

# Boko Haram Insurgency and the Underdevelopment of Girl- Child in Northeastern Nigeria: Implication for National Development

**Abstract :** *In recent times, millions of girl-child in Northeastern schools in Nigeria are caught up in conflicts that resulted from Boko Haram to insecurity which affected their school attendance. This paper examines the effect of Boko Haram Insurgency on girl- child attendance in secondary schools in Northeastern Nigeria. The study purposively selects three states in north eastern Nigeria. The study employed primary and secondary data; 360 respondents were randomly selected. The Ordinary Least Square (OLS) regression model was used to analyzed the data collected. The OLS regression model result shows that the  $R^2$  is as high as 0.680, this suggests that Boko Haram has influence on the girlchild attendance in secondary schools in the Northeastern Nigeria, therefore, the null hypothesis that Boko Haram insurgency has no significant effect on Girlchild attendance in Secondary Schools in Nigeria is rejected. This implies that Boko Haram insurgency has significant effects on Girl- child attendance in Secondary Schools in Nigeria. The study recommended that professional public private partnership (4 P's) should provide all necessary support to teachers and students, who have been affected by violence in Northeast of Nigeria, this should include rehabilitation and resettlement for those who have been forced to flee to return for academic pursuit.*

**Keywords** - *Boko Haram, Insecurity, Girl -child, Attendance, Islamic militants*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

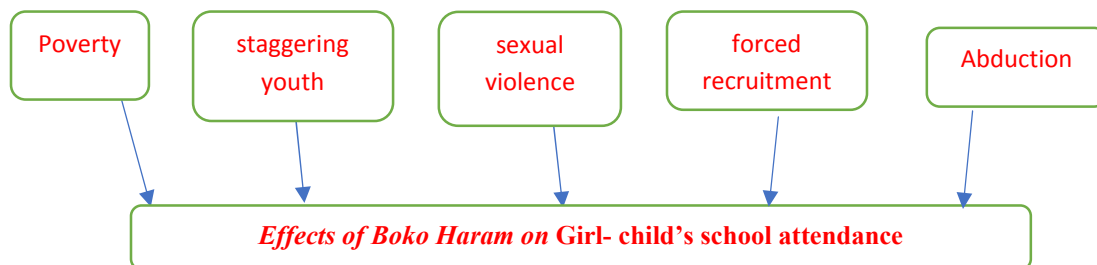
Most recently, girl child in Northeastern Nigeria are trapped in conflicts that resulted in insecurity which threatened their school attendance and their lives. Unvarying school turnout is vital to the education of girl child in any country. There is always a negative impact on the educational development of the girl child in school and the community when a girl child does not attend school regularly. A girl child who attends school regularly is likely to learn more and become more successful in school than those who do not. A girl child who misses classes, misses the opportunity to participate and as result left behind in academics [1]. There are no acceptable definitions of insecurity but it is linked to lingering fears of disease, hunger, terrorism, and poverty. Therefore, insecurity and poverty cannot be separated as high levels of poverty may expose people to various form of insecurity terrorism. The less privileged in developing countries are constantly faced with relatively high risks such as unemployment, domestic violence and crime. In recent times, northeastern Nigeria has been suffering security threats because of the sect's activities. The group shares the opinion that 'western education is a sin'. This group's activities have denied many from acquiring western education in an already disadvantaged region. It was reported that not only the pupils or students at the besieged schools that are affected, teachers are also affected [2]. As a result of insecurity, school enrolment in the region has dropped by 28 percent a figure much higher than elsewhere in the country.

Boko Haram attacks results to loss of life, injury, abduction of girl-child, teachers, personnel, damage to buildings and facilities by the group. For instance, 85 schools were closed in the region, affecting nearly 120,000 students, after a sequence of attacks by Islamic activists, in an area that has the country's worst knowledge rate [3]. These attacks have forced the affected state government to close down schools for a long period. This region is known to be educationally disadvantage [3]. In addition, pupils of school age are mostly affected due to frequent bombing of school, pupils, burning of worship places, schools, and sound of gunshots. The effects of insecurity in these areas seem to be enormous not only on parents, the school and the society but especially on the school pupils. It is meaningless to talk about the growth of girl-child education in the absence of national security. In other words,

insecurity is a danger to the expansion of girl-child education. Therefore, there is a nexus between development of girl-child education and national security. In a state of insecurity, the development of girl-child education is as elusive as a mirage. This study seeks to investigate the effect of Boko Haram Insurgency on girl child Education in Northeastern Nigeria.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptualizing girl- child's dropout in school, the paper mentioned the various causes and effects of Boko Haram on education to include violence, abduction, forced recruitment, staggering youth and poverty by Boko Haram as presented in Figure 1. Besides, these it affects the social life of the girl- child making them engage in unaccepted social activities which even can end them in death. The community and parents are not spared of the effects, as their economic life is adversely affected. Those who were able to complete school get good and highly paid jobs as compared to victims of school dropout due to insurgence who earn less income or none. Therefore, the paper suffices that, Girl- child's school attendance problem leaves no good effects on people and the society as a whole and can be curbed through protection from the parents, the communities and the government at large.



**Figure 1:** A framework showing causes and effects of Boko Haram on education  
Source: Researcher's own construct.

Theoretically, the paper is hinged on Liberal Feminist Theory, this theory is premised based on the knowledge that individual unawareness has resulted to gender bias. Education is therefore seen as a parameter used in improving these gaps. Liberal feminists are also concerned with equal rights and freedom of the individual. Gender inequalities are therefore credited to a number of factors including religion, culture and socialization of gender within cultures and the attitudes of the individual which can be changed through education. Some studies such as Bilyaminu, Ibrahim and Purokayo [3] evaluates the impact of insurgency on education in Adamawa state. The study uses primary sources of data collection in selecting 372 respondents in the study area. The model used was Structural Equation Model (SEM) in analysis of the data collected. The findings of the study showed that educational development is affected by enrolment, attendance, and school infrastructure which will certainly lead to a percentage increase in Boko Haram.

Awortu [1] investigates the impact of Boko Haram insurgency on development of Nigeria. The study used primary source of data while qualitative technique was used in the analysis and result shows that Boko Haram insurgency has led to the developmental challenges through destruction of lives and schools, this has led to the closure of schools. Bankole [2] viewed the success of Universal Basic Education with the supports of the Millennium Development Goal in Nigeria. The study used questionnaires and the qualitative technique was used in analyzing the data. The study reviewed that low funding and insecurity are major factors affecting education. While Mohammed [6] also examined the effect of insurgency on girl's education in Nigeria. The finding shows that the insurgency affects girl-child education negatively as the attacks hurts the girl child resulting in abandoning school since they are afraid of going to school. Umaru and Terhemba [10] examined the effects of insecurity on primary school attendance in Damaturu. The study adopted multistage sampling technique in selecting 225 parents and

teachers in 10 primary schools in Damaturu. The result also agreed that insecurity affects primary school attendance in Damaturu. In another study, Boko Haram insurgency as a threat to the achievement of education in Nigeria, authored by Ugwumba and Ikoku [11]. Adopting a descriptive analysis, the study shows that teachers were forced to flee to other areas for their safety.

### III. METHODOLOGY

The study employed a purposive sampling technique by selecting three states in the northeast, where there are prevalent cases of the Boko Haram attacks. The states selected were Borno, Yobe and Adamawa state. The states were selected based on the existing cases of girl child drop out of school due to Boko Haram insurgency. The study employed both primary and secondary data. The primary data utilized a well-structured questionnaire and interview schedule to obtain information from girl child and school management in the selected states while secondary data involves the use of journal articles, NBS bulletin, and library materials. Stage two was the random selection of one hundred twenty respondents in each of the states selected. In each state, forty questionnaires were distributed to each of the three senatorial zones. This resulted in a total of 360 respondents for the study. The criteria for the selection of sample were simply, a girl child who drop out from schools due to insurgency and the school management. The Ordinary Least Square method (OLS) was used to analyses data collected, it is specified as;

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + \varepsilon .$$

Where: Y = Girl- child in secondary schools

$X_1$  = fall in enrolment

$X_2$  = loss of teachers

$X_3$  = school infrastructure and facilities damages

$X_4$  = recruitment of girl-child in School for Soldiers

$X_5$  = girl-child ability not to learn.

$\alpha$  = Intercept;  $\beta$  = Beta coefficient of the independent variable.  $\varepsilon$  = Standard Error of the Estimate

The *a priori* expectation talks about the expected sign and magnitude of the coefficients of the independent variables and it is expected that all the parameters are expected to have positive signs. To this end, the research hypothesis is stated as  $H_0: \beta=0$  (There is no positive relationship between Boko Haram insurgency and Girl- child attendance in Secondary Schools).  $H_1: \beta \neq 0$  (There is a positive relationship between Boko Haram insurgency and Girl- child attendance in Secondary Schools).

### IV Results and Discussion

The estimated result in Table 1 shows that R- squared is 0.680. This indicates that 68% of the variations in the girl-child attendance in secondary schools are explained by the independent variables. This percentage shows a modest fit of the model. The F-Statistic (13.604) is significant at 95% confidence level. This implies that almost all the independent variables in the model have jointly contributed to the girl- child attendance in secondary schools. Durbin Watson (DW) – Statistics is 1.9690. This figure is close to two, this is an indication that successive error terms are not correlated. The results from the OLS regression model shows that the  $R^2$  is as high as 0.680, this suggests that Boko Haram has influence on the girl- child attendance in secondary schools in Northeastern Nigeria, therefore, the null hypothesis that Boko Haram insurgency has no significant effect on girl- child attendance in Secondary Schools in Nigeria is rejected. This implies that Boko Haram insurgency has a significant effect on girl-child attendance in Secondary Schools in Nigeria.

The estimated  $\beta_1$  coefficient is 0.360. This implies that a unit increase in Boko Haram insurgency is influenced by more than a unit increase in a fall in enrolment of girl- child attendance in Secondary Schools. This means that the higher the level of Boko Haram insurgency activity, the higher the fall in the rate of enrolment of girl- child attendance. This result is supported by [6], that Boko Haram's repeated attacks on schools in the northeast of Nigeria have insurmountable obstacles to learning for a large number of girl- child'. The psychosocial impact will affect the enrolment of girl- child, and where the threat of attacks persists may lead to them (girl- child) being kept at home from school, even if the school remains open. Such obstacles to access to education can result in severe developmental problems. girl- child run the risk of never being able to return to school or completing their education, thus diminishing the potential contribution they can make to society. There exists a positive relationship between Boko Haram insurgency and the loss of teachers in schools. The estimated  $\beta_2$  coefficient is 0.195. This implies that a unit increase Boko Haram insurgency is influenced by more than one unit increase in the loss of teachers in schools. This means that as the level of Boko Haram insurgency increases, there is a multiplied increase in loss of teachers in schools. Teachers may also experience psychological effects that are overcome by grief at the loss or maiming of their colleagues and students or are distracted by threats to colleagues, making it difficult for them to support their students or perform their job to the highest standards. If they are visibly anxious, this may heighten the fears of their own students. Fear may cause teachers to stay away from school for long periods, forcing their closure or preventing their resumption after attacks. There exists a positive relationship between Boko Haram insurgency and school infrastructure and facilities damage. The estimated  $\beta_3$  coefficient is 1.111. This implies that a unit change in Boko Haram insurgency will be influenced by more than one unit increase in school infrastructure and facilities damages. This is in line with the *apriori* expectation and confirmed the statement that reconstruction of the schools has cost so much to the government [4]. The Government Day Secondary School in Maiduguri alone cost over 339 million-naira, Government's Secondary school, Mamudo cost over 160 million naira, and fencing of College of Agriculture Gujiba cost about 120 million naira. All this was spent excluding all the primary schools and equipment being destroyed by the insurgency across the state.

**Table 1: Multiple Regression Results**

| Variables           | Coefficient | Standard Error | T-Ratio (Probability) |
|---------------------|-------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Constant            | 102.493     | 46.068         | 2.225 (0.046)         |
| FENRO ( $\beta_1$ ) | 0.360       | 0.770          | 0.868 (0.403)         |
| LOTE ( $\beta_2$ )  | 0.195       | 0.440          | 0.518(0.614)          |
| DSCHI ( $\beta_3$ ) | 1.111       | 0.610          | 0.693 (0.502)         |
| RGCS ( $\beta_4$ )  | 2.691       | 0.608          | 1.600 (0.135)         |
| GCL( $\beta_5$ )    | 1.590       | 0.360          | 0.993 (0.340)         |

R- squared of 0.680; F-statistic is 13.604; (DW) – Statistics is 1.9690.

**Source:** Authors' computation

There exists a positive relationship between Boko Haram insurgency and girl-child recruitment. This is because most of the bombing activities in the north east are undertaken by the girl-child recruited. The estimated  $\beta_4$  coefficient is 2.691. This implies that a unit increase in Boko Haram insurgency is influenced by more than one unit increase in bombing activities undertaken by the recruited girl-child. This is in agreement with the *apriori* expectation. This is in line with girl-child in school being recruited as soldiers by Boko Haram and are denied access to education and killed or injured in indiscriminate attacks carried out in most affected areas. There exists a positive relationship between Boko Haram insurgency and girl-child's ability not to learn. The estimated  $\beta_5$  coefficient is 1.590. This implies that a unit increase in Boko Haram insurgency is influenced by more than one unit increase in the girl-child ability not to learn. This means that an increase in the girl-child ability not to learn and level of Boko Haram insurgency move in the same direction. The higher the level of Boko Haram insurgency, the greater the magnitude of the girl-child ability not to learn in school. The psychosocial impact will affect girl- child's

ability to learn, and where the threat of attacks persists may lead to them (girl- child) being kept at home from school, even if the school remains open.

## V. CONCLUSION

The study concluded that Boko Haram insurgency has a significant effect on girl- child attendance in secondary schools in Nigeria. The primary responsibility of any responsible government is to ensure the security of lives and properties of its citizenry. Presently, Nigeria is in a perilous state of insecurity demonstrated in killings, bombings and nasty destruction of lives and possessions. In a serious condition such as this if left unchecked, will lead to permanent dropout of girl- child from schools thereby divulging them to other economic and social vices.

## VI. RECOMMENDATION

It is incumbent on the government to provide adequate and effective security personnel to all the institutions of learning in the study areas, to stop the burning of schools and constant shooting around educational institutions. This will encourage greater school attendance of the girl child. The security situation in Northeastern Nigeria calls for extraordinary measures to combat it. Also, there is need for behavioural transformation. The well-defined and appropriate enlightened education option comes in handy for the desired change. This may take huge resources to achieve but the end is certainly going to justify the means. Nigerians should perceive the education option as a new way to reduce the sophistication of crimes and violence that are threatening national integration and security. Finally, the government should renovate all schools damaged in the state and ensure that they are provided with adequate teaching staff and other resources in order that children's access to education can be resumed as quickly and smoothly as possible. Also, professional public-private partnership (4 P's) should provide all necessary support to all those, including teachers and students, who have been affected by violence in northeast Nigeria. This should include rehabilitation and resettlement for those who have been forced to flee the violence.

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