

**THE CAUSE OF NIGERIAN CIVIL WAR: STATE REPRESSION AND  
HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSE IN THE CASES OF BOKO HARAM AND  
BIAFRA**

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This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in Political Science and International Relations.

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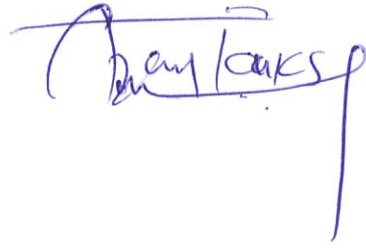
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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Abdullahi Abubakar Kaka', written in a cursive style.

## ABSTRACT

### THE CAUSE OF NIGERIAN CIVIL WAR: STATE REPRESSION AND HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSE IN THE CASES OF BOKO HARAM AND BIAFRA

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This thesis examines the reason why there is a civil war in Nigeria. The role of the regional government in escalating civil conflict in Nigeria. It argues that the regions where there is a high degree of human rights abuses and state repression experience more violent conflicts. This argument is based on the examination of violent conflicts in Southern and Northern Nigeria with the records of human right abuses. Additionally, regions that have been affected with high degree of violent conflict will be analyzed in accordance to the amount of federal government interference towards the indigenes of the region. The thesis argues that the more the federal government checks the application of the rule of law within a region, the less likely to witness escalation of violent conflict and vice-versa. In addition, the thesis is trying to fill the missing gap in the literature on the cause of civil conflict in Nigeria. The thesis tries to provide an alternative approach to civil conflict in Nigeria and aims to provide an important approach to the way the government battles civil conflict.

Keywords: Nigeria, Human rights, State repression, Boko Haram, Biafra, conflict management

## ÖZ

### NİJERYA SİVİL SAVAŞI NEDENİ: BOKO HARAM VE BIAFRA'NIN KASALARINDA DEVLET BASKISI VE İNSAN HAKLARI

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Bu tez Nijerya'da bir iç savaş olmasının nedenini, bölgesel hükümetin Nijerya'daki sivil çatışmanın tırmanmasındaki rolü incelemektedir. Yüksek derecede insan hakları ihlallerinin ve devlet baskısının olduğu bölgelerin daha şiddetli çatışmalar yaşadığını savunuyor. Bu argüman Güney ve Kuzey Nijerya'daki şiddetli çatışmaların insan hakları ihlali kayıtlarıyla incelenmesi üzerine kuruludur. Bununla beraber, şiddet içeren ihtilaftan etkilenen bölgeler, bölgedeki yerlilere yönelik federal hükümetin müdahalesinin miktarına göre analiz edilecektir. Bu tez, federal hükümetin bir bölge içindeki hukukun üstünlüğünü ne kadar fazla denetlerse, şiddetli çatışmaların da kadar azaldığını, dolayısıyla da ne kadar az denetlerse çatışmanın da o kadar yükseldiğini savunuyor. İlaveten, bu tez Nijerya'da sivil çatışma nedeni ile ilgili literatürdeki boşluğu doldurmaya çalışıyor. Tez Nijerya'da sivil çatışmaya alternatif bir yaklaşım sunmaya çalışmakta ve hükümetin sivil çatışmaya karşı savaşa yöntemine önemli bir yaklaşım getirmeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Nijerya, İnsan hakları, Devlet baskısı, Boko Haram, Biafra, Çatışma yönetimi.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Conflict affects over 40% of Nigerians; it is a significant problem with deep roots in the core of the state. Several scholars have written about the causes of conflict, including ethnic, tribal, religious, political, and socio-economic factors (Ohajifke D.C 1992, Augustine Ikelegbe 2006, Toyin Folala 1998, Claude E. Welch 1995, Nwabiro Ideyi 2008). Most of the scholars relate violent conflict in Nigeria to culture. Undoubtedly, culture plays a significant role in the rise of some militant groups and even in the violent conflict. However, the majority of violent conflicts in Nigeria are not caused by merely cultural differences, ethnic differences or religious differences. In countries like the United States of America, and Ghana, there are several religious or tribal groups, but they still live together without violent conflicts like there are Nigeria. The literature tends to overlook the role in which state repression<sup>1</sup> and human right abuse play in fueling violent conflicts in Nigeria. This thesis will provide insight on the role state repression and human rights abuse plays in Nigeria focusing on Boko Haram-controlled regions and The Niger Delta region (Biafra).

To explain what I mean by state repression, human rights violations, and conflict, I will explain and conceptualize the terms and how it provokes violent conflicts in Nigeria. First, we need to tackle the question what a conflict is. A conflict has several meanings and it is ambiguous. A person might have a conflict within himself or a conflict within the family. Here, I will focus on societal conflict, that is, conflict within groups, communities and states. According to Lewis Coser in his book *Function of Social conflict* (1956) Conflict is the struggle over values, and claims to scarce status, power and resources in which a person or group or people aim to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals. <sup>2</sup> The term

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<sup>1</sup> This article provides insight on how state repression leads to violent conflict Davenport, "State Repression and the Tyrannical Peace," 493.

<sup>2</sup> Coser, *The Functions of Social Conflict*, 8.

conflict here is referring to tension between two or more actors, which will lead to the destruction of properties and loss of lives. To 'neutralize' your opponent can carry several connotations; it may refer to coming to terms, an agreement or enforcing terms to the opposition. Hence, in a conflict there must be 'the other', it may be 'other opinion', 'other person, or group of persons,' etc. As a minimum, at least one of the actors, i.e., the opposition must in words or action, give the expression to a motive to frustrate the other person.<sup>3</sup> This means that, for a conflict to occur, one of the actors needs to show the impression of disagreement, discord or dissatisfaction towards the other, either by actions or by words. To get what he wants, there is a need to neutralize, injure or eliminate the other. However, what happens when the other does not recognize that there is a conflict going on? Hence, we need to classify conflict in accordance with the degree of acknowledgement by the other. According to V. Aubert, conflict can be classified into two types: competition and dissensus. Conflict arises from a mutual recognition of incompatible material interests or competing in basic values. Also, conflict is a pervasive feature of all social relations. (William J. Dixon, 1996, p 655). When two parties mutually agree to disagree, hence competition among them, this type of conflict is aggressive. For a conflict to arise there needs to be some form of confrontation between the actors, but in a case where the competition is caused by a third party or a reaction due to a third party's action towards a particular group, like in the case of Nigeria. The state acts as a third party where it instigates competition among the citizens through repression and human rights abuses. Here the confrontation is triggered through the action of a third party, hence dissensus.

In Nigeria, third parties are not only involved in conflict management, that is mediation, negotiation or arbitrations, but it can also be used to instigate violence when the third party is somewhat biased. In a federal system like Nigeria, conflict should not arise if every part of the state is involved in decision-making and if the state implements these constitutional rights of its citizens. When a state violates the rights of its citizens, the

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<sup>3</sup> Aubert, "Competition and Dissensus," 26.

reactionary response mostly is a conflict between the citizens. When the citizens are not involved in the decision-making, or their fundamental constitutional rights are being tampered with, this leads to competition and aggression between the citizens and the state. According to Oskar and Ron, violations of civil and political rights appear more obviously associated with conflict than abuses of economic and social rights, but the latter seems to play a facilitating role. Discrimination and violations of social and economic rights, function as the underlying cause, creating the grievances and group identities that may under some circumstances motivate civil violence. Violations of civil and political rights are more clearly identifiable as direct conflict, as these trigger resentment among the people or groups that have been violated Oskar N.T. Thoms and James Ron (2007, p 676).

### **1.1 Background of the Problem**

In the case of Nigeria, conflict is inevitable when the state represses or discriminates against a particular group or minority groups (whether social, ethnic, economic, religious, or tribal). Nigeria is a nation of different ethnic groups (524 ethnicities) and the ambition to grow together has been altered by some parts of the country trying to hold on to power. In a situation where citizens are deprived of education, massive corruption, torture, and restriction of freedom of speech violent conflict such as the cases of Boko Haram, Niger Delta militants are close to inevitable. According to human rights report by the US state department in 2009, there are several recordings of human rights abuse in Nigeria, these include the abridgement of citizens' right to change their government i.e. rigging political outcomes after voting. Politically motivated and extrajudicial killings by security forces, including mass executions; vigilante killings; abductions by militant groups; torture, rape, and other cruel, inhumane treatment of people (US state department, 2009). Nigeria has one of the highest numbers of election malpractices, and in a democracy, voting is one of the fundamental human rights of every citizen. Hence, when rigging occurs, it provides clear evidence of direct human rights abuse by the government paving way for resentment and eventually conflict. There are several recorded cases of extrajudicial killings by the armed forces in Nigeria, without any trials

or due process. Moreover, when these elements of direct abuse occur, the masses or rather the party that was abused tend to react through protests, demonstrations and eventually violence.

What are Violence and Human rights abuse? According to J. Galtung, violence is the presence of influence on people so that their actual semantic and mental realization is below their potential realization (Johan Galtung, 1969, p 168). That is, when a community sees a few usurping the available resources present and these resources are meant for everyone, this will lead to haggling among the members of the community and eventually to conflict. Conflict can be violent or nonviolent conflict, in the case of Nigeria; this thesis focuses on violent conflicts. Johan Galtung added that there are three types of violence: structural violence, cultural violence and direct violence. This thesis will concentrate on structural and direct violence; they both can be intentional and unintentional. Structural violence refers to those actions that are not visibly harmful to a person or group of persons, i.e. the community does not realize the impact of such violence until it accumulates to a significant degree. For example, discrimination towards women, ethnic minorities, or other tribe members, such violence is structural when it does not have a physical impact on its subjects but is more latent in the institutional framework. Another example is through education; a particular group could be taught to behave in a particular manner through their school curriculum, which teaches them to act in a particular manner towards others. These types of structural violence are not physically visible, but in the end, they lead to conflict between people or groups of people. On the other hand, direct violence is any physical harm that can be seen on a subject by the other group of people; it can be on properties or life. For example, any form of torture or extrajudicial killings by the military or armed forces is categorized under direct violence. When a group or a minority witness such acts of violence towards their members, they tend to react, however, the government suppresses these reactions, creating more agitation and anger, and eventually, due to the visible conflict of interest, it leads to violence.

Another definition of violence is the absence of peace and stability within a particular region. In the case of Nigeria, state violence can be seen in structural form and direct form, also intentional and unintentional. For example, prior to the rise of Boko Haram, there has been a high degree of structural and direct violence towards the indigenes of Borno state; there are documented cases of torture, discrimination towards minority groups, corruption and intimidation. The minority groups were not able to live in peace, grow or take part in decision making. These cases accumulated in the long run and transmogrify to violent conflict between the state and the Boko Haram members, the thesis will expound on this case in chapter 3. Additionally, in the case of the Niger Delta region and other regions where there are the killings of innocent citizens, the communities are always in the state of fear either by the actions of the government or the militant groups, hence, the communities could not grow. When there is such abuse and lack of peace within the state or a particular region, sooner or later it will erupt and turn into a major conflict. The figure below illustrates the triangle of violence, as clearly shown at the top of the triangle is direct violence or visible violence which the thesis explained earlier as the types of violence that can be seen or noticed by the individuals affected.

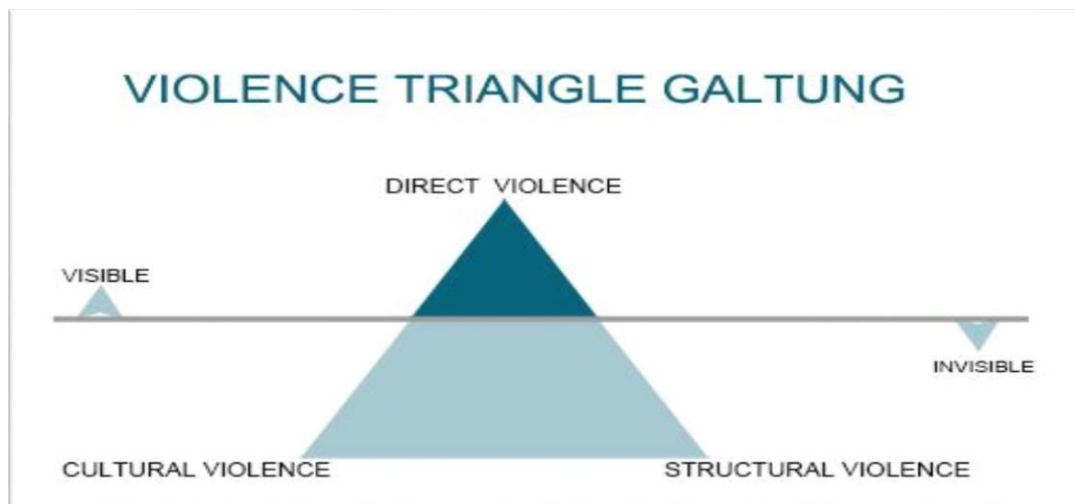


Fig 1.1: The Triangle of Violence. Transcend: Peace and Development Network for Conflict Transformation by Peaceful Means (Galtung J. 1969, p. 173)

It is demonstrated in the diagram above, that cultural and structural violence are invisible to the subjects, but direct violence is visible in the triangle of violence. We can understand why some people or group of people do not see when the state is violating their rights. As aforementioned, structural violence can take several forms, be it in school or at a workplace. It has more or less the same impact to direct violence in creation/fueling of conflict within a community.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

When a state respects human rights and abide by them, stability will be attained in the state. "Human rights are internationally agreed values, standards or rules regulating the conduct of states towards their citizens and towards non-citizens" (Peter R. Baehr, 1991, practice 1). There are certain norms across the world such as, rights to live, freedom of expression and freedom of belief to mention a few; these are internationally accepted norms and rights across the globe. For example, it is internationally accepted that there will be no more slavery or forced labor on citizens or non-citizens of any state. The United Nations has a body that regulates what are generally accepted as human rights in the world. In this thesis i.e. the study shows that states with high human rights abuse tend to witness more violent conflict, and the other states with less human rights abuse tend to have less or no violent conflict. Meanwhile, in the case of violent conflict in Nigeria, scholars tend to focus on cultural causes of civil conflict and overlook the effects human rights abuse made by the state government towards its citizens. According to Transparency International publication on corruption, Nigeria is one of the most corrupt nations on earth and corruption is an indication of structural violence within a state (C. Henry 2016).

According to Lydia Polgreen, corruption is one of the causes of conflict in Nigeria. The writer gave the example of the former Bayelsa state governor Alaghmesia who looted over \$4 billion from the state government within the Niger Delta and the after-effects of this looting are still felt within the region, where there are many militants and so many

kidnappings going on in the region (Lydia Polgreen New York Times, 2005). This thesis agrees with the writer that there is blatant corruption within the Niger Delta states, and corruption is an indicator of human rights abuse. When a person or group of people are given the authority to manage the affairs or properties of others with the state and they misuse this authority, it is an indication of structural violence, because not all corrupt practices are visible by the citizens<sup>4</sup>. Hence, when a person misuses his authority in favour of himself, his family or group of people, this is a clear violation of the rights of citizens of the country. Therefore, it is true that corruption has a correlation with conflict but it is not a primary cause and observation has shown a part of Nigeria where there is similar corruption, but the conflict level is minimal compared to the Niger Delta.

The degree of violation by the state regime determines the amount of conflict made by its citizens. The higher the discrimination, then the higher the level of structural violence and the degree of response. There is a considerable variation between regions where the state repression is high as it is the case in Borno state, and the places where we have much respect for human rights and lesser repression by the state government such as Lagos state. This thesis will examine this variation and show the variation within the regions, will also compare regions where the regional governments support and provide enough freedom, and engaging in less repression, in different regimes within Nigeria, especially regarding how the repressed states respond and the less repressed states. This thesis states that when a region is repressed and experiences a high level of human rights violation, it tends to respond violently.

The correlation between the levels of human right abuse and conflict is such that when the state highly meets citizen's expectations, the intention for conflict by the citizens will be minimum, also when the expectations are not met or at a minimal level, then the intention for conflict becomes high. Several theories show how humans react towards

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<sup>4</sup> [Http://www.transparency.org/country#NGA\\_DataResearch\\_SurveysIndices](http://www.transparency.org/country#NGA_DataResearch_SurveysIndices) .



repression. The theories include the predictive belief theory where people react based on their sets of belief.

According to predictive belief theory, a person's rationality and sets of belief and desire are strongly related. A person will not act on something, which is not appropriate to his sets of belief; instead act upon things that are appropriate to them (Christopher C. Mind 1981, p 166). From a rationalist point of view, it shows that individuals react towards mutual causality. When citizens see that there is massive repression and then some group of people come out to express dissensus, the individual will think in favor of those people expressing dissensus; it is only rational for the individual to join and express his dissensus. The outcome becomes collective when many people come together to act in a specific manner in favor of their interests and values. The diagram below on cumulative causation and composite outcome below expresses the relation between the common cause and individual outcome. In the case where there is collective repression, the state tends to have collective conflict, and sometimes an individual can be repressed which can lead to collective conflict.

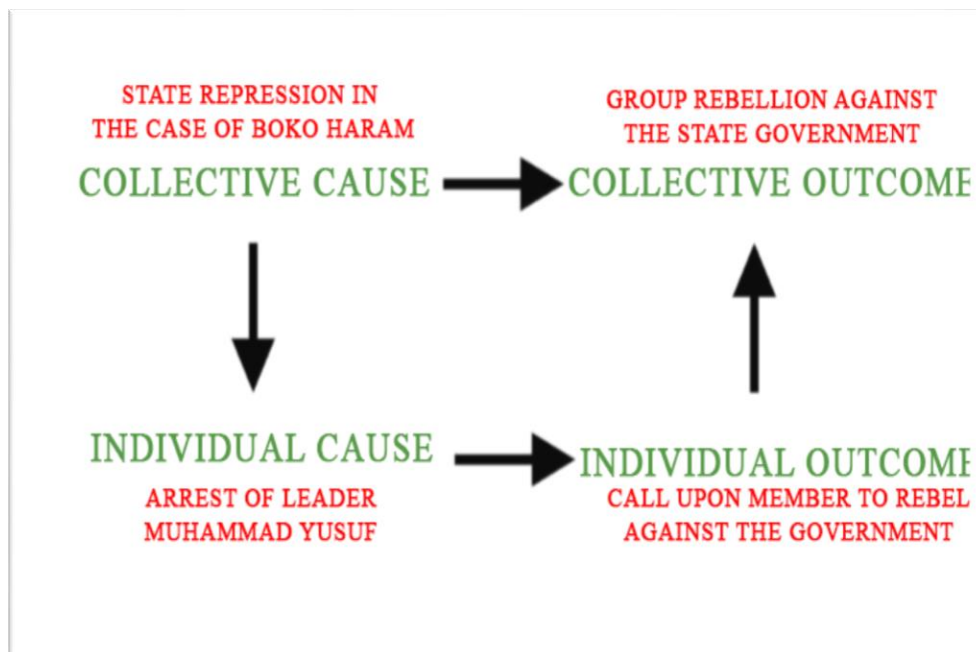


Fig 1.2: The diagram of collective causation and outcome based on Coleman (1986).

The above diagram illustrates how the collective cause can fuel individual cause, which can lead to an individual outcome and further lead to a collective outcome. For example, in the state where there is an apparent violation of human rights to some individuals, i.e. a group of people, this can trigger an individual to feel threatened by the state and can make the individual decide to participate in collection dissensus towards the state.

### **1.3 The Significance Of The Study**

The literature on violent conflict in Nigeria connected to religious revivalism, culture, socio-economic factors, has been studied and examined (Ohajifke D.C 1992, Augustine Ikelegbe 2006, Toyin Folala 1998, Claude E. Welch 1995, Nwabiro Ideyi 2008). With the hope of building a better nation, civil conflict is a deterrent for prosperity and development. However, there is a substantive gap in the literature connecting violent civil conflict to state repression and human rights abuse. Therefore, the primary purpose of this study is to examine and explain the relationship that is a concern with human rights and state repression as a precursor of violent civil conflict in Nigeria. The thesis focuses on different conflicts from different regions and different periods, i.e. the case of Biafra in 1967 and its return in 2015, the case of Mai Tatsine in 1980 and the rise of Boko Haram 2009.

Not disregarding other literature, this thesis aims to contribute to the already existing discussion of the role of civil conflict/war in the growth and development of Africa as a whole. This is significant in understanding the relationship between the Federal government and regional/local government in fueling violent conflict or curtailing it through different policies that they employ. The foundation of this thesis is to reanalyze the cause of conflict in Nigeria, and the power relation in the type of democracy in the country. Additionally, it tries to figure out a solution that will assist the state government in preventing the outburst of violent conflict.

Finally, with the increase in global participation due to the advancement of technology, this thesis will compare the forms of human rights abuses in which the country take for granted. It will understand the nature of government in exacerbating stability within a particular state. With this, it can be used as a tool to study other countries in West Africa, East Africa and other parts affected by violent conflict. This thesis does not only answer the research question but also reflects on the background of specific conflict for easy understanding of various aspects of the research.

#### **1.4 Research Question**

The purpose of this study is to identify the causal relations between State repression and Human rights abuse to civil conflict/war. Hence the primary research question is: What caused the civil war in Nigeria? Furthermore, this thesis will look into several related questions such as; to what extent is peace achievable in Nigeria and how Nigeria can achieve political stability. In addition, this thesis tends to look to analyze the existing conflict and tries to provide an alternative solution, to prevent such violent conflicts from occurring in the near future.

#### **1.5 Methodology And Data**

In this thesis, I choose to use a qualitative case study as to get an in-depth knowledge of the act of storytelling leads to identification in relations to the rise of violence. According to Levy<sup>5</sup>, a case study can be defined as “an attempt to understand and interpret a spatially and temporally bounded set of events” (Levy, 2008). Additionally, Zucker<sup>6</sup> states that it is a “systematic inquiry into an event or set of events which aims to describe and explain the phenomenon of interest” (Zucker, 2009). The unit of analysis in this thesis is the terror groups i.e. Boko Haram and the Biafra movement. The study will compare the amount of conflict within Nigeria under different regimes, from 2000 to 2015. There will be two levels of analysis, the federal government and the state (regional) government.

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<sup>5</sup> Levy, “Case Studies,” 2.

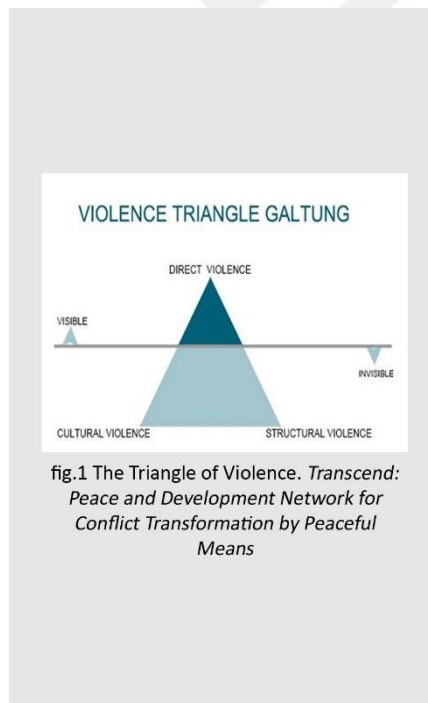
<sup>6</sup> Zucker, “How to Do Case Study Research.”

In the case of The Niger Delta, the thesis will study the amount of repression made by the federal government concerning the Biafra movement. According to the findings of process tracing in northern Nigeria, the northerners i.e. Hausa/Fulani dominated the federal government and did not allow the southerners, mostly Igbos, to participate at the federal level. The study will look into the data to confirm the hypothesis that human rights abuse and state repression is the primary cause of violent conflict within Nigeria. Furthermore, in the cases of abuse within the state and at the local government level, the study will try to compare cases from the western region of Nigeria, where education flourished, and the northeastern region (Boko Haram region), where there is a lot of state repression and abuse towards women and local minorities. The concept of human rights abuse and state repression can be measured by the degree of discrimination made by the state towards minorities, the degree of corruption, and limitation on media available within the particular region. Also, the degree of life lost due to violence, torture, denial of basic human needs, repression from the federal government and discrimination.

By discrimination the study means the treatment or consideration of, or making a distinction in favour of or against, a person or thing based on the group, class, or category to which that person or thing is perceived to belong to rather than on individual merit. This can be measured by the amount of participation of individual groups, and gender and class equality within the social, economic, civil, political and cultural levels of the state. For example, when less than 2 percent of women participate in the decision making of a country, or when only the children of the wealthy get employed to lucrative jobs in the federal level to mention a few; these types of discrimination eventually give rise to conflict in the country, especially in the north. The study will use data provided by Human rights watch, US state department reports, UN reports, Journals and statistics from Statista website.

## 1.6 Research Design and Conceptualization

This thesis will try to use the Galtung violence triangle to explain how direct and indirect violence and human rights abuse cause conflict and the study will subdivide human rights abuse and state repression into two dimensions, that is, visible and structural. The study will use a wide range of indicators to cover large forms of state repression and the degree of these indicators will determine the amount of state repression and human right abuse within the state; abuses such as discrimination, corruption, freedom, life, torture and denial of basic needs. The higher the value of the independent level, the higher the conflict level with the state. The relationship between the dependent variable (human rights abuse and state repression) is such that in a regime where there is less abuse by the government we expect to see less conflict. The figure 4 below shows the conceptualization of the thesis and how the study will conduct the research.



### CONCEPTUALIZATION

Independent Variable = Degree of Human right violation  
 Dependent Variable = Degree of Conflict within Nigeria

### HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION

# Structural Violence # Direct Violence

### INDICATORS

# Discrimination	# Life lost
# Corruption	# Torture
# Deprivation of Freedom	# Denial to Basic needs

# stands for the degree/amount of x

Fig 1.3: A Conceptualization of human rights abuse/state repression

The conceptualization above shows the dimensions and indicators of human right violation, and how it can lead to violent conflict in Nigeria. As aforementioned, this thesis will focus on indirect, and direct state repression in Nigeria. Below each dimension, there

are indicators which tell the reader what to look for when looking at the level of abuse by the state. The degree of institutionalized discrimination, corruption, freedom abuse towards minority groups is an indicator of the amount of structural violence, which will eventually lead to conflict. Also, the degree of torture, denial of fundamental rights, and even loss of lives will indicate the amount of direct violence going on in a state.

Structural violence can be simplified to social injustices, while direct violence can be simplified to the destruction of means of realization of Fundamental rights. While scholars focus only on direct human rights abuses in Nigeria, they overlook the other half of the source of conflict unless this is tackled and minimized, stability will not be achieved in Nigeria. The primary indicators of structural violation are discrimination, corruption, and absence of freedom. By discrimination, the study means unjust/unfair treatment of people within a particular state. Discrimination within the umpire (gender, tribal, political, religious), or within the implementation of laws within the state, is a red line to basic human rights and it is an indicator of structural violation, which will eventually lead to conflict.

Dependent Variable = Degree of Conflict within Nigeria

Here conflict is taken as a concept and violent conflict as a dimension. The indicators of conflict can be the amount of religious crisis such as Boko Haram, Tribal fights such as the Kaduna killings and the degree of societal disputes.

### **1.7 Thesis Outline**

Human rights Violation, state repression and conflict, has deep roots in the Nigerian state. There have been several kinds of literature trying to determine the cause of civil conflicts, different perspectives and causations has been linked to it, which includes tribalism, religious extremism, ethnicity, political and socio-economic factors. Most of these studies have shown how the causes as mentioned above and fuels civil conflicts in Nigeria, some provided meaningful solutions on how to curb and minimize conflict while

others do not. There are correlations between these problems (religion, tribalism, socio-economic, etc.) and civil conflicts. However, this thesis looks into a different cause of civil conflict; State repression and Human rights abuse are the essentials if not the leading cause of civil conflict in Nigeria. Using the Johan Galtung violence triangle to explain how state repression can also be direct or indirect. The thesis will provide an outlook on how Human rights abuses and state repression causes civil conflict. Hence in the introduction, this thesis provides primary argument on how conflict affects the lives of Nigerians, also how Human rights abuses and state repression exacerbates the situation. The introduction chapter conceptualizes Human rights into two dimensions; structural and direct violence with several indicators to identify and quantify the dimensions. Furthermore, it also provides the methodology in which the thesis will use to defend the theory and design, which the thesis will follow.

The thesis will be divided into five (5) chapters, which include; the introductory chapter; theory chapter, two case chapters, and the concluding chapter. The introductory chapter will consist of a statement of the problem, the significance of this study, primary research question, and literature review. The theory chapter will consist of the definition of concepts, anecdote, and conclusion. The third chapter will consist of the study of Boko Haram, background, growth and de-escalation. The fourth chapter will be the study of the IPOB movement and the role of government in the reoccurrence of the group. Conclusion chapter will include the summary, limitations, findings, and further research in this field. The next chapter will discuss the thesis, and how it applies in the case of Boko Haram in comparison to Biafra movement of 1967.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **THEORIES OF COMMUNAL VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, I will explain the application of state repression theory and how it leads to violent conflict in the case of Boko Haram and Biafra. There are several kinds of literature in regards to the cause of conflict in Nigeria. This thesis will try to use the already existing literature on Human rights and the state repression as the cause of violence. Internal war or civil wars have several causes; I cannot claim that state repression is the only cause of civil war or internal conflict. However, this thesis argues that state repression and Human rights abuses are the leading causes of civil war. The reader will notice that the study used a broad system of conceptualization so that the study can encompass the vast amount of causalities. In a country like Nigeria, where there is a large number of ethnicities, it will be difficult to correctly point out a cause of a civil war or internal conflict. Nevertheless, these conflicts create gap, instability and backwardness in the state. There are arguments about the consequences of internal warfare as a major factor in the wealth gap between world's richest and poorest nations (Collier et al. 2003). However, many scholars argue that, when the state manage the aftermath of the conflict/wars, there can emerge a stable state and institution. They claim that inter-state wars and wars of territorial conquest serve a critical role in enabling the development of robust and capable government institutions in Europe and in the cases of eastern Africa (e.g., Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson 2006; Niall Ferguson 2002; Charles Tilly 1975; Tilly 1992, Dan Slater 2005; Jeremy M. Weinstein 2005a). Therefore, the study will examine conceptual theory and try to find solutions after the study applies it to the cases of Boko Haram and Biafra, then the thesis will provide an alternative route to tackle such insurgencies and conflicts.

##### **2.1.1 State Repression**

State repression can be some form of coercive socio-political control used by political authorities against those within their territorial jurisdiction (Goldstein, 1978). Similarly,



when it violates the laws and international norms, it can be considered as human rights abuses. There are a wide variety of activities including direct or indirect forms. Indirect forms of state repression can include surveillance i.e. electronic or physical surveillance, as well as provocateurs, bribery and corruption. While direct repression can be “verbal and physical harassment, arrests, political banning (e.g. outlawing a party, type of action or belief), establishing curfews, acts of censorship (e.g. closing a newspaper), torture, disappearances, and mass killing”.<sup>7</sup> In order to maintain stability, states tend to employ the use of force on their citizens, in an autocratic or a military regime; we see states taking repressive measures to make their subjects comply with their rule. In these types of governments, it is clear that they do not have legitimacy within in the eyes of the citizens hence they apply coercive measures. Additionally, repression is applied when those who specifically enact these policies are either directly in power (i.e. coercive agents) or wield significant influence over those in power” (Davenport, 491).<sup>8</sup>

### **2.1.2 Conflict**

In political science, the word conflict can refer to several disagreements, tensions or disputes between one party and another. However, the word conflict is from Latin, which means ‘to clash or engage in a fight’; a confrontation between one or more parties aspiring towards incompatible or competitive means or ends. Conflict may be either manifest, recognizable through actions or behaviors, or latent, in which case it remains dormant for some time, as incompatibilities are unarticulated or are built into systems or such institutional arrangements as governments, corporations, or even civil society.<sup>9</sup> According to Muhammad S. (2014), there are conflicts based on ideas (religion, Ethnic, and ideologies) and conflicts based on interest (territorial, governmental, Economic). There are several forms of conflicts, which can lead to different wars, e.g. Hegemonic war, total war, limited war, Civil war. Ideas or interests can trigger these conflicts; in some cases, both interests and ideas can cause conflict. In a case where the conflict is

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<sup>7</sup> Davenport, “State Repression and the Tyrannical Peace,” vol. 7.

<sup>8</sup> Davenport, 491.

<sup>9</sup> Further readings and definitions “glossaryv2.pdf,” 22.

within a trajectory of a particular state, it can be classified as an internal conflict. However, in international relations conflicts can vary from each in regards to the amount of states involved and causalities. Internal conflict is one involving at least one state as a warring party, occurs within a state's boundaries and that directly causes at least 25 battle-related deaths per year, civilian and military.<sup>10</sup> When battle-related death toll is more than 1,000 people, it is classified as internal war or civil war.

Internal conflicts can differ in several ways, in the case where the citizens of a state haggle towards the administration settings or against colonial rulers, we can regard it to be revolutionary, anti-colonial, and post-colonial. Additionally, when the disagreement is based on particular interest, i.e. a group within the state is preventing other from achieving a particular interest, this can be regarded as political, socio-economic conflict. However, the reader should not confuse conflict caused by interest to that which is caused by ideas. Weak state structure, geographical conditions, history can also be factors that can trigger conflict within a state, when met with structural factors like state repression (government crackdown), external intervention (in the case of colonial legacies), regime change (military coup or election), discrimination in state policies (uncertainties).<sup>11</sup> In this thesis, the study is interested in the structural and direct state repression and human rights abuse, which deals with the violation of economic and civil rights of the citizens.

### **2.1.3 Human Rights**

It is generally agreed that human rights are universal rights that shape states behaviour towards its citizens. In other words, it tells states the limits of what they can and cannot do (obligations and abstention). Direct right (positive rights/ obligatory rights) includes

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<sup>10</sup> Thoms and Ron, "Do Human Rights Violations Cause Internal Conflict?," 3.

<sup>11</sup> According to the report by US State Department (2013), all the mentioned reason can cause conflict within a state. However, in this thesis I am concern with Human rights abuse and state reprssion which can be latent or direct. Thoms and Ron, 4"Yet while countries share similar underlying factors, only smaller number experience internal conflict..."

life, liberty, and security of the citizen, i.e. prohibition from torture, unwarranted arrests, detention or exile, fair trial in a court, freedom of movement, freedom of religion, freedom of assembly, freedom of opinion, and participation in one's country. The right to life is the core and inviolable by any means, it is the integrity of the person, this right should be protected even when other rights are absent.<sup>12</sup> Indirect rights (negative rights/abstention rights) includes economic, social and cultural rights; rights to social security, to work in equitable labour conditions, the right for standard adequate well-being, including owning clothing, shelter, education, and medicine. "In theory, human rights are inherent, universal and inalienable, meaning they are held by everyone by virtue of being human, and can neither be given up nor taken away."<sup>13</sup>

#### **2.1.4 Structural Violation Of Rights**

Any form of latent or unseen form of abuse of power by state or state personnel can be classified as a structural violation of the citizen's rights. In a case where the citizens are not aware of these rights, it is still a form of structural violation. Ignorance does not equal permission to violate rights of citizens. Structural violation is a form of "embedded social and political hierarchies—enacted most often by societies and their institutions—that impose conditions which place people at high risk for negative consequences, such as unemployment, malnutrition, mental illness, suicide, crime, disease, and ill health. The sources of structural violence may be difficult to identify, but its results are normally visible."<sup>14</sup> In a situation where rights are violated structurally, it compounds on the state, and the outburst always tends to escalate to violent conflict. According to Cheru (2002, p.204) "at the most fundamental level, the absence of justice is frequently the principal reason for the absence of peace. Ethnic discrimination, denial of fundamental rights, extreme economic inequality and other manifestations of injustice are forms of

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<sup>12</sup> the classification here varies a little bit from my classification of direct and indirect human rights. Thoms and Ron, 5.

<sup>13</sup> Thoms and Ron, 5.

<sup>14</sup> The concept of structural violence also hints at transactional relationships with other types of violence, such as domestic violence, sexual exploitation of children, and drug trafficking. These silent types of violence have a mutual effect on one another and often a disproportionate impact on marginalised populations. "glossaryv2.pdf," 74.

'structural' violence, [which] plants the seeds of physical violence and, in many cases, deadly conflict."

### **2.1.5 Discrimination**

This thesis defines discrimination as any act that shows favouritism towards a group of people over others. This definition may vary from others, however, according to Paul Brest in his explanation of antidiscrimination principle he suggests that to understand discrimination the reader should consider what non-discrimination means. By the "antidiscrimination principle" I mean the general principle disfavoring classifications and other practices that depend on the ethnic origin of the parties affected.<sup>15</sup> When there is a classification of citizens based on their ethnics, tribes, religion or class, this will in a long run give rise to latent discrimination. Every citizen should have equal rights to participate and abide by a given law.

Specific forms of defects in the process through which ethnic, tribal or class decision is made in favour of a specific group can be described or related to discrimination. Discrimination can be due to several factors as earlier stated the cause of conflict could be due to dispute on ideas or interest. Similarly, discrimination can be caused for specific reasons, "Proof of discriminatory motive is critical, although it can in some situations be inferred from the mere fact of differences in treatment." (Santarelli, R 2014) <sup>16</sup> However, the study argues that discrimination is usually not visible to the citizens of the state, because of the structure of the state. As the theory suggests when any form of structural

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<sup>15</sup> For further explanation, see Brest, "The Supreme Court, 1975 Term,". For Brest, d most simply, the antidiscrimination principle disfavours race-dependent decisions and conduct - at least when they selectively disadvantage the members of a minority group. By race- dependent, I mean decisions and conduct (hereafter, simply decisions) that would have been different but for the race of those benefited or disadvantaged by them. Race-dependent decisions may take several forms, including overt racial classifications on the face of statutes and statutes and covert decision by officials.

<sup>16</sup> Bagenstos,S. "'Rational Discrimination,' Accommodation, and the Politics of (Disability) Civil Rights," 834. "The employer simply treats some people less favorably than others because of their race, color, religion, sex, or national origin".

abuse accumulate, it becomes clear to the citizens and it might lead to a violent conflict if it is not tackled.

Discrimination can also be intentional or unintentional. According to Samuel R. Bagenstos (2003), “whatever the decision maker’s ultimate motivation for using a forbidden characteristic in this way to serve his animus, cater to the animus of others, employ a statistically effective proxy, or whatever else he engages in prohibited ‘disparate treatment’ or ‘intentional discrimination’. If he treats someone less well on the basis of that person's membership in a protected class”<sup>17</sup>. When the state supports a group of people due to their affiliation to specific class or groups (political party, religious background, economic status), to favour the person’s or group of person’s interests, it is classified to be a form of intentional discrimination. In this thesis, I will only focus on intentional discrimination, because it is the type of discrimination that can be quantified regarding the extent of the application by a state.

#### **2.1.6 Corruption**

Corruption, defined as the misuse of public power (office) for private benefit, is most likely to occur where public and private sectors meet. “Corruption tends to emerge when an organization or a public official has monopoly power over a good or service that generates rent, has the discretionary power to decide who will receive it, and is not accountable.” (Klitgaard 1988: 75) In other words, it occurs where public officials have direct responsibility for the provision of a public service or application of specific regulations (Rose-Ackerman 1997: 31). There are different forms of corruption, Institutional, administrative, economic corruption.

“Institutional corruption is manifest when there is a systemic and strategic influence which is legal, or even currently ethical, that undermines the institution’s effectiveness by diverting it from its purpose or weakening its ability to achieve its purpose, including, to the extent relevant to its purpose, weakening either the public’s trust in that

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<sup>17</sup> Bagenstos, 834.

institution or the institution's inherent trustworthiness". (Edmond J. 2017)<sup>18</sup> Similarly, administrative corruption is the abuse of public office by the state administration for personal or private use. Corruption affects state development by lowering economic growth and incentives for investment by private companies.

### **2.1.7 Direct Violation of Rights**

Direct repression and human rights abuses, can be seen in the daily lives of the citizens, in a democratic state have what is referred to as civil liberties restrictions. These involve state or state-affiliated limitations, such as arrests, banning, and curfews, being placed on expression, association, assembly, and beliefs (Davenport, 1995a,b, 1996, 2004; Hibbs, 1973). We have what is referred as personal integrity violations. These involve state or state-affiliated activities which target the integrity of the person (i.e. which directly threaten human life), such as torture and mass killing (Davenport & Armstrong, 2004; Harff, 2003; Krain, 1997; Poe & Tate, 1994; Poe, Tate & Keith, 1999).<sup>19</sup> Here the study argues that the indicators of direct violations include life lost, Deprivation of Freedom, Torture and denial of basic needs.

## **2.2 Literature Review**

### **2.2.1 Religious Affiliation Theory**

There are many scholars, who relate crisis in Nigeria to religion; scholars see Nigeria to be very religious and spiritual state. (Kukah, 1994; Falola, 1990; Kenny, 2006; International IDEA, 2000; Suberu, 2009). Even though many of the political tensions tend to relate back to religious backgrounds of the citizen, the study would like to argue that religion is a tool used by the repressed citizens to call for unity in order to fight the coercion by the state. The scholars give examples of, Kano metropolitan riot of October

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<sup>18</sup> FIX THIS!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Full text "Institutional Corruption" Defined Lawrence Lessig "Lessig+--+IC+defined.pdf," 1. Systemic and strategic influence: There are plenty of influences that weaken an institution's effectiveness or performance. Laziness, for example. But we are not interested in every source of inefficiency; Which is legal, or even currently ethical: The aim is to distinguish institutional corruption from other more familiar forms of corruption. This definition therefore excludes those more familiar forms...

<sup>19</sup> Davenport, "State Repression and the Tyrannical Peace," 487.

1982, the Ilorin riot of March 1986, the University of Ibadan crisis of May 1986, the national crisis over Nigeria's membership in the Organisation of the Islamic Conference in January/February 1986, the Kafanchan/Kaduna/Zaria/ Funtua religious riots of March 1987. Other crises include the Kaduna Polytechnic riot of March 1988, the acrimonious, nationwide debate on Sharia (Islamic law) at the Constituent Assembly in October/November 1988, the Bayero University crisis of 1989, the Bauchi/Katsina riots of March/April 1991, the Kano riot of October 1991. The Zangon-Kataf riot of May 1992, the Kano civil disturbance of December 1991 and the Jos crisis of April 1994. Similarly, between 1999 and 2008, 28 other conflicts were reported, the most prominent being the Shagamu conflict of July 1999 and the recurrent Jos crises of 2001, 2002, 2004 and 2008 (Omipidan 2009: 5-6; Akaeze 2009)<sup>20</sup>. Then, the Boko Haram crisis in 2009. These cases have a lot to do with religion, Islam to be precise however, the study argues that the crisis have a correlation with religion, but religion is just a tool they use to display dissatisfaction towards the state policies.

### **2.2.2 Autocratic Regime Theory**

There are some scholars, who argue that only autocratic regimes repress or coerce its citizens. Although, Davenport states that they could not differentiate types of autocracy (Davenport, 1995b; Harff, 2003; Hibbs, 1973; Krain, 1997; Mitchell & McCormick, 1988). By contrast, in governments where authorities have involved more individuals/organizations (e.g. single-party governments), the likelihood of coercive behaviour would be lower, for those in power can use alternative mechanisms of control to influence the population by 'channeling' them through established political institutions.<sup>21</sup>

Concerning another argument (coercive expertise), it is suggested that within political systems where the agents of repression (i.e. the military) directly wield power, there is a

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<sup>20</sup> "The-Boko-Haram-Uprising-and-Islamic-Revivalism-in-Nigeria-by-Prof-Adesoji.pdf," 97.

<sup>21</sup> Davenport, "State Repression and the Tyrannical Peace," 486.

higher likelihood that repressive behavior. Especially violent activity would be applied out of habit, familiarity, an impulse to meet specific organizational norms, and a desire to expand prestige in/control over the political system.<sup>22</sup> The systematic study of human rights violation/state repression has progressed a great deal over the last thirty-five years (Davenport, 2007). What is implied here is the belief that coercion is a policy authority will use unless they are provided with a viable alternative for sociopolitical control.<sup>23</sup>

Across time, space, context, operationalization, and methodological techniques, scholars consistently identify that democracy decreases repression (e.g. Hibbs, 1973; Davenport, 1996, 2004; Keith, 2002; Bueno de Mesquita et al., 2005). The reverse is the case in the case of Nigeria, even though the level of repression reduced in comparison to the military regime, the study's observation suggests that there are many elements of the military type of rule in Nigeria. Firstly, because we still have the past military rulers dictating how to govern the country, with the amount of military training the acquired, it is difficult for them to absorb the democratic system. Secondly, in the case of Boko Haram, where the military has been employed to mount checkpoints even before the uprising, this suggests the military mentality of the leaders and system of coercion, which the government still backs.

The role of the coercive agents influences the application of coercion because these actors are the most familiar with what is involved when proper behavior is used, and they are the ones that benefit the most from its application through enhanced resources, status, and fulfilment of organizational objectives (pursuing political order).

### **2.2.3 Failed State Theory**

Many scholars argue that, due to the amount of insecurity and the lack of control over the violent conflict in Nigeria, it can be classified as a failed state or failing state. However, the direct definition of a failed state is still contested among scholars Some

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<sup>22</sup> Davenport, vol. 4.

<sup>23</sup> Davenport, 490.



scholars and commentators argue that failed state is the opposite of a prosperous state, which is based on the western norms and classification of success. Nevertheless, prosperous states are said to have control over defined territories and populations, conduct diplomatic relations with other states, monopolize legitimate violence within their territories, and succeed in providing adequate social goods to their populations.<sup>24</sup> As the definition of a prosperous state, it can be identified that there are 4 essential elements that regards a state as successful.

1. Control over territory and monopoly of direct forces.
2. Ability to conduct relations with other international states (legitimacy in international society)
3. Provision of social welfare to the citizens
4. Legitimate authority to make decisions

Hence, when a country cannot provide the four elements above, it can be ranked among the failed or failing state. Nigeria is among the worst 20 states in the world, according to failed state index. However, this study argues that Nigeria cannot be classified as a failed state, simply because, these violent conflicts are on in minority parts of the country. The conflict in Nigeria is a security challenge that many African countries are facing; it occurs in the peripheral regions of the country. This thesis argues that states that have been affected with violent conflict can be related to the local state government's policies, trying to gain hegemonic power over the indigenes of the local states using religious scholars, militants, security agents and other coercive measures to achieve control over the local regions. In general, Nigeria cannot be classified as a failed state, because, it provides social welfare to its citizens, has a legitimate government to decide on behalf of the people, has international recognition and controls the vast majority of its territories. As earlier stated, the exact definition of a failed state is not determined, but

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<sup>24</sup> (Winter 1992-93) Helman and Ratner (2003). 1160.

we can say it has some symptoms of a failing state, which can be said to any other country around the world.









High Alert															
9		<a href="#">Afghanistan</a>	9.5	9.5	8.6	8.4	7.5	8.5	9.1	9.6	8.7	10.0	8.6	9.9	107.9
10		<a href="#">Haiti</a>	9.2	7.9	6.7	9.0	9.5	8.9	9.4	9.4	7.7	7.9	9.6	9.9	105.1
11		<a href="#">Iraq</a>	8.1	9.4	9.8	7.9	7.5	6.8	9.2	7.8	8.9	10.0	9.6	9.7	104.7
12		<a href="#">Guinea</a>	8.9	8.4	8.8	7.5	7.4	9.4	9.8	9.2	7.9	9.0	9.9	7.6	103.8
13		<a href="#">Nigeria</a>	9.1	7.7	9.4	7.4	8.8	7.7	8.8	9.4	9.1	9.7	9.9	6.5	103.5
14		<a href="#">Pakistan</a>	8.9	8.9	9.7	7.3	7.0	7.4	8.3	8.2	8.2	9.3	8.9	9.6	101.7
15		<a href="#">Burundi</a>	9.5	9.1	8.1	6.5	7.4	8.2	9.0	8.2	8.5	9.0	8.5	8.7	100.7
16		<a href="#">Zimbabwe</a>	8.6	8.7	7.5	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.9	8.5	8.4	7.8	9.8	7.7	100.5

Fig 2. 1: Nigerian ranking in failed states index (source: <http://fsi.fundforpeace.org>)

#### 2.2.4 Human Needs Theory

John Burton, Abraham Maslow and other ‘human needs theorist’<sup>25</sup> would argue that protracted conflict conflicts and violence is caused due to the insufficiency in the provision of basic human needs.<sup>26</sup> According to John Burton, the four classes of basic needs - an outcome of extensive dialogs in many parts of the world (Galtung, 1980a) - are survival needs (negation: death, mortality); well-being needs (negation: misery, morbidity); identity, meaning needs (negation: alienation); and freedom needs (negation: repression)<sup>27</sup>. Even though there is a correlation between these needs with violence, the thesis would argue that it could not be applied to Nigeria in general, because these conflicts emerge from specific regions of the country, generally northeastern region, and the Southeastern regions.

This thesis also argues that, states where these needs are not met, experience a high amount of violent conflict, in addition to other causalities. In the case of Biafra, basic needs can be said to be at its minimal, due to the type of regime in the country. However,

<sup>25</sup> Burton, *Conflict*.

<sup>26</sup> Read J. Galtung’s human need, human rights and the theory of development

<sup>27</sup> J. Galtung, “Cultural Violence,” 292.

in the case of Boko Haram, the regime is different, but the local government could not provide necessary needs to its indigenes in addition to repression by the local government. The level of poverty and illiteracy in the northeastern region is higher than any part of the country; this is due to a reduced administrative operation and poor governance. “The Northeast, the base of Boko Haram’s operations, has one of the largest concentrations of those Franz Fanon in his book of 1961 would call the Wretched of the Earth, many of whom are either unemployed or underemployed and therefore suffer from various forms of what Ted Gurr would call relative deprivation” .<sup>28</sup>

### **2.2.5 Economic Agitation Theory**

Nigeria is one of the highest oil producing countries in a world where energy depends on oil. It is the seventh largest oil producing country in the world. It supplies a fifth of United States oil imports. It is further becoming a significant supplier in the global liquefied natural gas. The critical link of oil to the international economy has made Nigerian oil to be more strategic. Oil and gas is the backbone of the nation’s revenues, economy and national survival. It accounts for about 40% of the Gross Domestic Product and 70% of government revenues. According to Lawal Y. (2004), the nation receipts consist of over 80% of federal expenditure in 2003. However, the oil-producing region lacks basic health care, good education and access to clean water. This gave rise to militant groups and in 2007, the Yar’ Adua administration create a ministry for the Niger Delta people in order to tackle the slow development in the region.

Due to militant vandalism and activities that can hinder oil production in Nigeria, the Nigerian budget share the revenue in favor of the oil-producing regions. According to the former CBN governor Sanusi Lamido Sanusi (2012) “revenue sharing formula that gave 13 percent derivation to the oil-producing states was introduced after the military relinquished power in 1999 among a series of measures aimed at redressing historical grievances among those living closest to the oil and quelling a conflict that was

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<sup>28</sup> Adibe, “Boko Haram,” vol. 9.

jeopardizing output.” He asserts that this formula has a direct causal link with violent conflict in the case of Boko Haram. The frustration-aggression hypothesis otherwise known as frustration-aggression displacement theory (Dollard et al. 1939) argues that frustration causes aggression, but when the source of the frustration cannot be challenged, the aggression is displaced onto an innocent target. However, this thesis argues that this does not fully explain the rise of violent conflict in Nigeria, recently, the Niger Delta agitation continues to emerge, if the 13 percent of the budget has a link with violence, there would not be another separatist call by the IPOB.

#### **2.2.6 Institutional Theory**

There are more than 500 different tribes in Nigeria, however three major ethnic groups (Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba) are at the center of the country’s politics. Some institutionalist scholars argue that state policies and institution play a significant role in aggravating or controlling ethnic violence or political mobilization. According to institutionalist scholars, political/ regime type, arrangements and institutional design determines the amount of ethnic reaction towards the state. (Hagre et al. 2001; Cederman, Gleditch, Buhaug 2003; Hechter 2000; Alptekin 2018). Additionally, Kymlicka, (1995); Coleman and Higgins (2000) argue that liberal multi-culturalism gives room for integration of ethnic groups, hence, suggesting less violence from ethnic minorities. Lijphart (1977); McGarry and O’leary (1994) argue that by allocating groups collective rights in power sharing within a state there is a good chance of preventing violent conflict in deeply divided societies (consociationalism) such as Nigeria.

Nonetheless, examining the civil conflict in Nigeria the aforementioned institutionalist theory rightfully claims that by correcting or adjusting the institutional structure in the state then there is will be lower violent conflict stemming from ethnic minorities. However, that is not entire the case in Nigeria, the IPOB movement are a part of the largest ethnic group (Igbo) in the country, adding to a special ministry created by the federal government to tackle issues arising from the indigenous people Biafra, the institution created a program that facilitates their integration with the state. On the

other hand, the Boko Haram group are also a part of the Hausa ethnic group and at the time the conflict began the President of Nigeria is actually from the Hausa ethnic group. Hence, the institutionalist theory though has a strong argument does not entirely explain the phenomenon in the civil war in Nigeria.

### 2.3 Conceptualization

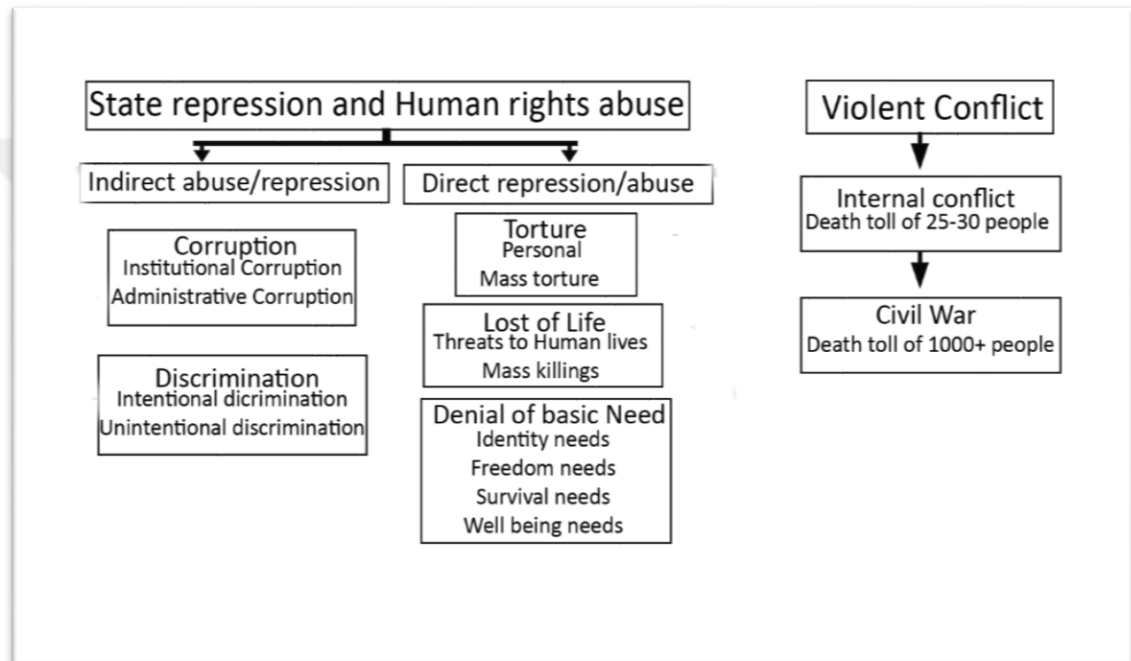


Fig 2.2: Theoretical argument and conceptualization of the key variables

Over the past decades, the cause of civil conflict in Nigeria has been related to several causes, However, this thesis argues that state repression and human rights abuse are the leading causes of civil conflict in Nigeria. Even though there are other triggers such as religion, politics, economic and cultural values, this study applies the theories from Christian Davenport (on State repression) and Oskar N. T. Thoms (human rights). They argue that 'state repression' and 'human rights abuse' cause civil conflict respectively. To understand why political leaders use repression, this thesis tries to show different dimensions and indicators to identify the levels of abuse by the leaders and how these indicators lead to civil conflict.

As designed, when political leaders try utilizing coercive action, against the citizens to achieve order and political gains, simultaneously, they also consider the availability of other alternatives well as the potential effectiveness of the repressive effort. It is expected when coercive measures are taken, no alternatives are available, and the probability of political success is high through coercive means. However, this thesis argues that, when the coerciveness exceeds a certain threshold, then citizen behavior changes towards the state and this leads to violent conflict. Instead of having good governance, preventing corruption, political stability and valuing the human rights, the state affected by conflict tends to pursue their political goals through a repressive measure. Through the above illustration, it can be understood that in order to achieve progress and stability, Nigeria needs to adjust its policies by applying a stricter measure to regional governors that employs the use of repression and abuse of human rights.

On the other hand, structural forms of abuse and repression that have been engrained in the country makes it difficult for the government to reform the political institution. In the northern parts of the country, strengthening education for both girls and boys (Islamic and western education) will assist the state to restore civil cooperation against militant groups and insurgency successfully. This is crucial for Nigeria because all the conflicts that occurred in the past had a lot to do with lack of education, due to discrimination towards educational standards in the Northern part. Moreover, the creation of new curriculum, inclusive constitutional amendments, and respect for human rights should be the essential agenda for Nigeria in order to achieve stability.

When the federal government decreases its assistance towards the local state governments, there is stagnant progress in tackling repression and human rights abuse. This is demonstrated by the decrease in freedom of expression, in states where it is a taboo to criticize the government's policies or to be against the governor. There have been many examples recently towards the arrest of people who criticize the government's policies, even though, the state government would argue that it is a

precautionary motive to prevent the spread of fake news and rumors. This thesis argues that this needs to be corrected by the federal government, or there will be more violent conflicts in the future.

The decline of checks and balances, as well as the rising amount of God-fatherism when it comes to employment, institutional abuse of power by public officers and fraudulent acts by local states and federal officers affects the level of growth and development of the nation. This gives rise to unemployment or underemployment when an unqualified person A gets a job of person B because the other person A has a Godfather in the ministry. On the other hand, the public officer 'A' takes part of the budget meant for the people into his/her private accommodation. This is a structural form of repression and it has effects in the long term towards the performance of the state. Then both the local state government and federal state government need to reprioritize their economic strategies in order to tackle this problem. I argue if it is not tackled, the social welfare, security, private and public sectors will subsequently affect the growth of the nation in the end and will give rise to a violent conflict. Because, this creates a gap between the masses and then it will lead to grievance towards the state, which the militant groups will exploit and use as a propaganda tool to achieve their ideological or interest gains.

In the context of internal war, such as Boko Haram or Biafra, the trigger usually is due to mass killing or mass torture by the state government (both federal and local government). Mass torture or killings have a direct impact towards the fueling internal conflicts/wars. The states that have been affected by violent conflicts have experienced direct repression by their local government or federal government. According to the Amnesty International, "the conflict between the military and the armed group Boko Haram continued, resulting in the deaths of thousands of civilians and over 2 million internally displaced people (IDPs) at the end of the year" (Amnesty International, 2015). Torture and other ill-treatment by the Nigerian police and security forces were widespread. Demolitions of informal settlements led to the forced eviction of thousands

of people<sup>29</sup>” (Amnesty International 2015/2016). Moreover, the same applies to the IPOB conflict where the military personnel kill group members in an extrajudicial manner.

Finally, the internal conflict in Nigeria illustrates several causes, but especially the manner in which the state treats its citizens, which affects productivity, growth and development of the country. The state government need to focus on reforms that strengthen the educational reforms, values for human rights, tackle corruption, and freedom of every citizen to be able to access basic needs. These dimensions have played a very significant role in advancing social interactions, advancing community initiatives as well as tightening the relationship between the state government and its civilians. In terms of regional state repression and human rights abuse, the federal government needs to have a extraordinary measure to tackle these issues, while regarding violent conflict the regional state government need to strengthen its reforms towards education and access to basic needs. However, in order to avoid another internal war/conflict, more security measures need to be put in place, and the implementation of DDR<sup>30</sup> (Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration) to the victims affected by the most be considered by the government.

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<sup>29</sup> Amnesty international Nigeria year 2015/2016.

<sup>30</sup> Definition “What Is DDR?” DDR stands for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.



### 2.3.1 Theoretical Framework

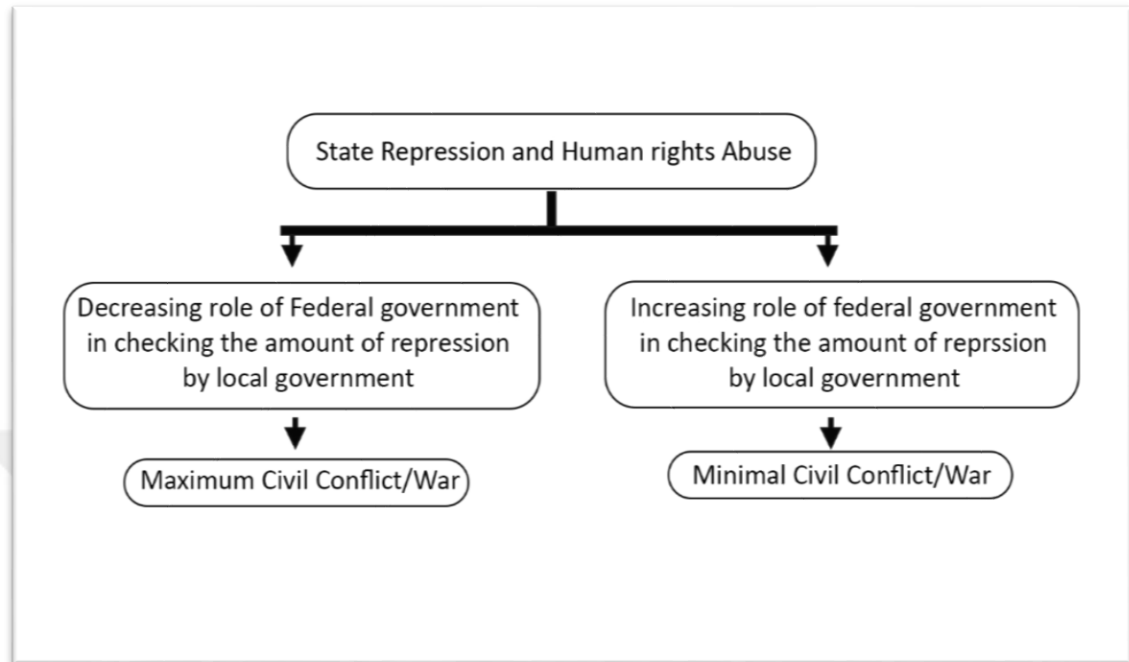


Fig 2.3: Theoretical Framework

Above is the theoretical framework, which shows how state repression and human rights abuse can affect civil conflict in Nigeria. The amount of federal government intervention in regional states affairs affects the level of civil conflict. Local government here is defined as the state regions where a particular governor rules over a certain number of indigenes within a territory. Nigeria has many ethnic groups; usually, the ethnics with the majority wins the gubernatorial seats within local states. This local government play a significant role in representation in the national assembly when some parts of the state are seen as ‘the other’, this cannot be determined by merely looking at the state rather efforts needs to be put in place to identify the forms of discriminations and abuses.

When there is structural abuse or direct abuse by the local state government, this will lead to anger by the minority and rebellion towards the state. The majority of the state’s ethnic group might not be able to experience this discrimination; however, it is apparent to the observer that there is a form of repression and human right abuse towards a particular part of the population. There are two main channels towards violent civil

conflict, first decreasing role of the federal government towards the local state government, which will lead to maximum civil conflict in the end. For example, the case of Boko Haram is a repercussion of minimum federal intervention in the Northeastern part of the country, where the state government has repressed minority groups, and by the time, they gather enough supporter and followers they rebelled against the government.

The second channel is for the federal government to increase intervention, which eventually will curtail the civil conflict into a minimal internal conflict, not all out war. For example, the state of Jos has experienced more violent conflict than Borno state; however, the federal government intervened in Jos, which assisted in defining policies that help in curtailing the civil conflict from escalating to a civil war like Boko Haram or Biafra.

#### **2.4 Conclusion**

The conflict of Biafra and Boko Haram has been linked with several factors, economic, political, ethnic; however, in this chapter, this thesis explains different dimensions where these cases have a causal link with human rights abuse and state repression. First, this thesis defines the concepts in relation to the causation of violent conflict. The thesis subdivided human rights and state repression into direct and indirect, where it measures the levels through the degree of corruption, denial of basic needs, deprivation of freedom, and loss of life. The thesis also look into several kinds of literature that argue towards the cause of civil conflicts and war, my argument differs a little bit with the available literature. This thesis argues that state repression and human rights abuse to a certain threshold can lead to violent conflict or even civil war. In the following chapter, the study will apply the state repression and human rights abuse theory to the case of Boko Haram and thesis will provide the background of the group and how the government would have avoided the war from occurring in the first place.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RISE OF BOKO HARAM**

The Boko Haram conflict is a reactionary movement towards the inability of the federal government of Nigeria to check the amount of state repression, and Human rights abuse by North-Eastern local governments. If this practice is not tackled and managed correctly, more religious sects and conflict will emerge in Nigeria. In this Chapter, this thesis will discuss the basic history of Boko Haram from an ethnographic overview of the conflict; I was present in Maiduguri during the emergence, escalation and de-escalation of the conflict. The thesis will discuss the correlation between the sect and the Wahhabi traditional doctrine of Islam, also how similar sects in the previous decades similarly portray their religious rhetoric. Notwithstanding the effects of massive state repression and human rights abuses by the local state government, enormous corruption and discrimination of basic human needs within the state. In this light, the thesis will provide a simple tool to use in tackling and preventing another sect or militant group within the state. Furthermore, the study tries to compare the group's actions to that of Mai-Tasine in 1980, which unveils similar characteristics like Boko Haram, and how the government's approach was not the best solution towards curtailing militant activities in Nigeria. The concept of peace-making and Peace-building will also be tackled on a lighter note to understand how the conflict needs to be resolved and prevented.

#### **3.1 Recent History**

Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati Wal-Jihad - meaning 'People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad', otherwise known as 'Boko Haram', which means 'western education is forbidden'. There have been several debates to the emergence of the sect, and many scholars pinned it to Muhammad Yusuf in 2002. However, this study argues that the sect did not just emerge in 2002, but it is a pattern in the Northern part of Nigeria, which has traces from Usman Dan Fodio (Islamic cleric who brought Jihadi Islam to the Northwestern part of Nigeria long before colonialization

by Britain). During Dan Fodio's time, he preached and taught Islam in the region, he was connected to the empire and highly respected by the king, however, when relations with the king turn sour, Dan Fodio goes against the empire, preached to attack the empire and he succeeded in toppling the king. Hence, some faction of Muslims from northern Nigeria when faced with repression or discrimination tend to react by attacking the state following the footsteps of Usman Dan Fodio. According to Abdullahi, "when he (Dan Fodio) noticed how large the Jama'a (his followers)' had become and how strong their demand was to break with the unbelievers and wage a Jihad, he began to urge them to arm themselves and say to them to equip oneself with arms is a Sunna".<sup>31</sup> He then waged war against the Rano Empire, and he succeeded in implementing a form of Islamic sultanate, which is present until date. In the 19th century, when the British kingdom introduced of Western form of education (known in the Hausa language as Boko), it seriously challenged the hegemonic position of Islamic tradition and has been seen as a threat, a symbol of the increasing impact of an alien, colonial, Christian, materialist and corrupt. Hence, the Northern clerics tend to be cautious about fully accepting the western education (Boko), and some of the clerics even go further to summon against it. Similarly, groups such as Mai-Tatsine and Boko Haram, approbate such teachings,<sup>32</sup> and they wage wars towards what they term as alien, non-Islamic cultures.

To understand the emergence of Boko Haram, this thesis reflects on both Dan Fodio and the Mai-tatsine crisis of 1980, which I firmly believe are the main foundations of Boko Haram. Firstly, the reader should know that, the indigenes of the communities where these conflicts occur create these nicknames (Mai Tatsine, Boko Haram, Yaran Malam and so on) to the sects and their clerics. For example, Mai-Tatsine was the nickname Muhammad Marwa, a Cameroonian religious teacher who died violently in Kano, Nigeria in 1980's.<sup>33</sup> Also, 'Yan Tatsine' (children of Tatsine) is the name given to his followers,

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<sup>31</sup> El-Masri, "The Life of Shehu Usuman Dan Fodio before The Jihād," 444. You can also read The development of Boko Haram by Roman Loimeier (2012).

<sup>32</sup> Loimeier, "Boko Haram," 139.

<sup>33</sup> Isichej, "The Maitatsine Risings in Nigeria 1980-85," 194.

which consist of a group of young northerners known as 'Yan-ci-rani (literally "those who 'eat'-i.e. 'use', 'exploit' the dry season").<sup>34</sup> The people from Cameroon, Niger, Chad come to Nigeria to trade during the dry season, some of these Yan-ci-ranis settle down in Nigeria when they find a suitable job or like Muhammad Marwa (Mai-Tatsine) use their 'Islamic Knowledge' to teach the Quran. After a while, the parents pay him to teach their children about Islam. He used the funds from his students to set his school and his mosque. By the time, his student toll raised and he gained followers, then the local government recognize him and use him to gain votes during elections. Mai Tastine supported the Kano state government, in return to some favors and funding, however, relationship with his political allies turned dreadful, some promises have not been kept, he was arrested and deported back to Cameroon, and he finally returned. In 1980, due to frustration, lack of economic opportunities and grievances from the oppressive regime, the Yan Tatsine decided to revolt after a clampdown by the state government. The main argument of Mai-Tatsine was that Muslims should use the Quran alone as the source of laws and doctrines, and avoid innovation and western dominance in the affairs of the states. Mai Tatsine died in 1982, his followers were dispersed, but his ideology lived with the people who see him as a teacher.

Similarly, I see the same pattern in the case of Boko Haram, Muhammad Yusuf preached the same type of doctrine to that of Yan Tatsine, but in order to sell to the now educated Muslims in the north, they include the use of Hadith (the traditions of Prophet Muhammad) in their doctrine and were strictly against western culture. Majority of the followers of Mai-Tatsine spread towards the Northeastern part of Nigeria, now Maiduguri, Yola, Yobe, Katsina, Bauchi according to interviewee no. 1 (2017), the father of Muhammad Yusuf was a follower of Mai-Tatsine and had a proactive role in the sect before he died. Due to the radical and militant character, along with its ultra-fundamentalist positions of Boko Haram movement, this study compares them with of Mai Tatsine. Hence, this sets the foundation for Muhammad Yusuf (the commonly

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<sup>34</sup> Hiskett, "The Maitatsine Riots in Kano, 1980," 213.

known founder of Boko Haram) to create the group. According to Isioma Madike (2011), the sect (Boko Haram) was created in 1995 and named as 'Sahaba'; it was initially led by Lawan Abubakar, who later left for further studies at the University of Medina in Saudi Arabia. Yusuf was said to have taken over the leadership after the departure of Abubakar and indoctrinated the sect with his teachings, which he claimed were based on purity. According to this version, when Yusuf assumed leadership of the sect, he embarked on intensive and hugely successful membership recruitment. The sect was said to have over 500,000 members before his demise. It was equally alleged that he taxed each member one Naira per day, meaning that he realized about 500,000 per day.<sup>35</sup>

Adding to the ideological confusion of the group, Muhammad Yusuf who was initially a Shia Muslim, and desperately wants to make an impact to the society. He (Muhammad Yusuf) later adopted the teaching by the 'Yan Izala' movement (Arabic: Jama'at Izalat al-bid'a Wa-iqamat al-Sunna, meaning "the community for the eradication Islamic innovations and the establishment of Sunna)<sup>36</sup> and denounced his Shia background to propagate the Salafi Islamic teaching. However, in 2002, Yusuf again denounces the Izala movement's doctrine; rather preferred to create his own doctrine. His path crossways with some renown and qualified Islamic scholars, between 2003 and 2004, bitter theological disputes characterized the confrontation between Late Sheikh Ja'far Mahmud Adam (Muhammad Yusuf's teacher) and Muhammad Yusuf. "...In his (Sheikh Ja'afar Mahmud Adam) sermons and pamphlets, he criticized Muhammad Yusuf's theological positions as "ignorant" and "stupid", and as dangerous for the political ambitions of Muslims in Nigeria".<sup>37</sup> Additionally, Sheikh Isa Ali Pantami, a renowned scholar also warns Yusuf towards the evil path he is embarking on. Despite the confrontation, Muhammad Yusuf went ahead, created his own doctrine; he got funding from politicians seeking votes. Hence, he built a school and a mosque where he preached his doctrines, which are against the Western Cultures, and dominance in the affairs of

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<sup>35</sup> Adibe, "Boko Haram," 50.

<sup>36</sup> Loimeier, "Boko Haram," 138–39.

<sup>37</sup> Loimeier, 149.

Muslims in Nigeria. Accordingly, Boko Haram was the name given to the group by the locals in Maiduguri, several names have been associated to the group, Yusuffiya, Taliban, Yan Malam, but Boko Haram is the one that prevailed. It is because it sums up the main idea of the doctrine of Muhammad Yusuf's teaching. Boko which is a Hausa word that means western education, and Haram is an Arabic word which means Forbidden; hence, Boko Haram means western education and culture is a sin and indeed evil. The group carried out its relations with the people smoothly, Muhammad Yusuf recruited many followers from university students, unemployed graduates and even some workers who denounced their works as Taghut (what Boko Haram calls anything outside Islamic culture). According to Adibe, "there are several conspiracy theories about Boko Haram. One, which is popular among commentators from the Southern part of the country, is that the sect is sponsored by key Northern politicians to make the country ungovernable".<sup>38</sup> It is clear that Muhammad Yusuf gets his sponsorship from affluent politicians in Borno state and other parts of Nigeria, where they use his influence on people to achieve political gains. However, it is not wise for the politicians to use him to make the country ungovernable. In 2007, President Umar Musa Yar'Adua's Administration jailed him (Muhammad Yusuf); Jerry Gana a prominent political figure in Nigeria bailed him out.<sup>39</sup> Additionally, the sect's boldness to operate openly within the Northeastern region without any interference by the government suggests that the sect has either political backing or they are too powerful for the state.

Nevertheless, his deviation from different Islamic sects shows what type of person he is when it comes to radicalization. Scholars like Roman Loimeier categorised his teaching to that of Muhammad ibn Abdulwahhab (Wahhabism), which he (Yusuf) also claims to be preaching. However, Muhammad Yusuf's did not attend any qualified Islamic school, and he is not certified to interpret the Quran. In addition, his interpretation of the Quran somewhat differs from mainstream Saudi-Wahhabi contemporary teachings, which

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<sup>38</sup> Adibe, "Boko Haram," 56.

<sup>39</sup> Ukpakareports.com, "Boko Haram," col. August 2009.

allows the interaction between the western education system to that of Islamic teaching. Wahhabi Salafism doctrine is a religious practice, where only the Quran, Sunnah and the interpretation of the Salafi (the Sahaba of the Prophet SAW) are used to interpret religious practices. This doctrine was founded by Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab in the 18th century and was adopted by the Saudi Royal Family to get hold of the people of Arabia. This intermarriage between the house of Saud and Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab was based on two principles, "to pledge allegiance to Ibn Saud if their campaign for God's unity Triumphed. Second, that the Sheikh approves of Ibn Saud's taxation on Diriyya's harvest" (D. Commins 2009, p. 19). The Sheikh agreed on the first one but disagreed on the latter, with his idea of Salafi teaching they both agreed to work hand in hand to achieve their goals. Therefore, it became the religious doctrine of Saudi Arabia even after the death of the Sheikh, and the doctrine triumphed through the spread of religion during the pilgrimage to Mecca. Also, in the 1960's, during the reign of King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, he promoted these teachings across the Arab world and African regions in order not to allow the Shia doctrines to spread. The Wahhabi teachings, which sees the Shiites as wrongdoers, and with several teachings that part ways with other Islamic Salafi views. Similarly, Muhammad Yusuf preached against western domination in the northern part of Nigeria which is mostly Muslim dominated, he gave fatwas and admonish his followers to avoid what he terms as Taghut (anything form of western-oriented practices). Nevertheless, that was not the cause of the escalation of the conflict, because they did not pick any arms during this period of Fatwa against Western cultures. Above the thesis gave an example of how the Dan Fodio gave fatwa against the Rano kingdom when faced with repression and abuse by the empire. Similarly, Mai Tatsine and Yan Tatsine rebelled in 1980's when promises made to Muhammad Marwa and due to grievances and repression. In 2007, the Yar Adu'a administration set a 7-point agenda to fight against crimes and thuggery in Nigeria. Hence, the Borno state government (a local government in the Northeastern part of Nigeria) used it as a tool to repress any opposition within the state. The massive repression by the state's governor towards the indigenes of the state is the primary precursor of the Boko Haram conflict. By state



repression, I mean "the actual or threatened use of physical sanctions against an individual or organization, within the territorial jurisdiction of the state, for imposing a cost on the target as well as deterring specific activities and/or beliefs perceived to be challenging to government personnel, practices or institutions (Robert J. Goldstein 1978, p. 27)". According to Christian Davenport (1991, pg. 684) "as the number of conflict events directed against the state increase, so do the repressive efforts of the regime to control this behavior". When there is a rise in repression within a state, it tends to invite more conflict among the citizens of that particular state. Adding insult to injury, the local government of Borno does not provide enough basic need to its citizens. John W. Galtung states, "I see violence as avoidable insults to basic human needs, and more generally to life, lowering the real level of needs satisfaction below what is potentially possible. Threats of violence are also violence" (Cultural Violence 1990, pg. 292). The local government's disregard for basic human needs, adding to the practice of repression, discrimination to achieve its political gains wanted to use Yusuf's followers to win the election and maintain stability within the state, in return for political amnesty and authority to Yusuf and his followers.

The origins of the conflict banks on the relationship between the sect and the Borno state government during the tenure of Governor Ali Modu Sheriff. The ANPP led government wanted to achieve election victory, he (Ali Modu Sheriff) uses a tactic of using thugs to intimidate the populace to vote for his interests during elections period. "My personal experience was when I was a student in the University of Maiduguri, I was playing in a football team called Chelsea in the Hausari ward (district), during the campaign the governor shared 500 Naira to all the players who attended his rally at the Ramat shopping complex"(interviewee no.1, 2017). These thugs have no other job but to create fear in the hearts of the population, the thesis argues that the governor used them to achieve success and when they got out of hand, he tried to curtail them using the mobile police (known as Operation Flush). It was during the operations by the mobile police that the sect became violent and tried to haggle with the patriarchal laws imposed

by the then local government. The people of Borno state are known to be peace loving, the state's motto is 'home of peace', due to their historical compliance with the rule of law. The emergence of Boko Haram is dated to 2002; it is no coincidence that the group leader gained support from the elites of the then ANPP, to recruit members to his sect to support their political ambition. In 2003, there was an election, which Ali Modu Sherriff emerged victorious over Late Mala Kachallah of the AC political party (Action Congress) and Kashim Imam of the PDP (People's Democratic Party). According to Alonge (2012) "...in the violent politicking that has come to define Nigeria's brand of democracy, his [Yusuf's] sect, given its numbers, was well funded to arm itself in pursuance of election victory for the ANPP. Not until 2008, (the last tenure of Ali Modu Sherriff), the state decided to bring the mobile police to control the thugs and their activities because the state government is losing the support from the thugs. The thugs who later transmogrified to become Boko Haram members haggled with the presences of the mobile police on the streets. In the 2011 elections, with Boko Haram involved in a different mission under a new ideology of Abubakar Shekau, the erstwhile deputy to Mohammed Yusuf, the ANPP lost the Borno South Senatorial District election to the PDP for the first time since the start of the new democratic era in 1999. The group then supported Ali Ndume against the then Borno governor Ali Modu Sheriff points to the possibility of a splinter in the group. Some members of the group wanted to punish the ANPP for withdrawing funding hence the new support for the PDP through Ndume who was a former ANPP stalwart and House of Representative member (2003-2011) under their platform.<sup>40</sup>

It is clear that the state government brought the mobile police, just because they realized that they do not have much support from the thugs. Thus, when the governor Sherrif felt threatened by thugs, he used the other route, i.e. using police force to make the people comply with his terms. Nevertheless, it did not go so well, when the members of the sect clashed with the mobile police, which left 19 members injured. Yusuf wrote an open

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<sup>40</sup> Alonge (2012) "Boko Haram," 52

letter to the presidency, the letter was read on state television. Following the letter, which content included threats to the stability and peace within Nigeria, the federal government order for the arrest of Yusuf, he refused to comply with the police, instead gave a fatwa (Islamic ruling) to his followers to attack every police checkpoints, governmental buildings and school within Borno state. Hence, the beginning of the violent conflict in 2009. Following an intense gun battle, the military arrested Mohammed Yusuf, and then he was handed over to the police for further investigation. He died while he was in police custody, according to the police report he tried to escape. The police, however, displayed the gunned body of Yusuf publically and declared Boko Haram dead, and illegal. Yusuf's schools and mosques were demolished. However, his evil doctrine did not die with Yusuf, and the group's leadership falls into the hands of Abubakar Shekau. In what was apparently a retaliation for the extrajudicial killing of the group's "leader, the group carried out its first terrorist attack in Borno in January 2010 at Dala Alenderi Ward in Maiduguri metropolis which resulted in the death of four people" (Vanguard, online, December 10, 2011). In January 2012, Abubakar Shekau, a former deputy to Yusuf, who was thought to have died in the government clampdown of 2009, appeared in a video posted on Youtube.com. According to Reuters' Joe Brock (2012), Shekau took control of the group after Yusuf's death in 2009.<sup>41</sup> Due to the extrajudicial killings of the members of the sect by the state government, children shot on video, the masses felt sympathy to the sect (it should be noted that the people of Borno did not experience such killings for centuries). In some point, the civilians of Borno supported the members and even hid some of them from the police and the military authorities. After the massive sympathy and support from the people of Borno and Maiduguri specifically, on July 26, 2009, the sect members launched a reprisal attack on the police in Bauchi, and spread their violence to other States in the North, - Borno, Yobe, Yola, Kano, Katsina and Sokoto. The Map below illustrates regions that have been affected by the Boko Haram violent conflict from 2009 to 2015.

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<sup>41</sup> Adibe, 51.

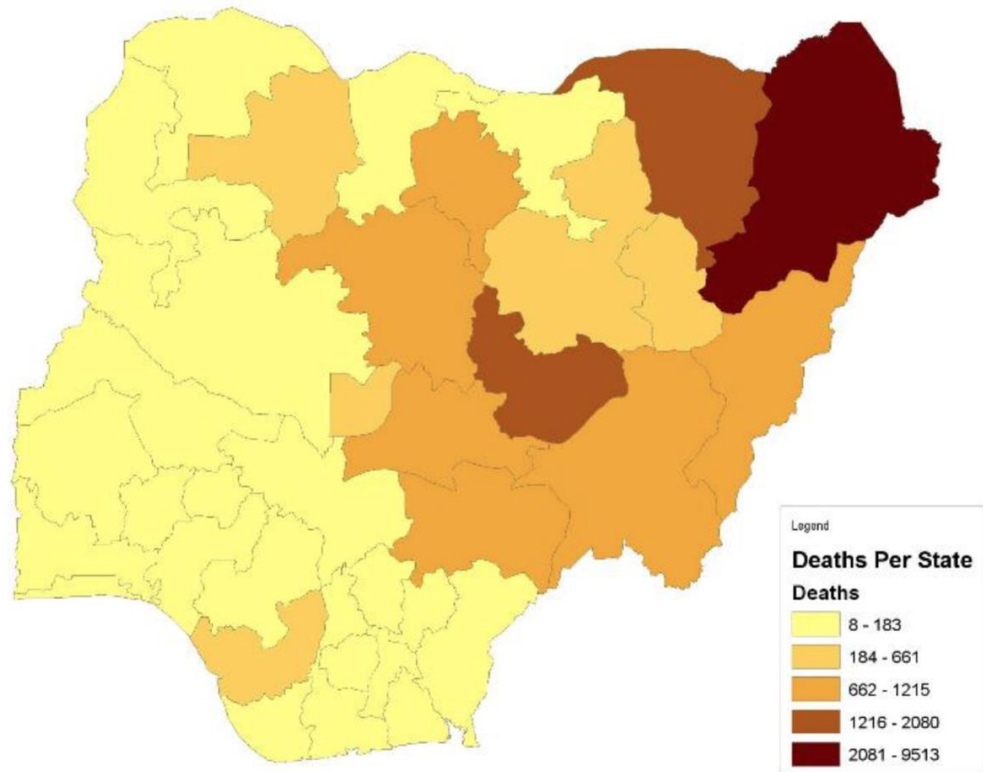


Fig 3.1: Lewis and Kew, (2015). Nigeria's hopeful election. *Journal of Democracy*, 26(3), 94-109.<sup>42</sup>

Boko Haram has repeatedly attacked schools, churches, mosques and markets, but state institutions such as police stations and military facilities have remained primary targets. In a similar pattern with that of Mai Tatsine in 1980, the Nigerian federal government sent down Army to curtail the insurgency. However, the army was ill-prepared and poorly educated regarding the local language of the people in of Borno state. Therefore, when they said 'Hands up', the people did not understand and did not raise their hands. They shot at innocent civilians. The military tends to act according to the moment, for example, every time there was an attack against the military, they tend to act in revenge, i.e. they will go to the neighborhood where the attack took to burn it down, kill the youths of that neighborhood.

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<sup>42</sup> Lewis, P., & Kew, D. (2015)

In Nigeria, there is a heavy burden of institutionalized sectional memories of hurt, injustice, distrust and even a disguised longing for vengeance.<sup>43</sup> These extrajudicial killings by the military served as recruiting propaganda for the terror group; the group tell the youths that the president of Nigeria (Goodluck Jonathan) who happens to be a Christian, to kill the Muslims in the north sends the army. Hence, civilians join the group not because they support the ideology of the group but because of what they perceive as repression by the state. According to Fulan Nasrullah, a Boko Haram insider, the military came with ignorance, they perceived that everybody was Muslim and if you are a Muslim, you are supporting Boko Haram. So, the army treated civilians the same as they treated Boko Haram. In the diagram below the reader will see the increase in human rights abuse by the Nigerian government and how the military tortured innocent civilians, killed and deprived the people of Borno certain freedom of movement, due to curfew order placed in the state. Majority of the youth within the state joined the group because of the massive repression by the state.

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<sup>43</sup> Adibe, 58.

Table 3.1.

Year	Total Received	Admissible	Inadmissible	Concluded	Pending
1996	41	29	12	28	1
1997	114	85	29	73	12
1998	221	133	88	89	44
1999	343	135	208	100	35
2000	559	286	273	95	191
2001	557	377	180	143	234
2002	421	356	65	114	242
2003	432	388	44	122	266
2004	287	271	16	92	179
2005	551	476	75	319	157
2006	514	416	98	258	158
2007	574	235	31	151	84
2008	1300	1423	185	1133	290
2009	1061	1040	21	750	290
2010	6967	6700	267	4000	2700
2011	19210	18060	1150	15403	2657
2012	22542	21373	3187	18188	3185
2013	26,067	24,198	1869	19,806	4392
Total	81761	75981	5780	60864	15117

\*The blue colored area shows the increase in human rights reporting during the Boko Haram conflict as shown in the figure below.

Source: Onimisi, T. (2018). Trend of Human Right Abuse in Nigeria: 1996-2013..<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Onimisi, T. (2018).

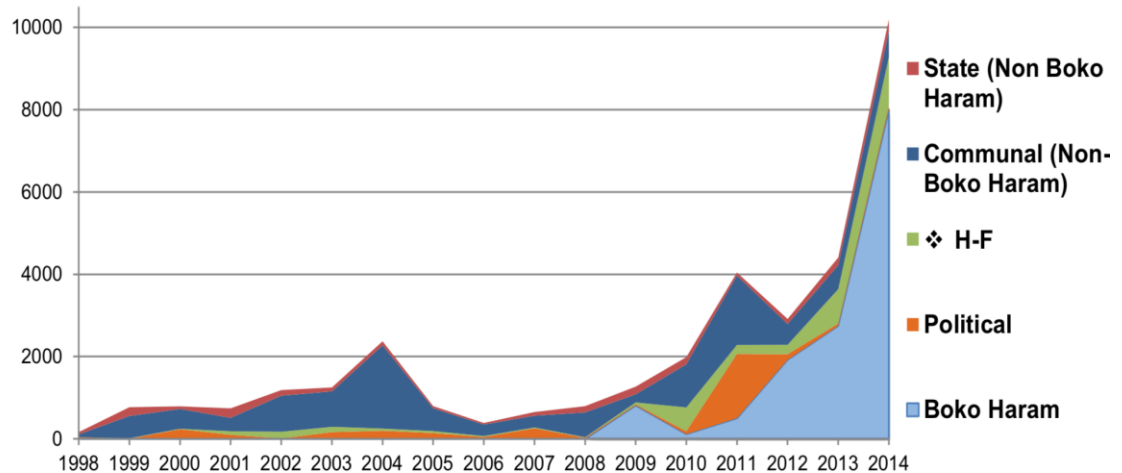


Figure 3.2: Lewis, P., & Kew, D. (2015). Nigeria's hopeful election. *Journal of Democracy*, 26(3), 94-109.<sup>45</sup>

As illustrated in the figure and table above, the Boko Haram situation was caused due to open application of force by the government, which can be linked to bad governance and lack of interference by the federal government. Prior to the increase human rights abuse, there was no reports of Boko Haram crisis or attack across Nigeria. However, as the repression increased, so also increased the civil unrest in the country. The Northern part of the country has been affected by the civil unrest, hence it is also the most backward part of the country.

Some analysts have also attributed the relative poverty of the North to 'bad governance' by the state Governors in the Northeastern region, who are accused of embezzling or misappropriating the funds that should have been channeled to the development of their States.<sup>46</sup> The amount of human rights abuse by the local government in northern Nigeria shows the relation between civil conflicts in the region compared to other parts of Nigeria. The figure 3.3 below shows how the percentage of fatalities according to

<sup>45</sup> Lewis, P., & Kew, D. (2015)

<sup>46</sup> Adibe, 55.

regions from 2009 to 2014. As illustrated in figure 3.1 above the Northern parts of Nigeria is mostly affected by the civil unrest and also it is the region with the most recorded cases of state repression.

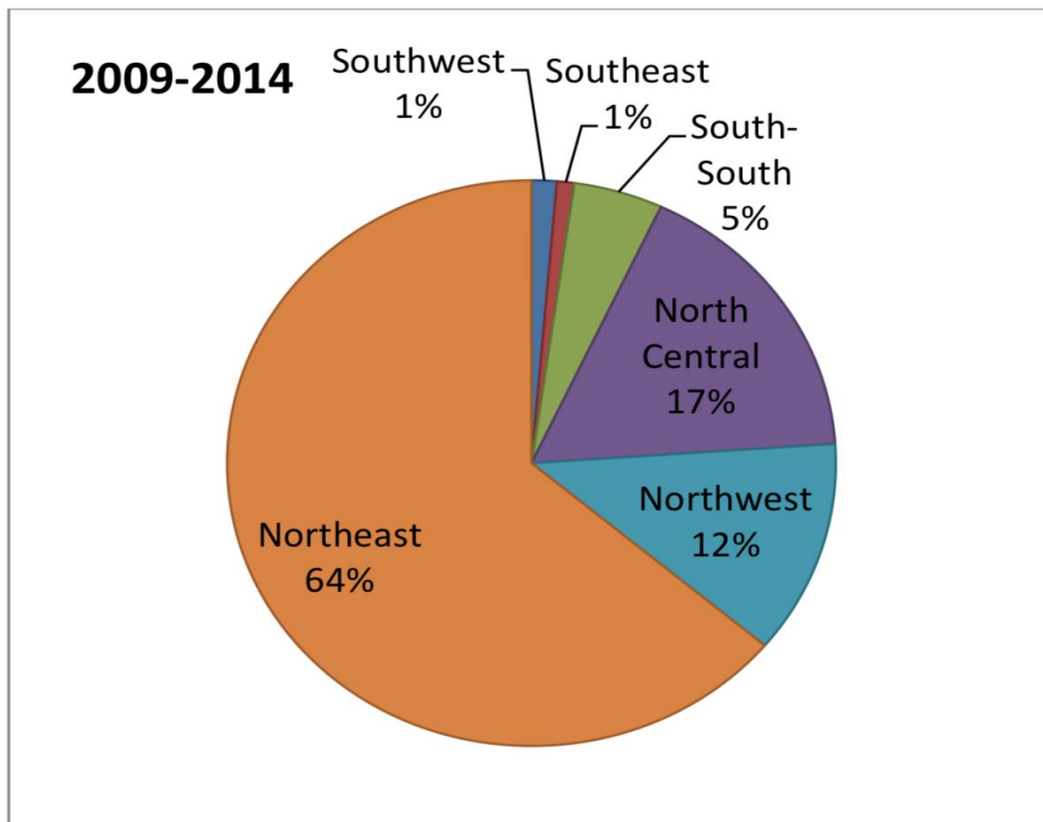


Figure 3.3: Lewis, P., & Kew, D. (2015). Nigeria's hopeful election. *Journal of Democracy*, 26(3), 94-109.<sup>47</sup>

Since 2010, people in north-eastern Nigeria have lived in constant fear of being attacked either by the state or by Boko Haram. “The insurgency and violence have resulted in more than 32,000 deaths and over two million people displaced”.<sup>48</sup> Scholars believe that civil war occurs as a result of rebellion. Rebellion is somewhat analogous to three other

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<sup>47</sup> Lewis, P., & Kew, D. (2015)

<sup>48</sup> Aljazeera.com the rise of Boko Haram.



types of organization: protest movements, armies, and organized crime. In the popular and political analysis, the most common analogue to rebellion is a protest.<sup>49</sup> Individuals might participate in mobilizations for numerous reasons ranging from social pressure to individual material interests, yet the overall activity must have an explicit political mission.

The Boko Haram conflict started as a protest against repression by the mobile police in northeastern Nigeria. However, it escalated to become an armed conflict which can be categorized as a civil war. According to N. Sambanis (2004), "Any armed conflict that involves (a) military action internal to the metropole, (b) the active participation of the national government, and (c) effective resistance by both sides".<sup>50</sup> (Gleditsch, K.2007) Participants in a rebellion must be prepared to fight over a prolonged period against organized force, which aims to kill them. This thesis is concerned only with those rebellions, which are sufficiently large and sustained, and come into sufficient conflict with government forces, to generate at least 1,000 battle-related deaths.

### **3.1 Conclusion**

To conclude, even though Boko Haram had a distorted ideology from the onset, the Nigerian federal government played a crucial role in the rise of the group, just because it did not regulate the amount of repression by the local/regional government when it comes to human rights abuses. Additionally, in what is supposed to be an intervention by the federal government, the federal government sent certain military personnel to deal the case. This thesis argues that sending an army should be the last resort by the federal government, negotiations, conflict reconciliation and management should be used to curtail the rise of such group. The Boko Haram conflict started as a protest against the Borno state government in the north; however, it became a form of rebellion when a large number of the northern youth joined the group, in retaliation to repression

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<sup>49</sup> Collier, P. and Hoeffler, A., 2000, Greed and Grievance in Civil War

<sup>50</sup> Sambanis, "What Is Civil War?," 817.

and human right abuses. The study concluded that the violent conflict by Boko Haram is and should be considered as a civil war, simply because the death toll surpassed the threshold of 1000 battle-related deaths. The Nigerian federal government had experience with similar groups like Mai Tatsine in 1980, instead of reconciling with and managing the grievances of the group, the federal government sent an Army to crush the group. However, it was not a success story because the rebels were not killed somewhat dispersed into the society. Furthermore, the federal government did the same with Boko Haram, instead of listening to the grievances of the group; the army worsens the situation and Boko Haram members dispersed among the society. The study argues that if the federal government increase its role in the affairs of the state government, by policing the amount of repression and human abuses made by the local state government, it will prevent or minimize the rise of groups like Boko Haram and the Biafra movement. Additionally, the remnants of the group should be called for negotiations, I will explain further in chapter five. There are similarities, in how the federal government treats rebel groups protesting against their regional government's repression and human right abuses in the case of Boko Haram and the Biafra movement. In the next chapter, I will discuss how the decreased role of the federal government in the affairs of the local government of the southern part of Nigeria gave rise to the Biafra movement and eventually led to a civil war.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE RISE OF BIAFRA AND THE IPOB MOVEMENT

#### 4.1. Introduction

The Biafran conflict began in 1966 and ended in 1970 with casualties of more than a million people. The oil-rich south-eastern region of Nigeria called for secession from the country after the Igbos felt neglected by the then leaders of the country. The government has been accused of failing to invest in the region before the war and up to date, it suffers from some form of lack of interference from the federal government hindering development in the region. Some see it as punishment to the south-western people for their support of secession from Nigeria. Meanwhile, this thesis argues that it is the federal government's failure to intervene in regional politics that encourages repression by the local officials and lead to rebellion and violent conflicts.

Following a bloody military coup in 1966 led by Major-General Aguiyi Ironsi and some Igbo military personnel from the South Eastern part of Nigeria, several northern dignitaries were killed including Prime Minister Tafawa Balewa. Commander Ironsi abolished the federation and instituted a unitary government. The killing of Northern leaders led to anger and frustration by the northern people, calling for revenge as their leaders were killed during the coup. The thirst for revenge from the northern people led to another military coup a few months later, Major-General Aguiyi Ironsi was killed and a junior officer from the North lieutenant Colonel Yakubu Gowon assumed leadership of the country. Additionally, in a rehearsal attacks to the killing of northern leaders during the first coup, several Igbos were killed in Northern Nigeria (some estimated the number to be up to 30, 000 people), which led to the exodus of about 900,000 Igbo people from the North back to the South Eastern part. In retaliation, some Northerners were also massacred in the southwest.

Throughout 1966 and into 1967, Yakubu Gowon's government failed to curb the insurgencies as some Southeastern leaders call for secession from Nigeria under the pretext of security and safety of Igbo people. Meanwhile, Igbo officers in from the SouthEastern region refused to recognize Yakubu Gowon as the leader of the country. In an effort to prevent chaos, Gowon issued a decree to abandon regional government and adopt a federal system with 12 states solution. Several leaders from all parts of Nigeria agreed to the new proposed system. However, the Southeastern officers led by lieutenant colonel Chukwuemeka Odemegwu Ojukwu declined the proposal, arguing that the northern leaders want to retain revenues generated from the Southeastern region.

On May 30, 1967, Ojukwu declared an independent republic called Biafra.<sup>51</sup> "He cited as the principal cause for this action the Nigerian government's inability to protect the lives of easterners and suggested its culpability in genocide, depicting secession as a measure taken reluctantly after all efforts to safeguard the Igbo people in other regions had failed" (Ahmed Salkida and Johnson C. Edwin, 2015).



Figure 4.1. [Globalsecurity.org /military/world/war/biafra.htm](http://Globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/biafra.htm)

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<sup>51</sup> "Biafra War," 13.

The federal government attempted to find a solution using police measures; however, that failed. Hence, it mobilized some 10,000 troops and recruited thousands of others to battle rebellion. Ojukwu's forces made some initial gains into Nigerian territories, but Nigeria's superior military strength gradually reduced Biafran territories. By the end of 1967, federal government forces had regained the Midwestern region and secured the Delta region cutting Biafra from direct access to the sea. Biafra lost its oil fields, its main source of revenue and without the funds to import food, an estimated 1 million of its civilians died because of severe malnutrition and hunger.

Biafran propaganda on the threat of genocide to the Igbo people was effective abroad and winning sympathy from secessionist movements. Medical supplies and food were scarce in Biafra. Private, Religious groups and international relief organizations manage to send humanitarian aid to the region. France played a crucial role in providing arms and munition to the Biafran government through its West African colonies. Some countries such as Tanzania, Zambia, Gabon and Ivory Coast recognized Biafran independence. Also, some British and Portuguese colonies such as South Africa and South Rhodesia extended their diplomatic support to the Biafran government. Hence the Soviet Union became a key provider of weapons to the Nigerian government.

Following several casualties, in October 1969, Ojukwu appealed to the United Nations to mediate a cease-fire as a prelude to peace negotiations. However, the Nigerian government insisted on Biafra to surrender. On January 11, 1970, Nigerian forces with some 120,000 troops captured the provincial capital of Owerri, one of the last Biafran strongholds, and Ojukwu was forced to flee to the Ivory Coast. The officer in charge of Biafra, Chief of staff Philip Effiong called for an immediate unconditional cease-fire and submitted to the Nigerian authorities in Lagos, four days later, Biafra surrendered to Nigeria.

It is estimated that some 1 million people died from hostilities, disease and starvation during the civil war. Three million Igbos were internally displaced due to a shortage of

food, medicine, clothing and housing. The economy of the region was dismantled, cities were in ruins, schools, transportation facilities, hospitals and other infrastructures were destroyed. Foreign organizations offered to assist the people in need, but the Nigeria government insisted on directing the assistance and barred some agencies from supplying aid to the Biafran people.

Some agencies accused the federal government of genocide, however, the Nigerian government allowed a team of international observers to scout the region. Subsequently, the experts testified that they found no evidence of genocide; however, there was considerable evidence of famine and death as a result of the war. Additionally, the federal government ensured that Igbo civilians would not be treated as enemies, but as citizens of unified Nigeria. A program was launched to reintegrate the Biafran rebels into the Nigerian societies. The federal government re-enlisted some of the Biafran generals into the Nigerian Army and no trials were made. Ojukwu who was in exile was made the scapegoat; however, the government later pardoned him. Igbo leaders were reinstated, the federal government granted funds to cover operating expenses, and social service and public utilities were slowly reinstated.

It is more than 50 years since the Nigerian civil war<sup>52</sup> or the Biafra war, however, due to state repression and human rights abuses by the Nigerian federal government, some groups led by Nnamdi Kanu are calling for the independence of the Republic of Biafra once again. "Groups calling for the peaceful secession of the southeast from Nigeria include the Indigenous People of Biafra and the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra. Eleven pro-Biafra activists were placed in detention in 2014 on charges of alleged treason, which is a capital offence." (Ahmed Salkida, 2015)

Hundreds of Biafran agitators were arrested including the leader of the movement Nnamdi Kanu. Mr Kanu, a British Nigerian citizen was born in the South Eastern region

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<sup>52</sup> [www.history.com](http://www.history.com) the Civil War in Nigeria - Jul 06, 1967

of Nigeria now known as Abia state. After his primary and secondary education, he left Nigeria for the UK to further his education. He advocated for better leadership in Nigeria during the Goodluck Jonathan Administration and later re-launched the Biafra separatist movement (IPOB).<sup>53</sup> As the leader of the movement, he initiated a radio station (Biafra 24) where he advocated for secession from Nigeria. Kanu gained followers instantly, as several Igbo people who are still aggrieved by the outcome of the Biafra war, adding insult to injury, the federal government still did not provide the necessary infrastructure to the region. On 5th September 2015, Kanu called upon the Igbo world league to take up arms against the federal government of Nigeria and fight for separation<sup>54</sup>. Nnamdi Kanu was quoted saying, “Nothing seems to be working in Nigeria. There are pain and hardship everywhere. What we’re fighting [for] is not self-determination for the sake of it. It is because Nigeria is not functioning and can never function.”<sup>55</sup>(Arinze Ago, 2017) On his arrival to Nigeria in September 2015, Kanu was arrested by the Nigerian state intelligence services (DSS)<sup>56</sup> and was accused of treason but later granted bail by the magistrate court in Abuja, as no DSS violated the court’s order to release Kanu. Following his release, protests continue to mount in the South Eastern region, and the Nigeria Military launched ‘Operation Python Dance’ to curb the growing protest by the Biafran agitators.<sup>57</sup> Kanu disappeared from public after the Nigerian Army raided his home in September 2017.

Amnesty International reported that Nigerian soldiers killed 150 people and several others were wounded during a Biafran separatist gathering in South Eastern part of the country in 2017. Supporters of the IPOB movement demonstrated in the city of Onitsha to commemorate the Biafran War; however, they were met with teargas and live bullets. The group argue that the Nigerian government failed to provide basic needs for the people of the South Eastern region hence they want to separate from the country. The

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<sup>53</sup> IPOB” Indigenous People of Biafra.

<sup>54</sup> Nnamdi Kanu 2017

<sup>55</sup> Nnamdi Kanu 2017

<sup>56</sup> News Express Nigeria. 2017

<sup>57</sup> Dailytrust Nigeria 2017

Nigerian government on the other hand has ruled out the possibility of the country's fragmentation; also argue that it has provided funding for programs to assist the local people of the region. Meanwhile, the military denied the killing of any defenceless agitators, rather counter-argued that five police officers were killed and several army officers wounded according to the army representative Colonel Sani Kukasheka Usman. "The London-based human rights organization said an analysis of 87 videos, 122 photographs and testimony from 146 witnesses showed "the military fired live ammunition with little or no warning" into crowds protesting in several cities between August 2015 and August 2016." (Amnesty International, 2017) Hundreds of people have been arbitrarily detained and some tortured, Amnesty added<sup>58</sup>.

According to Osaghae, in his chapter on social activism in the Niger Delta, emphasizes that social movements in the region have built their national and international profile and support base on campaigns for collective rights based on the failure of the state to provide rights to ethnic minorities. (Thompson & Tapscott, 2010, p. 7) The groups calling for secession from Nigeria argue that the Federal Government has abandoned the Igbo minority people and call for an independent state of Biafra, which gain some sympathy from the international community. However, the region has been left to the mercy of its state governors who use the resources of the people for their gains in abhorrent corrupt practices. It is based on this notion that the people suffer from lack of infrastructure, medicine, food and other social services. Even though efforts have been made by the Nigerian government to reach the demands of the Biafran movement, including a call to restructure the state system in Nigeria. The federal government fails to check the activities of the local government within the region hence the state Governors use the agitation for their political gains and to repress the ordinary citizens.

For instance, the former central bank governor Sanusi Lamido Sanusi was quoted by Thisday newspaper of January 28, 2012, blaming the rise of conflict in Nigeria partly on

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<sup>58</sup> Amnesty international 2017 report



the principle of derivation. According to him a “revenue sharing formula that gave 13 percent derivation to the oil-producing states was introduced after the military relinquished power in 1999. Among a series of measures aimed at redressing historical grievances among those living closest to the oil and quelling a conflict that was jeopardizing output.” he added that “there is a direct link between the very uneven nature of distribution of resources and the rising level of violence”.<sup>59</sup>(Brookings, 2014) The pattern of revenue distribution in Nigeria gives rise to inequality among citizens, where some parts of the country are favored over others. The “unflavored” part express their dissatisfaction by staging rallies and seeking separation from Nigeria. However, in this thesis, the study showed that even the so-called “favored” part of the country suffer from lack of checks and balances, as some people use the local government funds for their own personal consumption leading to corruption and human right violation.

The Biafran agitation is a symptom of massive mismanagement of local funds by few elites in the Niger Delta region, even when the federal government gives funds for the people of the region a few people benefit from the funds. Hence, the local people feel aggrieved by the lack of attention from the federal government. Nnamdi Kanu can be likened to Muhammad Yusuf, the founder of Boko Haram. The two so-called group leaders are children of abuse by the federal government of Nigeria; it can be argued that Mr Kanu who was born the same year as the first Biafran war did not receive the required attention by the federal government after the war. Hence, he feels aggrieved that the Nigerian government have abandoned him and his people.

#### **4.2 Conclusion**

The Biafran conflict shows a similar pattern to that of Boko Haram, as the genesis of both conflicts is not recent. In the 1960’s, the federal government failed to interfere in the affairs of those from the South East giving Ojukwu power to establish his dominion over the local region. When the federal failed to provide amenities to the people, human right

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<sup>59</sup> Adibe, “Boko Haram,” 56.

violation persisted within the local communities, leading to all-out rebellion. The federal government, however, did not listen to the calls of those oppressed citizens or even if it did, not much effort was taken to assist the Igbo people, instead of the federal government sort to the use of force. Eventually, the federal government succeeded in curbing the violent conflict with some 1 million casualties. However, the agitation continues decades later. In the previous chapter, the thesis highlighted similar pattern in the case of Boko Haram, where the federal government used force during the 1980's against the Mai Tsine group, the group which called for separation from Nigeria due to massive Human rights violation and repression. Similarly, instead of the federal government to listen to the calls of the people, it sort to the use of force without finding concrete solutions. Eventually, the government succeeded in disarming the insurgents, however, two to three decades later the group morphed into what is now known as Boko Haram.

## CHAPTER 5

### THESIS FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

The subject of conflict in Nigeria in the context of federal government's policies towards the regional government has always been a dynamic subject to study. There has not been much literature on the subject, but the ones available use different perspectives and approaches in determining the contemporary rise of violent conflicts in the cases of Boko Haram and the IPOB movement. The studies on Boko Haram reached its peak point in the recent abduction of some 270-schoolgirls in the village of Chibok that is the period between 2014 to 2016 where Boko Haram attacks were greeted with great appellation from the international community, Nigerian policy makers, academicians and public. Most of these have shown how the Nigerian government approached the crisis and managed to curb attacks by the terror groups, however, failed to eliminate their reprisal attacks.

With challenges created by the regional insurgencies towards the federal government, as well as the impact of the regional conflicts on the economy, social status and political interests, the regional government has refrained from making further reform progress. That is to say, the federal government takes the responsibility to end a conflict, which was started due to mismanagement by the regional governments involved. The significant decrease or increase in assistance from the federal government as explained in the second chapter could explain the decreasing importance of the regional government in curbing state repression. When there is a high level of involvement/checks and balances by the federal government, we see the decline in violence within the regions involved and vice-versa.

Therefore, the relations with the research question stated in the introduction chapter, this thesis argues that the political, social and economic impact created by the Biafra and Boko Haram conflict from 2011 to 2017 is limited to the scope of regional state

repression and human rights abuse in relations to efforts made by the federal government to curb the conflict. The decrease in checks and balance by the federal government towards the regional government as well as the policies taken by the state affects the rise and decrease in regional conflict during this period. Nevertheless, this does not mean the regional government has fully stopped its efforts in consolidating the ruins of conflicts and security for its society.

However, these efforts have very little to do with the regional government's repression towards local minorities and compared to the period when there were checks by the federal government. Moreover, the current security threats from the Boko Haram and Biafra movement also increases the federal government's involvement in the regional politics. The economy and social issues caused by more than 5 million internally displaced people drained much of the federal government's attention that has burdened the regional government in furthering its reform efforts and their implementation.

### **5.1 Findings**

Several important findings have been laid out in this thesis. Firstly, the regional state repression theory has different approaches and perspective in explaining the conflict escalation process. However, the main criticism in the state repression theory is that the theory tends to be difficult to apply in other regions where there are similar traits. This thesis fills the gap in the state repression theory by developing its arguments on a wider scope including policies made by the federal and state government on the civilians. Moreover, in terms of federal government's role on curbing violent conflicts, policy instruments promoting certain norms in exchange to quick time fix, using force and also applying a form of sanction on affected regions play a pivotal role in promoting conflict in the certain region, especially related to the Boko Haram and the Biafran case. In the context of conflict management done by the federal government, with its use of force and political biases has become one of the most important tools.

Second, the Boko Haram and Biafra crisis that happened due to exceeding regional government use of force and lack of checks and balance have its regional and federal effects. The regional effects of the crisis show the structural violent problem of the federal government with the state. While in the federal context, through the data found through rigorous research, there has been a significant decrease in the implementation of rule of law in the region during the period of Boko Haram and Biafra crisis. The decrease of interference and funding towards regional government prawn to conflict shows that the federal government has less interest in supporting stability and peace in the regions. On the other hand, indigenes of regions affected by violent conflict, especially the Biafra, also began to convey their disagreement and pessimism regarding the benefits and the positive impact of the federal government in the peace process.

The third empirical finding is that since the 1999 constitutional amendment, there has been no major constitutional amend as well as radical changes of law efforts in Nigeria. Beginning with the PDP regime, the discourse of constitutional amendment has been directed towards strengthening the federal government's consolidation of power without diversification.

Fourth, in terms of economic performance, Nigeria has not been able to find an alternative source of revenue from oil, hence the disproportionate sharing of budget causes a bit of haggling among the regional governments. Without the diversification towards other important fields such as agriculture, mining and clothing, regional governments creating its own revenue without depending on the federal government, affected regions cannot compete with other regions with oil.

Lastly, from analytical approach through the fight against Boko Haram, the federal government need to take account that groups like Boko Haram and the IPOB movement, a good education can assist in combating the radical ideologies. As the group have an ingrained ideology from generations of oppression and violent conflict with the federal

government. The groups are like water vapour, when face with intensive heat they evaporate into the atmosphere, by the time the weather is conducive they fall down as rain. Similarly, the Boko Haram and IPOB movement have been facing intense heat they evaporate like the vapour, however, if the federal government does not find an umbrella the rain will fall. The umbrella is quality education, checks and balances, application of the rule of law, diversification of economy and providing basic human needs to the regions involved.

It is clear to me that the more there is state repression the more reactionary and civil conflict in Nigeria. In 1967, the cause of civil war had more or less everything to do with state repression and abuses by the military regime. Similarly, in 1980, there was Maitatsine due to structural abuse by the state, repression and lack of control over the state's affairs<sup>60</sup>. In 2009, Boko Haram attacked due to similar incidence in the North-Eastern part of Nigeria, due to similar causes as the previous conflicts. Nevertheless, in the western region of Nigeria there is less experience of these kinds of civil conflict because there is less repression, and structural discrimination, while education and women's rights are well protected, corruption is at a minimum level. I will take Lagos for an example, where there is minimal experience of such armed conflict due to the level

## **5.2 Limitations**

Although the data obtained from the effects of Boko Haram and Biafra crisis has provided a basic argument in explaining the rise of violent conflict in Nigeria, there are still some major limitations and shortcomings in the writing of this thesis. First, in terms of data limitations, the lack of sufficient police records on the repression made by the regional government made it a bit difficult and reports published in the newspapers are usually one-sided. Most of the reports I cited in this thesis are from NGO's and amnesty international. Lack of enough data has made this thesis heavily relied on documents that are published online or by foreign agencies. While the data used in this thesis has been

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<sup>60</sup> Davenport, "State Repression and the Tyrannical Peace," 493.

selected to illustrate the impact of state repression on the rise of violent conflict, but it has a limitation in presenting the regional people's perspective and academics on the crisis. Moreover, with most of the media outlets in Nigeria have certain political leaning, sources from local newspapers and online articles need to be used cautiously and taking into account the overall political stance of the media outlet. With many of the Nigerian media outlets are being used as propaganda tools, both for opposing and supporting the state action on regional violence, the objectivity of sources used throughout this thesis needed to be reassured and approached carefully. Combined with biases, the situation has become the reason for using of sources from international media and organization to ensure the objectivity of the sources used throughout this study.

Second, in the theoretical limitations, this thesis acknowledges several other factors that could influence the pace of regional government's reform effort towards violent conflict. One of the major possible explanation is the ongoing Boko Haram crisis that has created a major security threat for the region affected. The atrocities and usage of IED in the conflict made the regional government create IDP camps, adding to security, economy and social burden that could explain the slowing down of the reform efforts in Nigeria. However, based on the initial study of regional government reform progress, the causal relation made by the federal government economic crisis and application of force is more viable in explaining the stagnation of Nigeria's reform progress. This claim is based on the influential role of the federal government curbing conflict process, especially in the context of Biafra and Boko Haram. During this period, the federal government is very much involved in the laws and legislation made as part of regional government's efforts. At the same time, regional government's support to the economic interest of the federal government as well as political gains has made the regional government make some action to consolidate power for the federal government.

### **5.3 Further Research**

From the analytical approach and data found in this thesis, several further types of research subjects may increase the knowledge of the current relations between the regional government and the federal government in relations to the rise of violent conflict in Nigeria. First, for scholars who are working in the field of conflict management in Africa, the impact of violent conflict towards the normative power sought to be held by the state structure is an interesting further research. With data found in this thesis that argues state repression to be the cause of violent conflict in Nigeria, and the decreasing check and balance by the federal government on the regional government to make reforms that will allow the growth of democracy. The question of the power struggle between the regional government and the federal government could be revisited. This possibility is based on how the federal government seem to place more interest in regions, which generates more revenue, and disregard regions who do not generate as much revenue. With the decrease of grants towards regional government and full aids to the regions affected by violent conflict, there is a probability for more violent conflict to emerge as shown in this case of Boko Haram and Biafra.

The comparative studies on this topic by comparing regional state repression and other regions where there are less repression and their reaction towards the federal government participation in local politics is an interesting topic that could be studied in further more research.



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