (59.6%) and 1, 609, 890 (40.4%) respectively. Similarly, in 2018 academic year in Junior Secondary Schools (JSS), the enrolment for boys and girls were 206, 600 (58.3%) and 148, 060 (41.7%) respectively. A similar situation is applicable in the Senior Secondary School (SSS) level as the enrolment for boys and girls the study is were put at 133, 375 (63.9%) and 75,465 (36.1%) respectively.

Moreover, the behavior of the girl child in relation to learning and environmental adoption was found to be depressing and discouraging as observed. Academic performance of the female children is wonderful against the male child, in every three secondary schools' graduation exams

two female student emerged best as described by the respondents. However, female students are discriminated on leadership roles in most schools as prefects and other supervisory responsibilities were dominated by the male student. Infrastructure and learning materials were also destroyed in the schools and make it very difficult for the girl child to adapt the environment for effective learning, unlike the male child that can resist staying in whatever situation. The importance infrastructures facilities are indicated by Lewin K. (2015) when he said the relevance of infrastructure and facilities such as classrooms, hostels, furniture, toilets, computers and ICT equipment in improving the capacity of the education system to deliver better result cannot be over. KII5 said

“Girls are so funny that cannot enter toilet where there is much dirty in it because of infection and therefore, many of them run back to their parents and leave the school while others have totally refused to come back because of poor hostel hygiene that also contribute to girl child drop out as a result of destruction by the Boko Haram”

The study also found that female teacher's population in most primary and secondary are far below the number of their male counterpart because of the fear of security especially in the out-skirt schools and those that agreed to come face challenges of mobility. Female teachers play a significant role in motivating the female child to stay in school because her presence makes the environment friendly and interesting to the girl child. This point is supported by UNESCO (2012) that female teachers make classroom environment safe and “more inviting” which encourages them to stay and advance their education. KII8 corroborated this

“Our children here are so scared of people especially male strangers and they find it difficult to mingle

with them so if there are female teachers, they can be able to cope and attend schools but where most of the teachers are male, they would not come and hence not attend the class”

Anyanwu (2015) summed it up by stating that higher share of female teachers in most schools increases democracy. Although Scheerens, Luyten, and Ravens (2011) claimed that this cultural aspect may reflect in regional, national or global level, such contextual issue must specifically reflect on the specific functioning of schools at various levels.

Boko Haram Insurgency and Gender Differentials on Health care Development

Majority of the responses attributed pregnancy related issues to women alone but at times the male counterparts also experience psychological tortured or trauma, especially when there is complications. Rape and abduction of female gender has been very high due to the activities of Boko Haram especially during displacement, majority of the girls became victim in process of moving from the displaced location to camp or host community. Therefore, access to health care and facilities becomes very difficult and worrisome to them as threats were coming from all directions. Although the study revealed that male gender was mostly killed at a tender age between the ages of 20-45 years old in virtually all the study area. While majority of death casualty incurred women was either accidental or circumstantial that is not unconnected to the attitude of the victim, KII6 said

“Any woman killed from the beginning to the end of Boko Harm in this area is because of her strong head of refusing to obey the demand of the Amir or his followers, like in the case of Kakus whom refused to marry Amir and eventually killed by one of them in my present”.

Life expectancy among female was truncated by worrisome destruction of health centers as well as shortage of health personnel that provides curative and preventive services. In another development KII4 said

“Many women experience series of sexual violence and eventually got pregnancy and gave birth to children out of violence as such end of committing suicide”.

This clearly unveiled how the Boko Haram undermined health status of victims and subsequent termination of the life expectancy of female gender. Similarly, FGD3 respondents revealed that many women that become widows without identifying the really because of their husband face difficulties in getting married again, this is because they are perceived to be the wives of Boko Haram as such the stigma has becomes threat to their lives as well as their livelihood. Similarly, another set of respondents confirmed that the insurgents forcefully come to their locality and abduct female children in the name of marriage and where the lady refused, she would be killed. This turned many families into negative feelings of the aftermath of their loved ones even if they are privilege to be rescued due to the negative stigma around them. The responses from all participant are geared towards the sentiment that female gender is much more traumatized and psychologically disorganized due to the activities of Boko Haram insurgency.

Boko Haram insurgency and Gender Differentials on Personal Income and Poverty levels

The study revealed that female gender has experienced financial hardship loss of capital like their male counterpart but most of the respondents were biased towards the male gender. This is because the communities under study are male dominated once with very few women intermingling among.

FGD5 with a group of females ascertain with the claim that the financial lost they recorded is far

below those of their male population, one of them said

“No, we can’t compare our income with those of our male income because we don’t have strong business women in this locality”.

Although few women engaged in business activities but the extent of their loss due to the Boko Haram menace is negligible when compared to their male. The study further revealed that women have no capital to invest in any form of business and because of that Poverty is alarming among them than the male because of their over dependence on the male folk, KII2 asserts that

“Women in this locality have no sources of income as majority of them are house wives as such they deeply depend on what their husband’s handout”.

National Commission on the Role of the Filipino Women (2004) have shown that women’s contribution (out of incomes from these enterprises) to the household coffers is not insignificant. Therefore, women have lesser income than the male in all ramification and worsen by the calamities of Boko Haram that bedeviled the region. Some women engaged in petty trading mostly at home but their personal income is below five hundred naira which was hitherto much more but the calamity has relegated them to have not. Therefore, personal income even among male gender has been unfavorable with the activities of the insurgents, KII10 stated that

“Before the devils came, I was able to generate ₦10,000 daily but today I hardly see ₦1,000 in a day”.

Life has become much vulnerable to both gender with female at the most receiving end in the shackles of poverty. The extent of poverty and

lack of income among women has been so obvious that thrown many to begging and some to prostitution. Others have chosen to work as domestic servant, except for the privileged ones otherwise their services turn to be rejected within a short time. Ibrahim et al (2017) suggests that male children are more likely to be enrolled in basic schools than girls indicating the preference of parent's willingness to send their children to school. In fact, with a predominantly poor rural and agrarian population in the state, most rural dwellers lack the orientation to enroll their children and wards to acquire a basic education, especially if compared with those in urban centers of the state or the country in general.

Similarly, Anyawu (2014) and Timothy (2016) have shown that notwithstanding the importance and relevance of GCE in developing democracies like Nigeria, the current poor access and quality of education to girls and women in Nigeria have been largely due to religious and cultural values and orientations.

JUSTIFICATION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

This study examines the impact of Boko Haram insurgency on gender differentials in human development in North East Nigeria. The research uses a qualitative approach, collecting data through key informant interviews and focus group discussions. The study reveals that the insurgency has had a devastating impact on the education, healthcare, income, and poverty levels of women and girls in the region. The findings highlight the need for urgent attention to address the gender disparities exacerbated by the conflict. The findings and recommendations of this study have the potential to inform policy decisions, program development, and resource allocation, ultimately contributing to the improvement of lives and livelihoods in the conflict-affected regions of Nigeria.

The study concludes that women folk have suffered a severe damage from the activities of Boko Haram insurgency in the north east region. Literacy development among the female was relegated to lower level with little attending schools and majority dropped out or refused to be enrolled. Health status of the female gender was affected especially the pregnant women that either lost their lives or developed hypertension and pregnancy related sicknesses. Income generation was also reduced to the lowest and left many women unproductive and over dependent on their husband. The study recommends that parents should reorient their wards on observing cultural values and respect for constituted authorities in order to become law abiding citizens at adulthood. There should be community mobilization on school attendance and enrollment for the girl child and where any parent failed to abide should be punished accordingly. Traditional health practice should not be relegated to the bottom and room for reconciliation among people should be upheld. Women should be train on the income generation skills to reduce over reliance on their husbands.

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