

A Review of the Counterinsurgency Approaches in Nigeria

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Abstract: This concept paper explored and analyzed the various counterinsurgency approaches adopted both by the Nigeria government, international partners and community base groups in the combating the violent insurgency of Boko Haram in the country's north. The article revealed that Nigeria adopted both carrot and stick approach in its operation. The former involved political campaigns of dialogue to ceasefire. The later approach is a violent aggression by the military and quasi-military forces aimed at annihilating the insurgent fighters and their alleged collaborators. Whereas the application of the two approaches is blended rather than sequential, the military aggression however remained the dominant campaign of the government. The article argued that the predominance of the military campaign undermined the unprecedented successes of the government. The indiscriminate force targeting both the insurgent and the population suppressed the chances of accessing timely and credible intelligence about the insurgents movements, their hideout and identification of their potential target. As panacea, the article suggest Nigeria government and its counterinsurgency partners to resort to the people centred campaign through enhancing governance through the provision of basic necessities of livelihood to withdraw the support of the population on the insurgent rather than sticking to the security only campaign.

Keywords; Insurgency, Counterinsurgency, Boko Haram, Military Approach; Political Approach

I. INTRODUCTION

Since the eruption of the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria in 2009, there is concerted effort by State, international groups, civil society organizations, and even informal private individuals to combat the insurgency. The combined engagement of these groups is not in any coincidental, but was instigated by the devilish attacks of the Boko Haram group, killing and maiming of the public thus stampeding on fundamental rights presented by the International Humanitarian Laws and declarations of United Nations. Although, there are multifaceted approaches to the approaches and manner of the counterinsurgency campaigns, existing works has partially discussed on these perspectives. Most of the prevailing literature only centered on the analysis of humanitarian consequences induced by the insurgent rebellion. Others on the evolution on the insurgency. Specific work analyzing the general counterinsurgency approaches against the Boko Haram group is not presented. This concept paper addressed this vacuum. The importance of the work besides the contribution to the literature, it is importance for

policy science suitable for the state authorities and other agencies interested in the campaign against the Boko Haram. In doing this, the work precedes in four sections. The first section discussed the methodological approaches of the study, the second section explained the key concepts used in the study, the third section presented the various approaches to the counterinsurgency operation, and the four section is the conclusion of the study.

II. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

This is a concept paper. The article mainly used secondary materials from published and unpublished sources including but not limited to journal articles, magazines, newspaper, thesis, and other scholarly works from the internet to present its ideas. The selection processes are mainly scientific involving careful scrutiny of the reliability of items and the timely of the works. About 40 different works are examined and studied.

III. CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

Insurgency

United States Army and Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual [FM 3-24] (2006) defined insurgency as an organized, protracted politico-military struggle designed to weaken the control and legitimacy of an established government, occupying power, or other political authority while increasing insurgent control. Hoffman (2007) defined insurgency as violent competition between a state and a rival political group to control a population or establish an alternative political order.

In this thesis, an insurgency defined as politico-military and religious struggle by a group of people aim at establishing a distinct authority within a given political setting that will ensure the control of resources, people and physical area. Put differently, it is a deliberate politico-economic, social and religious movement by people aims at changing an existing political, economy and social order fought through the instrumentality of guerrilla.

Counterinsurgency

United States Army and Marine Field Manual (2006) defined counterinsurgency as military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological, and civic actions taken by a

government to defeat an insurgency. Australian military officer and strategist David Kilcullen (2006), define counterinsurgency as a competition of state with an insurgent group over the right and ability to win the heart and minds of the people. Gray (2012) defined counterinsurgency as a set or combinations of diverse and multifaceted activities used in combating an insurgent violence in a given society.

Military Approach

Military strategy according to Campbell & Weitz (2006) refers to all activities, principles, and tactics used by regular security group in waging war in a given political setting. In most respect, the military strategy relies on “stick” operations that involve the use of aggression such as detention of suspect, brutal elimination of individual insurgents, disruption of insurgent support networks, and decapitation of insurgent organizations. It is a kinetic component of the counterinsurgency response to guerrilla warfare.

In this thesis, Military strategy refer to all forms of conventional combat adopted by armed force and other paramilitary forces in combating an insurgency in a given political entity. The main principle of the military counterinsurgency strategy is the application of aggressive military force involving violent destruction of the enemy force and threatening of local population to forcedly withdraw support for the insurgent.

Political Approach

Non-military strategy according to Campbell & Weitz (2006) refers to all political, social, cultural and psychological measures taken by government, groups or individual in combating an insurgent group without the use of force. Non-military strategy in this thesis refers to all forms of combating tactics taken by state and non-state actors in maintaining security that does not involve the use of force.

Counterinsurgency Approaches In Nigeria

The extant literature shows the Nigeria government responded to Boko Haram hostilities through military and political approaches. The following reviews will discussed the application of the two approaches in the counterinsurgency operation.

Military Approach

To date, commentator claimed that the military response is the dominant counterinsurgency approach of the Nigeria government against the Boko Haram group (Abdulazeez, 2016; Mbah & Nwangwu, 2014; Folade, 2016; Fatile & Ejalonibu, 2014). A kinetic tactic emphasizes the use of aggressive military force to crush the insurgent fighters, intimidate the sympathetic population and maim the innocent people to deter them supporting the insurgent. Some authors indicated that the prioritization of military combating by the Nigeria government came to the public notice in 2009 when the insurgent embarked on a weeklong anti-government uprising in Maiduguri (Nwanpka, 2016). However, some

analyst has indicated that the kinetic approach of the Nigeria government is evident in 2003 when the Boko Haram first erupts into violence in Kanamma town of Yobe State, Nigeria (Onuoha, 2012). To date, whereas there is a series of spirited military forces engagement as exemplified in the formation of a military task force in northeast Nigeria (Aghedo and Osumah, 2012; Onuoha, 2014). However, the most popular account remained the formation of the Special Joint Task Force (SJTF) and the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) established by member countries of Lake Chad Basin Commission (Nigeria, Niger, Chad, Cameroun, and Benin Republics).

A. Special Joint Task Force

To most of these accounts, the Special Joint Task Force (SJTF) a special security force is the front runner of the Nigeria government counterinsurgency since 2011 (Odomovo, 2014; Agbiboa, 2015; Folade, 2016; Mbah and Nwangu, 2013). The SJTF whose members were drawn from the Nigeria Armed Force, the Nigeria Police Force, Immigration, Custom, and other allied forces was stationed at Maiduguri, the spiritual home of the Boko Haran and was given the mandate to neutralize the Boko Haram threat in north-eastern Nigeria. Accurate size of the force is scarce, but anecdotal have claimed the existence of over 100,000 armed security personnel in the northeast (Folade, 2016). This number may, however, be conservative as there additional troops redeployed from other international peacekeeping operation to the northeast (Lawal & Aluko, 2016). Some sources show that in Maiduguri, a city of about 2 million populations, there are about 8,000 members of the Nigeria armed force supporting the police force in the combating operation. In fact, there is a general belief that this unprecedented deployment of armed troops into domestic conflict was the highest in the history of Nigeria's political dispensation.

Moreover, whereas the operation of the SJTF was allegedly successful in its earlier years because it succeeded to forces the insurgent to some condition of silence, and where there are attacks, mostly executed on soft targets (Bappah, 2016). However, this development short lives because the insurgent re-emerged in more devastating attacks. As indicated by Sampson (2015), since the resurgence of the Boko Haram, the SJTF besides its inability to protect the population against the catastrophe of the Boko Haram, many of its formations within an outside Maiduguri have fallen to unprecedented attacks of the insurgent Boko Haram. Although, different factors were attributed for the successive failure of the SJTF in combating the Boko Haram such as internal issues of corruptions and nepotism (Solomon, 2012; Bappah, 2016; Abdulazeez, 2016; Jacob and Akpan, 2015; Umar, 2013), and others on transnational influences on the Boko Haram activities (Eveslage, 2013; Shuaibu, et al, 2015). However, the dominant literature indicated that the authoritarian approach of the SJTF in combating the insurgency influence the ineffectiveness of the operation (Mbah & Nwangwu, 2014;

Folade, 2016; Fatile & Ejalonibu, 2014; Amao & Maiangwa, 2017).

Moreover, the aggressive approach of the SJTF perpetrated through gross violations of human rights undermined the support of the population. In fact, arising from the unwarranted atrocities, since 2012, some evidence suggests the refutation of the SJTF has been in jeopardy both within the Nigeria state and the international community. Successive official reports of the World anti-crime agency 'Amnesty International' labeled the Nigeria army for gross violation of human rights including summary executions of persons arrested on suspicion of Boko Haram membership. Whereas some victims are killed in gun battles (Sampson, 2015), many others are executed after arrest and or died in the stretched detention facilities of SJTF. Paradoxically, Sampson (2015) claimed that since its engagement in the counterterrorism, the SJTF has become anathema to the local communities in the northeast. Its indiscriminate use of force and other arbitrary acts have led to an unwarranted loss of life, destruction of valuable property as well as constituted extensive humanitarian crisis in the northeast.

Importantly, extant literature indicated the consequence of the counterinsurgents' arbitration on the success of its operation. To most of the prevailing accounts, aggressive military combating should result in the subjugation of the popular support of the population on the counterinsurgent force. The reality of this is evident in the operation of the SJTF. In addition to the direct military offensive, the operation of the SJTF was reinforced by the adoption of draconian laws by the SJTF and or in collaboration by the state. In fact, in most of the year 2011 and 2014, there is a massive imposition of dusk to dawn curfew, restriction of vehicular movement, and banned on the use of communication lines in the northeast.

Consequently, reflecting on the above scenario, Akpan (2014) indicated that between 2013 and 2015, all communication networks in northeast Nigeria was disconnected, whereas many others were badly damaged by the insurgent. The overall effects of the SJTF measures thus undermined the chances of accessing critical intelligence, a vital instrument for successful counterinsurgency operation according to the prominent counterinsurgency experts (Galula, 1964; Thonson, 1966; Kitson, 1971). David Galula, in particular, insisted that aggression, even when targeted on the insurgent, should negatively affect the supports of the population on the counterinsurgent. Therefore, since insurgency and counterinsurgency is a battle for legitimacy, the derailing support of the population on the SJTF thus undermined it combating successes.

B. Multinational Joint Task Force

Perhaps, arising from the unprecedented escalation of the Boko Haram across the Lake Chad region, the member states of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (Niger, Chad, Cameroon and Cameroun) established the sub-regional military block 'Multinational Joint Task Force to support the Nigerian's

effort in combating the insurgents. Extant literature shows Multinational Joint Task Force emerged from the successive ineffectiveness of Nigeria owned SJTF (Okorie, 2017), and especially on the believed that Boko Haram is exploiting the porous border around the Lake Chad Basin for the perpetration of its violence (Onuoha, 2013; Thomson, 2012; Tar and Mustapha, 2017). Most of these authors claimed that Boko Haram exploits the porous border by escaping detection, moving arms, and transferring hostages for ransoms negotiation as well as recruitment and training.

Importantly, the formation of the MNJTF was initially criticized in many quarters especially in the context of its legality in international law and human rights (Okorie, 2017). However, it is argued that the philosophy for the formation for the sub-regional military bloc emerged from the idea of traditional security functionalism that advocates for multinational cooperation in some certain areas of security challenges shared by many states. Tar and Mustapha (2017) indicated the formation of the Multinational Joint Task Force to combat the surging violence of the Boko Haram insurgency succinctly corresponds to the security regionalism within the Lake Chad Basin Commission. The reality of this contention is imminent with the escalation of the insurgent menace within and among the neighbouring countries. Onuoha (2014) argues that the implications of Boko Haram on regional security can be viewed in different dimensions. Among others includes the expansion of transnational recruitments, training, equipment and funding; perpetration of cross-border attacks, refugee proliferation, and cross-border kidnappings for ransom.

Subsequently, some accounts have argued that the formation of the MNJTF was ahistorical suggesting that the principle has predeceased the era of the Boko insurgency (Tar and Mustapha, 2017), however, the prevailing evidence shows the idea of MNJTF reached its point in November 2014. The intensification of the transnationalism of the insurgency coupled with the abduction of the spouse of the Cameroonian Deputy Prime Minister further accelerated the formation process. The refugee proliferation and devastating humanitarian situation together with debilitating economic condition along the Lake Chad region further prompted the member states for the stronger sub-regional collaborations to fight the terrorist group.

Importantly, whereas the MNJTF started as sub-regional collaboration, the operation of the group received formal ratification by the African Union during its 29 January 2015 General Assembly Summit held in Addis Ababa. The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union thereafter authorized the MNJTF's deployment. Moreover, the European Union and the United Nations later adopted draft operational plans for the MNJTF. The plan among others outlined the strategic coordination, rules of engagement, and requirements for supporting and sustaining the mission (Tar and Mustapha, 2017). The command headquarters of that force first located in the border town of Baga situated along the fringes of Lake

Chad Basin in Nigeria's Borno State. However, when the border town fell into the hands of Boko Haram caliphate in 2015, the headquarter was moved to the metropolitan town of N'Djamena, the capital city of Chad Republic.

Consequently, the initial mandate given to the MNJTF to combat the insurgent is one year. However, even after the expiration of the approve period, the force continued to operate in the Lake Chad region until it received another renewal on January 16, 2016 for an additional 12 months period (Okorie, 2017). Included in the mandate are the authority to conduct operations to obstruct the insurgent growth; conducting massive patrols; tackling arms transfers, and aggressive hunting to rescue the abductees Chibok schoolgirl. Others are engaging in psychological transformation activities to encourage defections within Boko Haram ranks.

Interestingly, despite its financial, logistics and troop's shortcomings, some piece of evidence suggests the MNJTF in its earlier years has managed to make some successes in combating the insurgency. Between February and March 2014, the aggressive combating of the MNJTF resulted in the capturing of many towns and village across the member states of the Lake Chad Countries (Tar and Mustapha, 2017). Interestingly, with the establishment of its command and Control Centre in the Maiduguri, the MNJTF has provided the Nigeria military the capability to monitor, coordinate, and control its operational efforts from the epicentre of the crisis. Moreover, with the increased commitment and expanded military expenditures coupled with better military armaments, the MNJTF involvement have resulted in the arrest of several Boko Haram, as well as succeeded recaptured many towns such as Madagali in Adamawa State and Chibok, Damasak, Ngala in Borno State. However, these gains short live as the violent insurgency has continued unabated and the group has expanded its attacks on Nigeria and its neighbours.

Moreover, simultaneously with the deployment of troops, the Nigeria government embarked on an accelerated hike in military expenditure. The increase in the military budget is aim at procuring heavy military artilleries to fight the insurgency. Odo (2015) and Agbibo (2014) argues that the Nigeria defense budget was nearly double between the year 2013 and 2014. This extensive military expenditure according to START (2015) successfully enlisted Nigeria as among countries with the highest military expenditure in Africa.

Furthermore, at the global level, Abdulazeez (2016) argued that Nigeria was ranked the 57th largest military expanding countries. In fact, one can comfortably claimed that the excessive military expenditure by the Nigeria government on countering the Boko Haram menace has further exaggerated the insurgency in the north. Perhaps, the military over expenditure created an unwarranted vacuum in the provision of basic social and physical infrastructures to the general population. The resultant thus left some sensitive socioeconomic aspects of the population unattended. The

consequences of this thus further created the impetus for the support of the insurgency by the local population. The assertion is unarguably true with the assumption of population-centric counterinsurgency theories (Galula, 1964; Kitson, 1971; Kilcullen, 2006). Therefore, arising from the persistent ineffectiveness of the military measures by the Special Joint Task Force along the transnational force of the Multinational Joint Task Force, the Nigeria government adopted numerous political approaches to supplement the military operations. In most respect, the two approaches executed simultaneously.

Political Approach

In most respect, through the years, the military and the non-military measures by the Nigeria government executed simultaneously. Notable among the political-legal approach of the Nigeria government was the enactment of the counterterrorism law in the country. The law that is the first of its kind since the country's political independence make provisions among others capital punishment for the insurgent fighters, as well as corporal punishment for financiers and collaborators (Gana et al, 2018a; Folade, 2016). It also afforded unchallenged power for the military and other security operatives to embark on aggressive action to curtail the insurgency without necessarily seeking court warrants.

Furthermore, according to Folade (2016), in addition to the absolute power given to the security operatives to undertake a search on terrorist dens and houses by the law, it also empowers the armies to confiscate properties owned by the terrorist without necessarily seeking for court warrants. However, despite the excessive penalties contained in the Act such as life imprisonment depending on the gravity of the crime, the source shows Boko Haram not deterred by the sanction (Ike, 2018). Therefore, the group increase in size and attack frequencies.

Moreover, with the exacerbation of the Boko Haram hostilities perpetrated by the unprecedented attacks on government establishments; international organizations; security formations and worship centers, the Nigeria President Good luck Jonathan invoked an executive power of section 305 of Nigeria's 1999 constitution. With the used of this power, the President declared a state of emergency in three states of Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa the worst affected by the Boko Haram insurgency (Bappah, 2016). Among other specific powers set out by the emergency law was the conferment for unwarranted power to raid, search, arrest and detain person suspects in complicit with the Boko Haram for the SJTF.

Furthermore, simultaneously with the massive security deployment of armed security and the enactment of the counterterrorism law, Nigeria government embarked on an accelerated rise in security budget. The increase in the defense budget is aim at procuring heavy military artilleries to fight the insurgency. Odo (2015) and Agbibo (2014) argues that the Nigeria defense budget was nearly double between the

year 2013 and 2014. This extensive military expenditure according to START (2015) successfully enlisted Nigeria as among the countries with the highest military expenditure in Africa. Furthermore, at the global level, Abdulazeez (2016) argued that Nigeria ranked the 57th largest military expanding countries. The consequence of the high budgetary expenditure by the Nigeria government, therefore, created an unwarranted vacuum in the provision of basic social and physical infrastructures to the general population. Many have opined that the prioritization of military expenditure neglected sensitive socioeconomic aspects unattended thus further created the impetus for the support of the insurgency by the local population.

Furthermore, in addition to the quasi political-legal and military measures, the Nigeria government has adopted numerous non-military measures to combat the insurgent Boko Haram. Among others includes the demobilization campaign. This strategy according to START (2015) adopted to the de-radicalize fighters and to discourage potential recruits through counteracting the spiritual teachings of the Boko Haram. Although, Nigeria is a secular state, but to stop the spreads of the extremist teaching, several state governments' enacted legislation that mandate clerics to be certificated before presenting any religion sermons. As pointed by Al-Efendi & Gumel (2015), the engagement of community and religious leaders has assisted in identifying several Boko Haram members and sympathizers. This has led to the confiscation of properties owned by the Boko Haram group.

Nevertheless, some spectators have argued that the de-radicalization measures adopted by the religious leaders, community heads and traditional leaders' short live (Stevenston et al, 2017). This is because the insurgent extended its attacks on the community leaders labeling them as collaborators. Reflecting on this assertion, Al-Efendi and Gumel (2015) argued that between 2009 and 2014, Boko Haram gruesomely killed 24 Islamic clerics in the north. The killing also includes of Mahmud Jaafar the erstwhile mentor of Mahmud Yusuf, the founder of the Boko Haram. Moreover, the insurgent group gruesomely attacked many traditional leaders, village heads and heads of a district council.

Disturbingly, the atrocities perpetrated by the insurgent on community leaders' came to the public notice on May 2014 when three prominent monarchs of Gwoza, Askira, and Uba felled into the ambush of the group leaving the leader of Gwoza killed and the two others survived with varying degree of injuries. According to Pham (2016), the killing of the monarch occurred barely two days after the leader criticize the group's activities in a public gathering. Within the same period, other Muslim leaders such as emir of Kano, Potiskum, and Damaturu also survive vigorous assassination attempts by the Boko Haram group. The attack on the Emir of Kano Alhaji Muhammad Sanusi, in particular, came a week after the monarch condemned the Boko Haram movement urging

people to carry arms in self-defense. Therefore, arising from the increasing spate of attacks and killings of spiritual and community leaders, the de-radicalization strategy appeared ineffective resulting in the majority of the population scared in speaking against the insurgent group.

However, in furtherance of the non-military strategy, in September 2011 Nigeria government resorted to dialogue and peace agreement. The first attempt was the involvement of former President Olusegun Obasanjo to engage the Boko Haram group in peace talks (Egunjobi & Odiaka, 2014). Official data on the deliberation of Chief Obasanjo with the Boko Haram group in Maiduguri is scarce, but there is generally believe that the ex-president set the phase for the compensation of families of fallen fighters. Others include promises of amnesty for defecting fighters as well as rehabilitation and reconstruction of the groups' spiritual mosque, house and Islamic complex in Maiduguri.

Interestingly, as argued by Egunjobi & Odiaka (2014), partly attributed to the agreement of Chief Obasanjo, Borno State government paid compensations to the family of late Mohammed Yusuf, the founding leader of the Boko Haram. The agreement also included payment to other deceased members of the Boko Haram. These strategies largely aimed at mollify the pains of the families and encourage defections. However, a few days after the payment of the compensation by the Borno government, the representatives of the insurgent were kills. Killing according to Nyuykonge & Ojigho (2016) includes of Baba Fugu Jr, the brother-in-law of late Yusuf. The brutal killing of the men obstructed further dialogue engagement by the government. Since the purported killing of the people, the group spikes its attacks in Nigeria's north.

Moreover, in August 2011, Nigeria's government inaugurated an eight-member committee under the chair of Alhaji Gaji Galtimari, a politician and diplomat to establish talks with the insurgent group. The committee according to Odo (2015) was among other tasks to ensure ceased fire and create modalities for ensuring permanent peace in the Northeast. Although the committee in the earlier months of the negotiation was generally pointed to be successful, especially in ensuring the fall of violent attacks, however, this also short-lived because the chairman of the committee furiously withdrew in the dialogue process. Factors attributed to the sudden withdrawal of the chair are not clear, but many have attributed it to the lack of political will by the government.

In furtherance to the above attempts, in October 2012 another committee inaugurated under the leadership of Dr. Ahmed Ibrahim Datti, the head of the Nigeria Supreme Council on Islamic Affairs. Credible sources indicated that Dr. Datti led committee brought the insurgent leaders and the government representative in a dialogue table resulting in relative peace in the country (Ekwueme and Obayi, 2012). However, in November 2012, one Abu Mohammed, the spokesperson of the group alleged boycotting of the peace talk pointing on lack of willingness and integrity of the government.

Moreover, in May 2013 President Good Luck Jonathan inaugurated another 27-member committee "Presidential Committee for Dialogue and Peaceful Resolution of the Security Challenges in the North." Like the succeeding committees, the present committee was task to engage the Boko Haram group in peace talk and restore peace in the region. However, Abubakar Shekau, the embattled leader of the group appeared in a 15-minute video and called on his follower to desist from all negotiation with the government. As indicated by Bamidele (2016), Abubakar Shekau called the concept of "amnesty" as derogative principally aimed to tarnish the objective of the movement. The terror leader argued the term is not suitable for the Boko Haram followers whose members are not criminals. He then called on the followers to intensify attacks on the government and enemy population. Perhaps, the prevailing accounts has shown that Boko Haram is a kind of localize terror group whose eruption and continued sustenance is linked to grievance factors.

However, there are noticeable successes in the reduction of the Boko Haram toward the end of the year 2015 due to the inception of Muhammadu Buhari, a war veteran as the president. Onuoha and Oyowele (2018) documents that there is a decline of Boko Haram attacks by 8%, hostages by 23% and fatalities by 30% between 2014 and 2015. The attributed the successes to an improvement in the counterinsurgency operation with the inception of General Buhari as President. In contrast to subsidence of the existentialism of the violence, Doukhan (2015) claimed dialogue attempts often accompanied by an acceleration of violent attacks. Although, some sources attributed the military response to be responsible for the failure of the successive dialogue attempts thus protracting the conflict (Nwanka, 2016; Olanwareju et al, 2017), others, however, argued that the persistent attacks by the Boko Haram against civilian potently discourage the Nigerian government from reaching any sort of consensus with the group (Popovski and Maiangwa, 2016). In fact, despite the protraction of the conflict, the participation of Civilian Joint Task Force signified in relative peace in many communities.

IV. CIVILIAN JOINT TASK FORCE

Interestingly, in spite of the lackadaisical performance of the Nigeria government, including the international military collaboration in combating Boko Haram, since 2013, when members of civilian self-defense group colloquially 'Civilian Joint Task Force,' participated in the counterinsurgency, there is a significant reduction in hostilities of the Boko Haram group in many communities (Bamidele, 2016; Agbiboa, 2015a; Alfendi and Gumel, 2015). For instance, in their comparative analysis of the frequencies of Boko Haram attacks before and after the participation of the CJTF, Omenma & Hendricks (2018) indicated that the participation of the CJTF has resulted in a significant reduction of the Boko Haram attack rates. They scored the mean (M) and standard deviation (SD) at before 11.83 and 4.926 respectively before

the participation, and 5.35 and 4.248 Mean and Standard Deviation respectively after the participation.

Moreover, there is growing evidence that since its participation, the CJTF emerged influential in reconquering many towns and villages fallen to the Boko Haram caliphate. For instance, Bamidele (2017) documented that in March 2014, CJTF conquered Mafa town about 30 km from Maiduguri, the capital city of Borno state resulted in the rescued of over 5000 people. Empirical data by the Integrated Regional Information Network (2013) shows shortly after the participation of the CJTF, nearly 600 Boko Haram members were killed, arresting of thousands of the fighters, as well as the destruction of the insurgent cells and networks. Furthermore, besides protecting the lives of the ordinary civilians, the CJTF is pointed out instrumental for abating many attacks targeted against the security operatives in the north. One notable example was the courageous role played by the group in repelling an attack on the notorious Giwa military barrack in Maiduguri.

Furthermore, according to Chukwuma (2017) before the mobilization of CJTF, the insurgent has virtually overrun the military formation by forcing armies to withdraw into defensive tactic allowing the insurgent to overrun. Moreover, the author argued that the mobilization of CJTF rendered a huge blow to Boko Haram leaving many of the fighters killed and others arrested. The group also captured several arms and ammunition, including armored personnel carrier previously captured by insurgent from the military. Commemorating on the successes of CJTF, Nigeria's then-President Good Luck Jonathan described the members of the CJTF as Nigeria's new national heroes.

Consequently, the successes of the CJTF is generally pointed to have been triggers by a sense of shared purpose and operational urgency, mission focus, and personal relationships among themselves and with the local population. Reflecting on the main contributory factor to the CJTF successes, Omenma & Hendricks (2018) indicated that the active support of the civilian population to increase the strategic and operational intelligence gathering of the group thus influence its success.

However, while the literature has documented successes of the CJTF, the motivation triggering the participation of the people has been an issue of the fierce scholarly contest. Some authors claimed the group started as voluntarily force (Bamidele, 2016); however, others indicate that it is a deliberate creation of the government (Peic, 2014). In either case, prevailing evidence suggests the group has been receiving support from the government as well as supported by the Special Joint Task Force and the MNJTF in its combating process.

Although, while there is lack of sufficient empirical data revealing on the formation of the CJTF, the majority have attributed the philosophy to the courageous role of Baba Lawal Jafar of Hausari ward in the metropolitan town of Maiduguri (Bamidele, 2016; Agbiboa, 2015; Chuckwuma,

2017). Lawal according to most of these accounts courageously accosted and arrested an armed Boko Haram fighter before handing him over to the nearest security formation. Thereafter, according to Hassan and Pieri (2018), the news of the courageous work of Lawal went viral around the population thus fascinated others to support and fight the insurgent group voluntarily. In fact, within the shortest time period, the philosophy of the CJTF spreads to other states and towns affected by the insurgency.

However, at the initial stage, the group operates in a neighborhoods watch, activities of which are predominantly on the defensive combating including patrolling of streets, guarding markets, worship centers, and vital social infrastructures that are susceptible for the insurgent attacks. Extant literature shows at the earlier stage the group was generally identified as Kato da Gora or literally, 'men with the stick' (Agbiboa, 2015). In fact, this colloquial name emanated from the usage of the mundane weapons such as stick, cutlasses, bow, and arrows by the arrow.

Subsequently, impressed by the successes of the CJTF, the state authorities in Nigeria's northeast affected by the Boko Haram supported the groups in its combating process. They provided some level of regulation to the groups' operation. In Borno State, the movement was termed 'Borno Youths Empowerment Scheme (BOYES) and others as 'Youth Vanguard.' In Yobe the movement was termed 'Peace Group,' and in Adamawa state, 'Sarkin Baka' literally 'hunters group.' Since then, the successes of the CJTF in combating the insurgent persisted tremendously.

Consequently, even as the CJTF members are purportedly successful, there is fear that the group may challenge both formal authority and the traditional kingdoms of their localities. There is fear that the group may appropriate power and influence to themselves. Accusations are enormous that they are questioning the authority of traditional and village heads, alleging them as conspiracy for running away from the community because of the Boko Haram. In addition, many participants were accused of using personal scores to victimized innocent citizens. Many others also engaged in criminal activities involving but not limited to drugs and arms trafficking. These patterns of militia threats were also evident elsewhere, such as in Afghanistan and Iraq.

V. CONCLUSION

This article revealed that Nigeria government; International and Community base groups resorted to multifaceted approaches in combating the Boko Haram combining both military and political actions. The military focused mainly on the deployment of military and other quasi-military apparatus to engage the insurgent in conventional front including the use of aggression to annihilate the insurgent fighters. The other approach is political campaign, a kind of diplomatic strategy that involved a carrot campaign as an enticement to ceasefire, defections and surrenders. Although, while political approach has been a focus of the government over the years, the popular

literature however shows military approach has been the dominant strategy of the government. The prioritization of the military campaign is rooted from the assumption of enemy-centric scholars that insisted on the uses of violence targeting both the insurgents and alleged collaborators to forcedly withdrew support for insurgents. The strategy is an opposite of people-centered campaign popularized by David Galula, David Kilcullen, Robert Thomas etc. Most of these scholars insisted that salient options of wining the hearts and minds of the host population is the best approach of combating an insurgent rebellion. The military campaign against the insurgent in Nigeria is a blended campaign of the State Joint Task Force, Multinational Joint Task Force, and a pro-government militia Civilian Joint Task Force. Although, even as the combined campaign since 2013, growing evidences suggest that the insurgents are far from being degraded. Pockets of attacks persist in most parts of the Northern Nigeria. It would argued that the persistent of the insurgents is rooted from the overconcentration of the enemy-centric campaign of the government. The indiscriminate violence targeting both the insurgent and the host population undermined the successes of the counterinsurgency campaign. Besides withdrawing the support of the population from the government, the military aggression suppressed the chances of accessing vital intelligence about the insurgents' movements, hideouts, and attack areas.

As a means of policy, this article recommends that to combat the growing rebellion of the Boko Haram, Nigeria should adopt the population-centric counterinsurgency campaign on against the enemy-centrism. The importance of the former was rooted from the assumption of Sun Tzu, the popular ancient Chinese strategies that the offered the explanation of river and fish analogue to host population and the insurgent. Sun Tzu equated the insurgent to a fish and the host population to a river. The expert argued that much as fish should be left to death if a river is drain to dry, the insurgent is forced to misery if the population providing it asylum withdraw support of for its operation. As a panacea to withdraw the population from the insurgent, the governments at all levels should be up to their task by providing the basic necessities of livelihood to the population than sticking to the security only campaign.

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