

VOL. 27, 2022: 32-45 Journal of Islamic Social Sciences and Humanities مجلة الثقافة الإسلامية و الإنسانية

DOI: 10.33102/abqari.vol27no1.425

# THE EFFECT OF CONFLICT IN INFLAMMATORY PEACE AND SOCIAL-DEVELOPMENT IN NORTHEAST, NIGERIA

Mohammed Ibrahim<sup>a1</sup>, Halliru Abdullahi Muhammad<sup>b2</sup> & Ibrahim Dahiru Idriss<sup>b3</sup>

¹peacezumami@gmail.com
²ibndiskudo@gmail.com
³ibrahimdahiruidriss@gmail.com (corresponding email)

### **Abstract**

The paper aims to examine Boko Haram conflict and its effect on social development and peaceful atmosphere of the Muslim community leading to unprecedented underdevelopment. The paper in this regard explains the modus-operandi of the terrorist group of Boko Haram that encompasses killings of innocent people, bombing places of worship, raping and kidnapping in the name of religion. The negative effect of the group activities on general development of Yobe State, Nigeria, has been so devastating and has forced financial institutions, businesses and commercial ventures to shut down operations in many areas of the state especially the state capital (Damaturu). It is based on the aforementioned that this paper seeks to explore the extent to which the Boko Haram conflict and insurgency has affected the peace and social development of Yobe State, Nigeria. The paper explains the concepts of conflict, peace and social development. A qualitative methodology through document analysis was employed for the collection and examination of data in the paper by reviewing printed materials including books, journal articles and thesis related to the study. From these sources, information was generated and gained knowledge on the extent of effect of the conflict on social development. The paper concluded that the

Boko Haram disturbance of peace constitutes a serious problem to development of various sectors in Yobe state.

Keywords: Peace, Conflict, Social-Development and Nigeria

### INTRODUCTION

The crackdown on Boko Haram in 2009 followed encounters with two uprising of the group that clashed with security forces, leading to loss of numerous lives and properties in northeast Nigeria. It was remarkable throughout the entire northern Nigeria since after Nigeria's independence in 1960. No uprising that vandalized individual and government properties came about in northeast Nigeria in that magnitude. One needs to realize that without harmony there will be no advancement and struggle can only disturb any social related conception to Islam in its exercises. The name Boko Haram aims for that, and it is synonymous to a freak activist advancement, affecting general public through clashes that lead to injury of people and properties. Regardless of whether the group is appropriately or wrongly an Islamic group, its rise in northern Nigeria had its antecedent in the mid-1990s.

At first, the group called itself "Ahlussunnah wal-jamā'a ala minhaji as-salaf" signifying "individuals of the method for the prophet Muhammad (harmony arrive) and the network (of Muslims) in accordance with the soonest age of Muslims" however because of terrible administration both at the State and the focal government later the gathering turns activist and called itself "Jama'atu Ahlussunnah Lidda'awati Wal Jihad" which signifies "individuals focused on the proliferation of the prophet's lessons and endeavouring in the reason for Allah. Harmony is a method for building up any country despite the fact that contention is inevitable in the human culture.

Having at first misjudged the military ability of the group due to lack of dependable insight, insufficient and degenerate administration, mixed up approaches and various strategies, Nigerian specialists wound up in a humiliating worldwide spotlight. Apparently constrained to act, Nigeria utilized (may be still do), a singed earth approach utilizing blind military may absent of accidental losses and misfortunes of honest lives and property and uninterested with exactness of focus before assault. As a drop out of this system, numerous towns were sacked, destroyed and scoured. Ladies, youngsters, wiped out and the frail in thousands were felled by stray slugs. At a point, the regular citizen exploited people were at lost whom to fear more between the scouring agitators and the unpredictably bulldozing military.

Reports of abnormal extra-legal beheadings were basic as much against the activists as against the security operators. Also, notwithstanding a huge number of captures and inconclusive confinements, just a bunch have as at now after numerous years,

been charged to court, against all known national and global laws. This technique (or absence of it) in any case, doesn't have all the earmarks of being prevailing with regards to halting the focused-on rebellion from developing in any way. Nevertheless, the employment of the outlined method of engagement by authorities is as much from desperation, ill-preparation and ill-plan, as it is from confusion regarding the acceptable or suitable modus-operands social development employable in novel security challenges in the nature of which we are faced with today and such is not limited to the Nigeria's experience.

## METHODOLOGY

This study adopted qualitative approach through the content analysis framework. It had employed the library research and examined relevant materials on Boko Haram conflict and its effect on social development and peaceful atmosphere of Muslim community based on the glorious Qur'an and scholarly point of views. Document analysis for the data collection methods was employed, by reviewing printed materials such as books, journal articles and thesis related to the study. According to Scot, documents refer to the materials produced by an individual or group in a written form or text in the progression of their everyday practice (Scott, 1990). Similarly, Doherr, (2018) discourses that documents are ready made sources of data that be easily accessed by the potential and inventive researcher. It involves a wide range of written materials, digital, visual and physical material relevant to the intended study.

# THE CONCEPT OF PEACE, CONFLICT AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT Peace and Conflict

Conflict: There are various definitions and understanding of conflicts. It can be 'defined as a struggle (both overt and covert) among persons or parties who aim at gaining certain objectives or advantages while simultaneously neutralizing, injuring or if possible (in extreme cases) eliminating rivals'. For Ifediora 'conflicts are quarrels, fights or struggles between interest groups and are one of the inescapable consequences of man's interaction with fellow humans and his environment.'

In another understanding, it is a 'struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure, or eliminate their rivals' (Coser 8). Conflicts are a basic fact of life and human interactions. There will always be divergent opinions among individuals and groups. The thing to do is to work to negotiate and dialogue through those differences and contrary perceptions. It is when conflict is mismanaged or precipitated into a crisis, and it becomes violent that society needs to guard against.

Violent Conflicts: are conflicts in which one or both of the parties involved in a dispute, disagreement, and struggle over resources, services, exchange of goods, or

on which position or decision should be taken; takes up arms or other material or non-material elements to do harm to the other in order to be victorious in the struggle. Non-material implies that it is possible to do harm and destruction through words of mouth, or other spiritual means. In other words, violence includes 'acts of deliberate violence resulting in direct attack on a person's physical or psychological integrity. This category includes all forms of homicide, genocide, war, crime, massacre, murders, terrorism) as well as all types of coercive or brutal action involving physical or psychological suffering kidnapping, torture, rape, maltreatment. This is the sense in which the term will be used here (Alimba, 2014).

## **Social Development**

Social development is about improving the well-being of every individual in society so they can reach their full potential. The success of society relies on the well-being of each and every citizen. Social development means investing in people. It requires the removal of barriers so that all citizens can journey toward their dreams with confidence and dignity. It is about refusing to accept that people who live in poverty will always be poor. It is about helping people so they can move forward on their path to self-sufficiency. Every individual must have the opportunity to grow, develop their own skills and contribute to their families and communities in a meaningful way. If they are healthy, well-educated and trained to enter the workforce and are able to make a decent wage they are better equipped to meet their basic needs and be successful. Their families will also do well and the whole of society will benefit. Learning must start early in life.

By investing in early learning initiatives, we can ensure a greater degree of success amongst our citizens. Making sure that children get a good start in their education goes a long way to increasing their success later in life. An affordable, high quality childcare system is also needed for society to succeed. When people know that their children are being well taken care of, they can be more productive in their jobs. When employers have good employees, their business is more likely to succeed. When businesses succeed, the economic situation of a community is improved. An investment today in good childcare programs can provide many long-term economic benefits for society (Galtung, 2009).

Social Development: Meaning to unfold it or to grow into fuller or mature condition Meant Referring to an instrument of action, an act or process Therefore, Social Development refers to the progressive improvements in the living conditions and quality of life enjoyed by society and shared by its members. Social means relating to society or its organization (Haider, 2014). Social development is more concerned with the investment in human beings. A vibrant unit of investment in education, health, social welfare etc. social development aims at the total development of

people...Social development is inter-sectoral, inter-regional and inter- disciplinary and visualizes institutional and structural reforms to provide greater social justice. (Lenshie, 2016). Social development has been described as a process of change from the traditional way of living of rural communities to progressive ways of living (Byrne, 2017).

According to Agarwal "Social Development is the promotion of a sustainable society that is worthy of human dignity by empowering marginalized groups, women and men, to undertake their own development, to improve their social and economic position and to acquire their rightful place in society" (Agarwal, 2016). Social development may be used in connection with structural transformation in society seeking to Changes in the system of stratification and in degree of mobility. In a narrower sense, it would be used with reference to the human welfare aspects of development, which is improving the quality of life and more equitable distribution of material and cultural goods. In the broadest sense "it signifies all aspects of development that are of collective nature pertaining to the society as a whole." "The concept of social development is inclusive of economic development, but it emphasizes the development of the society in totality that is, in its economic, political, social and cultural aspects" (Paffenholz, 2008).

Social development requires decentralization of power and decision making so that process of planning at the grass root level is made possible. This means active people's participation in making political and economic decision involving their welfare. There should be combination of central leadership, central coordination and central resources contribution with decentralized decision making and mobilization of local resources to make social development program more effective. Culture socio-political socio-economic basic minimum needs full development of human potentials and creativity equity of distributive justice, social equality, redistribution of assets democracy higher growth with greater equity, mass consciousness, eradication of abject poverty and unemployment–access to minimum income and public services through employment with people's participation (Ajayi, 2014).

Social defense covering juvenile delinquency and rehabilitation, juvenile court and family or institutional placement, probation and after care, suppression of immoral traffic in women and girls, beggary prevention etc.  $\square$  Social welfare covering child development through integrated child development services (ICDS), welfare of the differently-abled, vocational training and rehabilitation, family courts and counseling etc.  $\square$ Education covering pre-school education for children, non-formal education for parents, tutorials for slow-learners and drop-out, continuing education for adults through reading room and library and social work.  $\square$ Health and family welfare

covering social aspects of primary health care, family planning, childcare, nutrition and community health services etc (Ukpong-Umo, 2014).

### CAUSES OF CONFLICT

From a development perspective, understanding armed conflict is an important part of understanding the context in which efforts to reduce poverty take place. The development practitioner debate has focused on varying themes such as the prevention of armed conflict, reducing the negative effects of aid on conflict ('Do no harm'), human security, and the role of development in conflict resolution and peacebuilding (Paffenholz, 2008). As Paffenholz, (2008), professed and analyses the conflict entrepreneurs or economy war and in accordance with some of the reviewed literature indicates that there is not a single developmental variable that causes conflict, but many variables that foster violence when combined in specific contexts. Research debates examine the causes of conflict in relation to issues such as:

- i. Globalization and the transformation of societies: The first stage of democratization, when pressure is exerted on authoritarian governments, is often accompanied by violence.
- ii. Economic growth and income: Economic growth may increase the risk of armed conflict in very poor economies but decrease this risk in richer economies.
- iii. Poverty and inequality: A simple link between each of these factors and conflict has been questioned as each context involves specific, complex variables.
- iv. Resources: Whether environmental conflict becomes violent depends largely on the government's environmental policy. The 'war economy' debate suggests that war may be seen as an alternative way of generating profit, power and protection.
- v. Aid: The aid system can inadvertently exacerbate conflict, as it did in Rwanda, other part of African countries and the way currently happing in the northeast, Nigeria. Some have gone further to suggest that donors use aid allocation as a political instrument.

The transfer of the above debates into policy has been selective, however. There is little conceptual thinking about the consequences of globalization and modernization for peacebuilding; it is assumed that liberal market economies will promote both peace and development, and critical research is largely ignored. Furthermore:

- i. Using aid as an incentive for peace ('peace conditionality'), is promoted by donors, but in practice tends to be undermined by lack of donor coherence.
- ii. 'Do no harm' and 'conflict sensitivity' guidelines are widespread, but do not often lead to the equal and fair distribution of aid.

iii. The international community has included issues of 'war economies' and natural resources into policy documents for dealing with conflict and has introduced diamond certification. However, it is difficult to regulate other resources and government revenues.

Comparative studies show that development and peacebuilding must be integrated (not just linked) at an early stage – for example by including the political context in development policy and practice in conflict-affected fragile states and by addressing the structural causes of conflict. Development policies and resources are a very important dimension in addressing armed conflict – when applied coherently and with an orientation towards peace that goes far beyond 'Do no harm'. Likewise, peacebuilding must see by development practitioners as much more than just another policy and operational option.

## EFFECT OF THE CONFLICT

Walton & Dutton (1969) founds that conflict results in low trust and low respect which in turn has an adverse effect on individuals. When conflicts are not well managed it can also result in the reluctance of individual to continue to participate in a barbaric task. Although conflict may have a negative impact on society, but this is dependent on the nature and level of the conflict. According to Verma (1998) conflict is unavoidable as it is a natural phenomenon in any human society and its response determines whether the results will be positive or negative.

Kassab, (2019) maintains that conflict remain a challenge in the human society with the potential to leading to developmental failures, litigation and outright social justice abandonment. Sometimes, when there are conflicts among the individual, groups or society it could result in frustration that can manifest a tripartite effects of communication break, unnecessary annoyance and aggressive behavior. Conflict also affects the accomplishment of societal goals due to their attending stress, hostility and other undesirable factors when poorly managed (Femi, 2014).

# AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE ON CONFLICT AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

When a man said to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him): "Counsel me." The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "Do not get angry." The man repeated his request many times, but the Prophet (peace be upon him) kept saying: "Do not get angry" (Yassien, 2015). Conflict is considered a very interesting subject for study in social, management and psychology fields (Ma, 2008). One of the main reasons for this attention is of the contradictory and highly effective outcomes that may be widely devastating or highly productive (Robbins, 2002). Conflict is also a complex and forked subject involving lots of issues, and great amount of positive and/or negative

feelings. (Olson-Buchanan, J.B., & Boswell, W.R. 2008) state that, the reflected number of studies that looked into the subject carrying different views and consequently different number of definitions.

## **Diversity**

Diversity is another concept that's used in this research as the starting point of new conflict model presented by the author. A widely accepted definition of diversity is introduced by Diversity Task Force (2001). It defines is as "all characteristics and experiences that define each of us as individuals" Diversity has been an important issue that is continuously researched and became a major social and political as well as a management research topic (Yassien, 2015). Bogaert & Vloeberghs (2005) lists number of authors who acknowledged the value of diversity, such as van Poeltje and van Silfhout who ensure that it leads to economic or competitive advantage.

Yassien, (2015) also presents the importance of increasing productivity and profitability through customer satisfaction, which cannot be accomplished without fulfilling their diverse needs. First consideration to fulfill diverse customer satisfaction is to maintain diversity among employees. According to Bogaert & Vloeberghs (2005), also emphasizes the importance of appointing employees with different backgrounds to bring new ideas and viewpoints; or in other words new blood to bring life for the organization. "Vigorous exchange of ideas" sentence, expresses Peterson's (1999, p.19) opinion regarding diversity. (Bhasin and Low, 2002) also sees that diversity can provide a particular country the cutting edge. As it is discussed above, diversity is mostly valued and empowered by researchers. Managing diversity is a new field of study emerged in a try to capture the benefits of diversity as clarified in next section.

## **Managing Diversity**

Since the early 1990s, several U.S. scholars have promoted the concept of managing diversity, also called "diversity management" (Cox, 1994) as diversity is seen as an asset. Thomas (1990) presents managing diversity is a way to obtain from a heterogeneous workforce the same productivity, commitment, quality and profit that companies obtain from their homogeneous workforces.

According to Bogaert & Vloeberghs (2005) distinguishes four approaches for managing diversity. Two of these approaches (deficit and discriminatory) look in creating diverse organizations to acquire all the previously mentioned benefits of diversity. Creating diversity within organizations is out of the scope of this research. The other two approaches defined by individualization and culturalization focus on achieving a stimulating environment to manage diversity.

First approach, individualization, focuses on considering differences between individuals to motivate individual innovation by applying many tools for diversity management such as labor flexibility, part-time employment, and the stimulation of work-family balance to allow for individualized and diversified personnel management.

Last approach, culturalization, cares about different attitudes, and perceptions within different cultures. It cares about cultural difficulty, and ways to drive different people with different backgrounds to reach integration within cultural differences instead of conflicts especially when these cultures clash in deep believes, central values and priorities, which might be extremely difficult (Bogaret & Vloeberghs, D., 2005). These last two approaches assumed and adopted by the author as classification for diversity.

## Diversity and Conflict in Qur'an

Diversity of people is clearly recognized in Qur'an and introduced as a clear concept whereas Qur'an points to it in Surah ar-Rum in terms of colors and languages:

"And of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your languages and your colors. Indeed, in that are signs for those of knowledge" (Ar-Rum: 22).

Human general diversity is mentioned in Surah Yunus

"And mankind was not but one community [united in religion], but [then] they differed. And if not for a word that preceded from your Lord, it would have been judged between them [immediately] concerning that over which they differ" (Yunus:19).

Qur'an also indicates the fact of diversity in Surah al-Hud as follows:

"And if your Lord had willed, He could have made mankind one community; but they will not cease to differ" (Hud:118).

Meanwhile, Surah al-Mai'dah Verse 48 refers that Allah has the power to unit humans to one nation, but it is of His wisdom not to:

وَ أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَرَقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمُهَيْمِنًا عَلَيْهِ ۖ فَاحْكُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ ۖ وَلَا تَتَبَعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ عَمَّا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ ۚ لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شِرْعَةً وَمِنْهَاجًا ۚ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَكِنْ لِيَبْلُوكُمْ فِي مَا آتَاكُمْ ۖ فَاسْتَهِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ ۚ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَتِّفُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ

"And We have revealed to you, [O Muhammad], the Book in truth, confirming that which preceded it of the Scripture and as a criterion over it. So, judge between them by what Allah has revealed and do not follow their inclinations away from what has come to you of the truth. To each of you We prescribed a law and a method. Had Allah willed, He would have made you one nation [united in religion], but [He intended] to test you in what He has given you; so, race to [all that is] good. To Allah is your return all together, and He will [then] inform you concerning that over which you used to differ" (Al-Ma'idah: 48).

Qur'an refers to the purpose of diversity in Surah al-Hujurat

"O mankind, indeed, We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted" (Al-Hujurat:13).

As discussed above diversity is valued in Qur'an, on the other hand conflict is rejected. While conflict word (Niza'a) is mentioned in Qur'an seven times in different contexts, it is associated with failure (which is also mentioned four times in the whole Qur'an) in three contexts of the sevens. According to Surah al-Anfal the Almighty Allah says:

"And obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not dispute and [thus] lose courage and [then] your strength would depart; and be patient. Indeed, Allah is with the patient" (Al-Anfal: 46).

This verse clearly describes failure (loss) as a definite consequence for conflict, that's why it's considered an undesirable event. As Islam considers conflict unsolicited, the author sees that conflict is only one of the two extremely opposing results of human diversity knowing that (as mentioned earlier in this research) diversity is a nature of human being. It is inclusive and it is part of our everyday reality (Kapoor, 2011). The author believes that diversity is just as any gift of Allah, if managed correctly would bring positive results (cutting edge) (Bhasin & Low, 2002), otherwise it would bring bad outcome, which is conflict.

Not valuing diversity and lack of understanding of people who are "different" would bring undesirable behaviors (such as expressions of racism, discrimination and exclusion). These behaviors are the foundation of conflict. Because it's a commonsense fact that no individual can be perfect, and each person has his own limitations. Thus, if diversity is really valued and respected, it can build on strength and compensate to weakness, it would bring synergy (Covey, 2009).

Synergy is recognized in this research as the other outcome of diversity, which if achieved it could bring a new dimension that never exist. Synergy is a Greek word synergia συνεργία from synergos, συνεργός, meaning "working together (Yassien, 2015). Covey (2009) also defines it as "working together of two things to produce a result greater than the sum of their individual effects. "That's why it has been recorded as a good practice for employees to face their differences and seeks synergetic resolution to raise communication, commitment and nurter loyalty (Bogaert & Vloeberghs, 2005).

Finally, the conditional approach depends on when conflict is likely to occur, such as incompatible goals, means or activities leading to conflict. For example, Kolb and Putnam (1992) defined conflict as when there are real or perceived differences that arise in specific organizational circumstances and that engender emotion as a consequence (Condition: antecedents and consequences). Most researchers nowadays use Wall & Callister's definition. Their definition sees conflict as the process in which one party perceives that its interests are being opposed or negatively affected by another party.

The concept of trusteeship is another pillar of the Islamic healthy culture. Trusteeship means the whole world is owned by the Almighty Allah in Surah al-Fatihah Verse 2), and people are viewed as trustees of the earth on behalf of Allah.

"All] praise is [due] to Allah, Lord of the worlds" (Al-Fatihah: 2).

Earth protection is a must for each Muslim even in the cruelest forms of conflict which is war. Abu Bakr, the first caliph of the Islamic state after Muhammad, sent someone on a war assignment, he warned him not to kill indiscriminately or to destroy trees, planets or animal, even in war and on enemy territory.

Trusteeship facilitates sustainable development and social responsibility of ethics (Rice, 1999). Models of sustainable development do not regard natural resources as a free good, to be spoiled at the free will of any nation, any generation or any individual

(Ascher, 2020). Lots of values, perspectives and priorities form the ground for the followers of Islam, because Islam is a comprehensive system include all aspects of life (Yassien, 2015).

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. Interdisciplinary research on the causes of conflict and preventive measures and joint quantitative and qualitative approaches are needed. Translating research into policy needs to be better organized.
- ii. Conflict risks becoming just another donor 'mainstreaming' topic along with gender and the environment. The peaceful constitution of countries is a highly political matter; peacebuilding needs to be at the forefront of economic and political development agendas.
- iii. Policy development interventions in fragile contexts should be based on solid analysis that is systematically linked with implementation.
- iv. Donors should take the issue of coherent policies seriously. They should stop linking development policies to national agendas or hiding behind mandates of 'neutrality'. Country ownership of peace and development processes needs to be put into practice.

### CONCLUSION

Islam does not only value diversity, but also provides a full management strategy for it in order to obtain synergy. The process starts proactively for preventing conflict, by building a full culture that smoothest the ground for synergy, then for each stage in the process several guidelines are provided to hinder the process from reaching to conflict. The paper concluded that Boko Haram constitute a serious problem to the development in various sectors of human endeavour in the State. It was recommended among others that the institution of Zakat and endowment be revive and all stakeholders should put hands on deck towards the realization of high-level peace and social security by strategizing different ways of fighting the menace of Boko Haram in the region for the region to gain its lost glory.

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