



## Influence of Boko Haram Insurgency on Children's Rights to Inclusive Education in Northern Senatorial Zone, Adamawa State, Nigeria

Sababa L. K<sup>1</sup>. and Ballah A. Y. Godwin<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education Faculty of Education Adamawa State University, Mubi, Nigeria

<sup>2</sup>Department of Science Education Faculty of Education Adamawa State University, Mubi, Nigeria

### Abstract

This study investigated the influence of Boko Haram Insurgency on Children's rights to Inclusive Education in Northern Senatorial zone, Adamawa State, Nigeria. Rural communities in the zone which share border with Borno State have been devastated by the activities of Islamic Insurgents. Research questions sought to identify the major causes of Islamic Insurgency and the major problems confronting children in emergency with a view to finding possible solution strategies. The hypotheses determined if there are significant differences in perception between boys and girls on the challenges facing children in emergency. The population of the study consisted of all children in emergency in communities bordering northern and southern Adamawa and Borno States. A sample of 300 children and adolescents were purposely selected based on Robert Morgan (1970) sampling technique. The instrument used for data collection was subjected to validation process. The reliability index of 0.78 was obtained using Kuder-Richardson method. Means and Standard Deviation (SD) were used to answer research questions while *t* – test statistics were used to test the hypotheses formulated. The study identified the burning desire of the Islamic terrorists to convert non-Muslims and to establish a theocratic government. The study also revealed that many schools were destroyed; teachers and pupils were killed and maimed. Consequently, many of them were denied access to quality education thus infringing on their unalienable rights to inclusive education. It was therefore recommended that the North-East Development Commission (NEDC) should be established to provide adequate financial resources for the rehabilitation of agricultural, social and educational sectors of the region. All stakeholders in the education industry at the three tiers of government should implement the provisions of the Child's Right Act (CRA) that was passed by the Nigerian National Assembly.

**Keyword:** Boko-Haram Insurgency; Children's Right Act; Islamic Insurgency; Inclusive Education; Theocratic State; Education for All.

### Introduction

Inclusive education is a term used in the education industry to refer to equal access to quality education and support for all children and adolescents irrespective of their ethnic and religious differences, socio-economic backgrounds, nationality, gender, language, mental and physical conditions. The role of inclusive education in the provision of quality education to all children has been given due recognition by national and international communities, governmental and non-governmental organizations. These organizations see children and adolescents as a venerable group who must be nurtured to maturity in all global communities.

The perception of children as a vulnerable group in need of protection motivated the preamble to the United Nations Declaration of the Right of the Child adopted by the U. N. General Assembly in 1959. According to the document, children who are in the state of physical and mental immaturity must be safeguarded, nurtured and given appropriate legal protection before and after birth (African Charter on the Right and welfare of the child, 1990).

Under the Convention on the Right of the Child (CRC), all stake holders agree to secure the rights of the child to life, survival and development, non-discrimination and the right to be heard. In Nigeria, the Child's Right Act (CRA) was passed into law by

the Nigerian National Assembly. The provisions of the law encapsulate these rights that have already been enshrined by the various arms of the United Nations (FRN, 1990).

The 1990 world declarations on Education For All (EFA) stated that all individuals have an absolute right to basic education. Article 26 outlines the right to free and compulsory education. Article 28 calls for the state to make primary education compulsory and free to all and accessible secondary and other forms of education (UNESCO, 1990).

In spite of the protection given to children in these policy documents, northern Nigeria, particularly the north-east geo-political zone experiences an array of raw, uneducated children and adolescents. Many of them come from poor homes where parents cannot afford the cost of education available in private schools. Most of these children are dirty and unkempt, several have ragged clothing and patched shoes or without shoes. They live in disgraceful living social conditions and are vulnerable to infections, diseases and victims of child abuse. The problem is compounded in the region where street begging has over the decades, been given divine sanctions by the northern politico-religious establishment through the almajiri system (Olagunju, 2012).

According to Federal Ministry of Education (FME, 2009) about 10.5 million children are out of school where the north – east and the north – west account for a significant portion. Added to this number, Ardo (2018) reported that about 12 million nomadic children are out of school due to the poor implementation of the Nomadic Education Programme.

The out of school syndrome in northern Nigeria particularly the northern Senatorial District of Adamawa State has witnessed an unprecedented explosion in the population of school going children without access to education due to destructive activities of Boko Haram.

Terrorism, which greatly affects the well-being of civilians, armed conflicts affect the entire populace but it has a special effect on children as a vulnerable group. Children are made to pay the price for a war

they did not participate in hatching. Children, in situation of armed conflict are exposed to human rights violations as it affects the provision of services including food, health, education, infrastructure and separation from families and loved ones. Abdulahi and Terhember (2014), Atsua and Abdulahi (2015), Bilyaminu and Purokayo (2017), Abdulrasheed and Obioma (2018) investigated the impact of insurgency on primary and secondary children in the north – east Nigeria and found that many children and teachers were killed. Many suffered severe injuries and worsening human rights violations. According to UNESCO (2014), Awortu (2015), Joda and Abdulrasheed (2015), Isokpan (2016), and Durojayi and Medugu (2017), their investigation on the impact of Boko Haram insurgency on child's right to education revealed that many children, teachers and parents were killed in schools, buildings destroyed, tortured, recruited as child soldiers, abducted and raped and above all, subjected to unspeakable brutality.

In Northern Senatorial zone of Adamawa State, targeted attacks by the Boko Haram sect on schools since 2009 have forced Adamawa and Borno state government to shut down primary and secondary schools. Some schools recorded low attendance rates as children have to stay away for fear of being victims of the attacks (Sababa and Mbahi 2016; Musa and Nwachukwu 2015; Nwachukwu, Abdullahi and Kyari 2015). Boko Haram insurgents burnt down more than 300 schools thereby depriving children access to education. In such situations, not only the buildings but also teaching materials and children's school records are affected. These attacks have therefore slowed down the nations' ability of achieving the Millennium Development Goals Project and Education for All. These conflicts have not only affected the children and teachers physically, but have also affected them psychologically. Many children and adults were not only subjected to serious traumatic experiences, they were forced to flee from their homes, leaving family, friends and their possessions behind. Many were exposed to fighting, destruction and violence directed at their family members and the uncomfortable life as internally displaced persons. This has affected the physical and mental health of children as they face severe post traumatic disorder, depression and fear,

cognitive and emotional impairment which affect their ability to learn.

Religious indoctrination, poverty, and unemployment were identified by Jibrin (2016), Sababa & Mbahi (2016) and Musa & Kyari (2015) as the principal cause of Islamic insurgency in the North-East Geopolitical zone. There are, however, a teeming population of promising school going children and adolescents that are out of school. Most of them have lost their relatives, parents and guardians who are supposed to take care of them in school. They are therefore left to roam the streets and communities in search of means of livelihood. Most of them have become ready tools for the insurgents which lead to the sustenance of the insurgency.

EFA, CRC, CRA and ACLWC contain a number of provisions aimed at protecting the rights of the child to quality education. There are few studies if any on the extent to which these rights to education are protected by member states. There are also no studies in the north – east region that investigated the influence of insurgency on the child's rights to inclusive education. This study therefore, attempts to determine the extent to which the activities of the Islamic sect/insurgents have denied promising children access to quality education as provided by the various national and international conventions of the rights of the child to inclusive education. To do this, the study set to determine:

- i. the causes of insurgency as perceived by children affected by the insurgency
- ii. consequences of the activities of insurgents on children's education and psychological well being
- iii. the reasons why these children are out of school
- iv. what they think should be done to help them go back to school.

The following research questions were answered by this study:

1. what are the causes of Islamic insurgency as perceived by the out of school children?

2. what are the problems confronting out of school children arising from the activities of Boko Haram insurgency?

3. what reasons do out of school children give to explain why they are not in school. These hypotheses formulated below were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

HO<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant difference in perception between out of school boys and girls on the reasons given to explain their absence from school.

HO<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant difference in perception between boys and girls on the challenges confronting them in their displaced communities.

### Materials and Methods

The research design adopted for the study was Expost fact research design, equally known as “after- the - fact” research design. The use of this method is the most appropriate, because the events of Boko Haram insurgency have already taken place. Respondents are expected to simply recall on their encounter and experiences with the dreaded Boko Haram insurgents.

The study population comprised of an estimated 100,000 children and adolescents who are out of school in Madagali, Michika, and Hong (Uba) Local Government Area of Adamawa State. A sample of 300 children and adolescents comprising of 150 males and 150 females were selected through purposive and stratified random sampling techniques based on Robert and Morgan (1970) sample size for research activities. According to Oche (2007), purposive sampling ensures that only those elements that are relevant to the research are included, while an equal number of males and females are selected from each stratum to ensure equal representation of male and female respondents.

Data were collected using an instrument titled “Boko Haram Insurgency and Inclusive Education Questionnaire” (BOHAIEQ). The instrument is a check list which contains items that try to measure out of school children opinions on the causes and consequences of Boko Haram insurgency in their place of original residence.

The researchers administered the instrument to 50 internally displaced children and adolescents in Yola sub – urban settlements. The scores obtained were subjected to KR1 formula. The reliability obtained was 0.784 which is an indication that the instrument is reliable. Means and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions, while t - test statistical analyses were used to test the hypotheses formulated.

### Results:

Research Question 1: What are the major causes of Boko Haram insurgency as perceived by out of school children and adolescents in Madagali, Michika, Mubi and Hong Local Government Areas?

This question sought to find out from children and adolescents what they think are the major causes of Boko Haram insurgency in their original settlements. The results are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Mean distribution of causes of Boko Haram insurgency as perceived by out of school children and adolescents.

S/No.	ITEMS	N	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	They want us to become muslims	300	2.58	0.49	Accepted
2.	They do not like our parents	300	2.28	0.45	Rejected
3.	We refuse to follow them	300	2.31	0.46	Rejected
4.	They want to be our leaders	300	2.63	0.50	Accepted
5.	They do not want us to go school	300	2.54	0.50	Accepted
6.	They want to make us poor	300	2.50	0.49	Accepted
7.	They want to make us slaves	300	2.29	0.46	Rejected
8.	They are fighting JIHAD against unbelievers	300	2.69	0.50	Accepted
9.	They want to help Allah to fight his enemies	300	2.59	0.44	Accepted
10	They want to go heaven Aljanna	300	2.36	0.48	Rejected
<b>Grand Mean &amp; SD</b>			<b>24.77</b>	<b>4.77</b>	

Table 1 shows the mean responses on the major causes of Boko Haram insurgency as perceived by out of school children and adolescents affected by the activities of the Islamic insurgents. The analysis of the study revealed that children affected by the Islamic terrorism saw Boko Haram insurgency as a holy war declared on non-Muslims with the intention to convert them into Islam and establish a theocratic state.

Research question 2: What are the problems facing out of school children and adolescents in emergency areas?

This research question sought to identify the major problems confronting out of school children and adolescents in emergency. The result of analysis is presented in table 2.

**Table 2:** Mean distribution of problems facing out of school children

S/No.	ITEMS	N	Mean	SD	Rank
1.	I do not have food to eat always	300	2.76	0.50	Accepted
2.	I do not have clothes to wear	300	2.08	0.27	Rejected
3.	My parents do not take me to the hospital When I am sick	300	2.05	0.21	Rejected
4.	I am living with my relatives without help or assistance from them	300	2.12	0.33	Rejected
5.	All my parents are dead	300	2.59	0.29	Accepted
6.	My mother has no money to take me to School	300	2.59	0.44	Accepted
7.	I joined the Almajiri to beg for food and money	300	2.05	0,21	Rejected

8.	I work on people's farm to earn money	300	2.08	0.27	Rejected
9.	my relatives do not give me food to eat	300	2.02	0.14	Rejected
10.	my parents want to sell things instead of going to school.	300	2.53	0.34	Accepted
11.	My parents are separated	300	2.04	0.20	Rejected
12.	Fear of attack by Boko Haram	300	2.07	0.25	Rejected
13.	I think of my parents who are killed in my presence	300	2.57	0.44	Accepted
14.	we are no longer living in our villages Again.	300	2.67	0.50	Accepted
<b>Grand Mean &amp; SD</b>			<b>29.51</b>	<b>4.39</b>	

Table 2, revealed four major problems confronting out of school children and adolescents in emergency. The study identified death of parents arising from the activities of Islamic terrorists as a major problem leading to lack of physical and psychological needs and access to quality education. Living in displaced camps creates feelings of despair and abandonment.

Research question 3: What are the causes of lack of access to education as perceived by out of school children and adolescents in emergency?

This question sought to find out children and adolescents' perception on their inability to access emergency educational services. The result is presented in table 3.

**Table 3:** Mean distribution of the reasons for the prevalence of out of school children

S/N	ITEMS	N	Mean	SD	Rank
1.	Boko Haram killed my father	300	2.56	0.44	Accepted
2.	Boko Haram killed my mother	300	2.04	0.20	Rejected
3.	Boko Haram killed both my father and mother	300	2.12	0.33	Rejected
4.	My parents have no money to send me to school	300	2.24	0.43	Rejected
5.	We have left our village due Boko Haram attack	300	2.55	0.44	Accepted
6.	Our school was destroyed by Boko Haram	300	2.14	0.35	Rejected
7.	Our religion does not like Boko Haram	300	2.18	0.39	Rejected
8.	My parents dislike Boko Haram	300	2.60	0.46	Accepted
9.	I attended Sangaya school (makarantan allo)	300	2.20	0.40	Rejected
10.	The school is far away from our village	300	0.00	0.00	Rejected
11.	My parents are not in support of a girl child school	300	2.15	0.36	Rejected
12.	Our boys go to school	300	2.58	0.45	Accepted
13.	Our parents prefer us to do business instead of school	300	2.66	0.48	Accepted
<b>Grand Mean &amp; SD</b>			<b>28.02</b>	<b>5.16</b>	

The result of the study revealed that out of school children and adolescents in emergency do not have access to effective educational services due to death of parents and living in displaced environments devoid of basic educational services. Some children and adolescents living in displaced camps also perceived that their parents prefer to send only the male children to school at the detriment of their female counter parts.

HO<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant difference between emergency and children's right to inclusive Education.

This hypothesis sought to determine whether or not children in emergency are denied the right to inclusive education and equal access to appropriate educational services. The result is presented in table 4.

**Table 4:** T-test analysis of insurgency and children's right to inclusive education

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Df	t	P – value	Remark
Insurgency	300	118.40	34.24	598	8.35	0.000	Rejected

Children's right to inclusive education	300	93.14	20.68
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Table 4 reveals a statistical significance ( $t = 8.35$ ,  $df = 598$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). This implies that the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between insurgency and children's rights to inclusive education is rejected.

This means that out of school children and adolescents in emergency do not have access to educational services as spelt out by EFA and other national and international documents.

**Table 5:** t-test on the difference in the perception of boys and girls on the problems facing out of school children and adolescents

Variable	N	Mean	SD	df	t	p-value	Remark
Boys	155	103.67	72.58	398	5.818	0.579	Accepted
Girls	145	105.33	77.23				

Table 5 reveals statistical insignificance value ( $t = 5.82$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). This implies that the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in perception between boys and girls on their perceived problems confronting them in emergency is accepted.

## Discussion

The result of this study clearly shows that the rights of the Nigerian child have been grossly violated by individuals, institutions and governmental organizations.

Research question one which sought to identify children's perceived causes of Boko Haram insurgency in their environment identified the desire to establish a theocratic state ruled by Muslims and extend the influence of Islam to non-Muslim communities. The activities of these vandals have led to destruction of lives and property, destruction of public buildings and educational institutions. This led to massive internal population displacements in the region. The finding of this study is supported by previous studies who reported that the desire of all Islamic Jihadists is to Islamize Nigeria and establish a theocratic state based on the teaching of the holy Prophets (Jibrin, 2016, Sababa & Mbahi, 2016, Isokpan & Durojaye, 2016)

HO<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant difference in perception between boys and girls on their perceived problems confronting them in emergency.

This hypothesis sought to determine whether or not children of both sexes are exposed to the same challenges confronting them in emergency. The result is presented in 5.

Research question two sought to identify the major problems facing out of school children and adolescents in emergency. The result of the study showed that children and adolescents in emergency live in disgraceful social conditions and vulnerable to infections and diseases. Many of them are exposed to human rights violations that are left to face the harsh impact of conflict as internally displaced persons. Many of them are forced to roam the streets and villages to beg for food and clothing. School buildings were burnt down thereby depriving children access to education. Children who are forced to flee from their traditional home lands experience post-traumatic disorders, depression, fear, cognitive and emotional impairment. The findings of this study are in agreement with the findings of Isokpan & Durojaye (2016), Abdullahi & Terhema (2014), Badau (2016) and Sababa & Mbahi (2016) who's findings revealed children in emergency are denied access to emergency educational services and are exposed to untold living conditions.

Research question three tried to find out how out of school children and adolescents perceived their inability to access educational services. Children identified death of parents and poor living displaced environment as the major causes of their lack of access to educational services. Female respondents

reported that where there were available educational services only male children were allowed to go to school, thus, denying the rights of individuals to inclusive education. The findings of this study are in consonant with the findings of Badau (2016), FME (2009), Ardo (2018), UNICEF (2014) who reported that most children in emergency had no access to education due to the activities of Boko Haram insurgency. The child's right to inclusive education in the north –east therefore remain a pipe dream. This is because local councils, state and federal governments are yet to provide any form of intervention in the communities ravaged by the Islamic insurgents. The interventions of the international organizations are hardly felt due to the enormity of the problems. The results of the two hypotheses formulated testify the fact that the provisions of the U.N. declaration on the rights of the child, Convention of the rights of the child and the Nigerian Child Right Act have been abused and neglected by individuals, governments at all levels, institutions and non-governmental organizations. This attitude of indifference and sometimes complicity has led to denial of the Nigerian child equal access to quality education.

### Conclusion

The conclusion to be drawn based on the findings of this study is that out of school children in emergency are denied the fundamental right to education due to failure on the part of the government to implement the provisions of the documents on inclusive education as enshrine in the provision of the Child's Right Act passed by the Nigerian National Assembly.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Local, state and federal governments, NGOs, donor and international agencies should make effective emergency educational services accessible to all children in emergency in order to address the humanitarian crises rocking the north – east region.
2. The establishment of the North –East Development Commission should be done and made to function as a matter of urgency

so as to provide adequate funds to meet the developmental needs of the region.

3. Provision of scholarships should be made available to all children in emergency irrespective of religious and ethnic affiliation.
4. Special schools for children in emergency should be established and provided with effective educational services supported by professionally trained teachers.

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