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Boko Haram: Terrorist Selection and Recruitment

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POLITICS, PHILOSOPHY, AND LEGAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT

**BOKO HARAM: TERRORIST SELECTION
AND RECRUITMENT**

BY

GARRETT A. CLARK

POLITICAL SCIENCE HONORS THESIS

PS 498

ELIZABETHTOWN COLLEGE

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Thesis Advisor (signature required)_____

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Third Reader (if applicable)_____

Abstract:

Besides the infamous abduction of the 276 Chibok girls, little is known internationally about Boko Haram. However tens of thousands have been killed because of this terrorist organization. The purpose of this thesis is to identify how Boko Haram selects and obtains new recruits in order to prevent future recruitment from occurring. The scope of this thesis is examined through theories such as rational choice, frustration aggression, narcissistic rage, relative deprivation, class theory, functionalism, tribal particularism, and Stockholm syndrome. The methodology of this project included observational textual analysis, discourse analysis, and historical observations, all of which were obtained through peer-reviewed articles, news sources, and interview recordings with both current and former Boko Haram members as well as Boko Haram victims. It is through these sources that I discovered Boko Haram recruits its members by taking advantage of ethnic fissures, rationality, limited economic opportunity, and alienation from the Nigerian government as well as through abduction utilizing Stockholm syndrome. By identifying these recruitment tactics, a policy recommendation was constructed in order to help advise the effort to cut off Boko Haram's most valuable resource – people.

I. Introduction

There are copious differences among terrorist groups. One of these differences is in terrorist recruitment. Terrorism is much more likely to be used when combatants have asymmetric numerical strength and weaponry. As a result, the survival of the organization depends on the recruitment of others. By analyzing a terrorist organization's recruitment methods, we can possibly discover how to demographically starve such organizations' main resource – people. In this thesis, I question how Boko Haram recruits its members. The reason for studying specifically Boko Haram, rather than other terrorist organizations, is the significant amount of neglect from the international community and the academic literature. This thesis is important because the international community can make an impact if the appropriate steps are taken to neutralize Boko Haram. It analyzes the tactics Boko Haram deploys in recruiting new terrorists. It also assesses who the target population is for Boko Haram, why they are targeted, and where, both geographically and demographically, Boko Haram obtains such members.

I expect to find that Nigeria's ethnic fissures, the role of unequal distribution of power, and the alienation of the Nigerian military due to its brutal counter-terrorism tactics are fueling Boko Haram's recruitment. I also expect to discover a recruitment mechanism which feeds off of repression, limited economic opportunity, rationality, a particular tribalism, and Stockholm syndrome. For this thesis, the methodology I use involves in-depth qualitative data about Boko Haram over the past decade in literature and news sources. I argue that Boko Haram's recruitment mechanism forces civilians into submitting to their will. Furthermore, I hypothesize that the methods deployed by Boko Haram leaders and members stem from tribal traditions.

I will first review the key terms and concepts such as terrorism and those individuals involved in terrorism. After this I will give a brief overview of Boko Haram. This will be followed by a literature review that will analyze the main theories for terrorist recruitment as they apply to Boko Haram. Subsequently, the methodology and research design behind this thesis will be explained. In order to give critical background knowledge, a history of the relationship between Nigeria and Boko Haram will be next. Next I will discuss the results and analysis of my thesis in regards to tribal particularism, alienation of the Nigerian government, common recruitment tactics, the changing of Boko Haram's recruitment mechanisms, and the group's use of Stockholm syndrome. In conclusion a policy brief will be provided at the end advising the Nigerian government on how to stem the flow of Boko Haram recruits given the results of my thesis.

A. Key Terms and Concepts

It is easy to lump "terrorists" together. However, there is no standard and universally accepted definition of terrorism. A common quip states, "One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter." For this thesis, I will have to create a boundary between and distinguish between soldiers, criminals, vigilantes, warriors, terrorists and everything in between. The Federal Bureau of Investigation defines terrorism as, "violent acts or acts dangerous to human life that violate federal or state law," that, "appear to be intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population."¹ These violent acts, "affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping."² Similarly, the Central Intelligence Agency defines

¹ "Terrorism." FBI. 2016. Accessed November 13, 2016. <https://www.fbi.gov/investigate/terrorism>.

² "Terrorism." FBI. 2016.

terrorism as, “premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents.”³

According to the government of Nigeria, a terrorist is defined as:

Anyone who [is] involved or who causes an attack upon a person’s life which may cause serious bodily harm or death; kidnapping of a person; destruction to a government or public facility, transport system, an infrastructural facility including an information system, a fixed platform located on the intercontinental shelf, public place or private property likely to endanger human life or result in major economic loss.⁴

The Nigerian government’s definition of terrorism aligns with the idealist school of thought, which stresses the fact that every act that produces fear, terror, or death – whether legitimately carried out or not – by an individual, group, or state is an act of terrorism. The realist school of thought, on the other hand, sees terrorism essentially as an attack by clandestine groups on non-combatants or civilians in order to draw attention to themselves and their cause, by imbuing fear in the public to coerce a state actor to carry out an action for their political objectives.

Title 22 United States Code (USC) Section 2656 (f) provides a realist definition of terrorism by the United States. According to Title 22, “Terrorism is defined as premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetuated against non-combatant targets by sub-national or clandestine agents usually intended to influence an audience.” The U.S. Department of Defense states that a terrorist group creates fear to try to persuade people to its will. More specifically, a terrorist group, as defined by the U.S. Department of Defense, is a group that uses, “the unlawful use of violence or threat of violence to instill fear and coerce governments or societies,” and is, “often motivated by religious, political, or other ideological beliefs and

³ “Terrorism FAQs.” Central Intelligence Agency. 2013. Accessed November 13, 2016. <https://www.cia.gov/news-information/cia-the-war-on-terrorism/terrorism-faqs.html>.

⁴ An Act To Make Provisions For And About Offences Relating To Conduct Carried Out Or Purposes Connected With Terrorism, Act No. 10, National Assembly of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2011)

committed in the pursuit of goals that are usually political.”⁵ A. A. Akanni affirms this through his definition of terrorism stating, “Terrorism is a deliberate and systematic use of violence designed to destroy, kill, maim and intimidate the innocent in order to achieve a goal or draw national/international attention.”⁶ Based on this realist perspective and criterion, the Boko Haram can indeed be seen as a terrorist group in Nigeria. I will choose to identify terrorist groups as those who inflict unlawful violence or threaten the use of violence to instill fear and coerce governments or societies, as defined by the Department of Defense, as one in the same. I will be defining terrorism under a realist perspective for the remainder of this thesis.

Li’at Levanon makes a crucial point in his literature, noting that a distinction must be made between those who are actively partaking in outright terrorism, the members of the terrorist organization, and those civilians supporting it. However, Levanon points out that terrorist organizations can be “mixed” organizations, meaning they carrying out both terrorist and civilian activities.⁷ Recruitment in this paper will be defined as the action of enlisting new people who, willingly and unwillingly, join an organization to engage in terrorism related activity. However, recruitment will not be defined as the action of cultivating civilian sympathizers. Although Boko Haram may, and most likely does, obtain sympathizers, the interest of this paper will remain on how Boko Haram recruits those who participate in acts of terrorism.

These recruits participate as members by, “support[ing] the organization through

⁵ U.S. Department of Defense. Joint Chiefs of State. *Antiterrorism*. Joint Publication 3-07.2, 2010.

⁶A. A. Akanni, “History of Terrorism, Youth Psychology and Unemployment in Nigeria.” *The Journal of Pan African Studies* 7, no. 3 (September 2014): 66-76. Accessed August 5, 2016. EBSCOhost.

⁷Li’at Levanon,. *Membership in a Terrorist Organization*. Jerusalem: Ha-Makhon Ha-Yisre’eli Le-Demokratyah, 2012.

finances, weapons, intelligence, etc. and are engaging in terrorism-related activity.”⁸ Although sympathizers may contribute to acts of terror, support itself is difficult to identify as an act of terror. This support can include advocating for the organization, but once a sympathizer engages in terrorism-related activity, he or she becomes a member of the terrorist organization. For example, one can be an avid supporter of Boko Haram and believe in *Salafi* extremism. However, if he or she has not committed or engaged in violent activity, or provided to Boko Haram monetarily, then they are not a terrorist. Having the same ideology does not make one a terrorist or member of an organization.

B. “Boko Haram”

Boko Haram is located primarily in Nigeria and West Africa. Boko Haram is a religiously motivated terrorist group inspired by a sect of Islam called *Salafi Jihadism*.⁹ The word “boko” in the *Hausa* language translates to book, and “haram” in Arabic translates to something that is prohibited, inviolable, or forbidden.¹⁰ Put together, the name implies that books are forbidden.¹¹ Under this banner, Boko Haram has killed tens of thousands of people over the past decade. The violence committed by Boko Haram in Nigeria has grown exponentially and is an everyday occurrence with the purpose of striking fear, intimidating and coercing the people of Nigeria to submit to their ways.

As a result of belief in Salafi Jihadism, Boko Haram believes in establishing Nigeria as

⁸ Levanon, *Membership in a Terrorist Organization*.

⁹ A particular sect of Islam that enables the Boko Haram to act on its beliefs. To learn more in-depth about Boko Haram’s theology and how it signifies its beliefs look to my other thesis titled “Boko Haram: Using Salafism as a Weapon of Violence”

¹⁰ A Chadic language, with about 39 million speakers, mostly within Africa.

¹¹ Ali S., Yusufu Bagaji, Moses Shaibu Etila, Elijah E. Ogbadu, and Jafa’aru Garba Sule. “Boko Haram and the Recurring Bomb Attacks in Nigeria: Attempt to Impose Religious Ideology through Terrorism?” *Cross-cultural Communication* 8.1 (2012): 33-41. *ProQuest*. Web. 1 Mar. 2016.

a *caliphate*.¹² The Salafi Jihadist movement grew out of the perpetuation of a caliphate and currently relies on key sources like Taqi al-Din Ibn Taymiyya's theological and life perspectives.¹³ Ibn Taymiyya, a 13th to 14th century religious scholar of Sunni jurisprudence, encouraged violent Jihadism on the grounds of *tawhid*¹⁴ and the belief that Allah's law was sovereign.¹⁵ As a result, Salafi Jihadist groups like Boko Haram similarly call for the return of the caliphate and the imposing of *Shar'ia law*.¹⁶ Members of Boko Haram are willing to die because they believe that, "legislation comes from God; in a democracy, this capacity is given to the people." As a result, democracy is viewed as a new religion centered on making the, "people into gods and giving them God's rights and attributes."¹⁷ As a consequence Jihadists try to correct this blasphemy.

This terroristic religious motivation is built upon Boko Haram's narrative or, "social realities, particularly in terms of defining subjects and establishing their relational positions within a system of signification,"¹⁸ and critically depends upon sacred texts and history.¹⁹ Narratives, "are so ingrained in cultures that they are an essential part of people's identity and 'who they are.'"²⁰ These operating narratives are often fluid and able to be reinterpreted by individuals and groups.²¹

¹² An area containing an Islamic steward known as a caliph who is a person considered a religious successor to the Islamic prophet, Muhammad.

¹³ Roel Meijer, *Global Salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 152.; Patrick Sookhdeo, *Global Jihad: The Future in the Face of Militant Islam*, (Virginia: Isaac Publishing, 2007), 76-77.

¹⁴ Meaning the oneness of God.

¹⁵ Sookhdeo, *Global Jihad*, 76-77.

¹⁶ The body of Islamic law. The "way" or "path"; it is the legal framework within which the public and some private aspects of life are regulated for those living in a legal system based on Islam.

¹⁷ Sookhdeo, *Global Jihad*, 76-77.

¹⁸ Richard Jackson, "Constructing Enemies: 'Islamic Terrorism' in Political and Academic Discourse", *Government and Opposition* 42, (2007), 396.

¹⁹ Jeffrey R. Halverson, H.L. Goodall Jr. and Steven R. Corman, *Master Narratives of Islamist Extremism*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

²⁰ Halverson, *Master Narratives of Islamist Extremism*.

²¹ Dina Al Raffie, "Journal of Terrorism Research." *Whose Hearts and Minds? Narratives and Counter-Narratives of Salafi Jihadism*, 34. September 22, 2012. Accessed February 20, 2016. <http://jtr.st-andrews.ac.uk/articles/10.15664/jtr.304/>.

Salafi Jihadism is a particular sect of Islam that enables the Boko Haram to act on its own beliefs. Salafism comes from the word “*salaf*” in Arabic.²² *Salaf* is the term used for forefathers or ancestors of those collective generations who lived around the beginning of the Islamic practice.²³ Salafi followers consider believers during this time period to be practitioners of the purest form of Islam.²⁴ As a result, believers try to emulate the Salaf generations by following Salaf laws, tenets, morality, and even textual interpretations of the Quran and *Hadith*.²⁵ The models for the Salaf generation, the Quran, Hadith and *ijma*²⁶ of the *ulama*²⁷ are seen as true Islam. Militant Islamists or Salafi Jihadists call for doctrinal purity and for literal interpretation of the Quran.

Boko Haram’s Salafi Jihadist leader, Abubakar Shekau, has lead the group to success and established it as a force with which to be reckoned. Boko Haram continues to grow despite the Nigerian army’s efforts to dismantle it. This successful track record of the terrorist organization must be studied to understand how to defeat the terrorist group. The group’s efforts amount to thousands of casualties and abductions each year. Boko Haram also acts outside of Nigeria, continuing to move and control different territories within West Africa. Most importantly, it is has gained recognition from ISIS while remaining under the radar of the international community with the exception of the abduction of the 276 Chibok girls.

II. Literature Review

Many look for a reason as to why people join terrorist organizations. There are many different theories behind what fuels terrorist recruitment. In order to prevail in finding our

²² Meijer, *Global Salafism*, 152.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ A collection of the reports or accounts claiming to quote what the prophet Muhammad said.

²⁶ An Arabic term referring to the consensus or agreement of the Muslim scholars on religious issues.

²⁷ A body of Muslim scholars recognized as having specialized knowledge of Islamic sacred law and theology.

correct lens to focus on Boko Haram's recruitment, it is necessary to review many of the major theories surrounding it. One theory I believe can explain terrorist recruitment is rational choice. Nigeria's ethnic fissures, the role of unequal distribution of power, and the alienation of the Nigerian military that are fueling Boko Haram's recruitment can be explained by the individuals' decisions to join Boko Haram.

Mark L. Lichbach's influence with rational choice theory in "Rational Revolutionaries," employed an individual bottom up approach. Lichbach claims that hardship is not a required or ample excuse for political violence.²⁸ As a result he dismisses relative deprivation theory with logical collective action. Lichbach also claims that incentives chosen by individuals are the major motivation for individuals to take part in political violence. It is through this that rational choice holds that individuals select their actions so that they can obtain their goals, given their beliefs about what strategies are the most effective. Rational choice theory tries to make that case that those who join terrorist organizations are actually just making a logical decision. Each person examines the positives and negatives of joining a terrorist group and then determines the best logical choice that serves their own interests.

Pamala L. Griset and Sue Mahan argue that individual effort to join in terrorism activity can, "follow logical [a] processes that can be discovered and explained."²⁹ The individual has preferences between the choices that are available to him. As a result, "The resort to violence as a willful choice [is] made."³⁰ A recruit processes the available information, such as the positives and negatives of joining, and determines his or her best

²⁸ Mark I. Lichbach, "What Makes Rational Peasants Revolutionary? Dilemma, Paradox, and Irony in Peasant Collective Action." *World Politics* 46, no. 03 (1994): 383-418. Accessed October 20, 2016. doi:10.2307/2950687.

²⁹ Pamala L. Griset, and Sue Mahan. *Terrorism in Perspective*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2003.

³⁰ Griset, *Terrorism in Perspective*.

course of action. However, the argument may arise that if an individual is indeed a rational person, then, why would he join a terrorist organization? Griset and Mahan explain how rationality can be relative. They state, “People realize that their participation is important because group size and cohesion matter” and that they, “perceive their personal influence on,” the public to be for the overall good.³¹ Griset and Mahan go even as far as to state that people “choose terrorism when they want immediate action. They think that only violence can build organizations and mobilize supporters, and accept the risks of challenging the government in a particularly provocative way.”³² However, Griset and Mahan qualify that, “the choice of terrorism involves considerations of timing and of the popular contribution to revolt, as well as of the relationship between government and opponents.”³³

Many choose to join terrorist groups because of various individual factors. Individual circumstances that make it more likely to join Boko Haram could be anything from struggling to support a family financially, wanting to learn more about Islam, or even revenge. However, as John Scott shows, the problem with rational choice theory is that these individual factors can create patterns. Therefore, “Social structures can be understood as chains of interconnection,” that can reflect common sources of influence on those who join terrorist organizations.³⁴ Some would even argue that rational choice theory does not really explain a terrorist group’s action in recruiting but the mindset of the individual joining. With this being said, I believe that even if patterns emerge from social structures, which I argue they do, it still does not diminish the fact that the individual chose to be a part of a terrorist organization.

³¹ Griset, *Terrorism in Perspective*.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ John Scott, and F. Webster. “Rational Choice Theory.” Web.archive.org. 2000. Accessed August 27, 2016.

As for the assumption that rational choice does not explain terrorist recruitment, I would argue that terrorist groups are indeed responsible for this. Groups like Boko Haram can create an environment in which citizens doubt their government. Terrorist groups can also proclaim who they are and their beliefs, attracting those who deem the group a rational choice.

Sigmund Freud and Dollard Dupe provide another theory, as to why people participate in terrorism. Frustration aggression theory suggests that when frustration sets into the community as a whole, it can lead to aggressive behavior. As a result, the researcher is left to try to discover the source of frustration, which Akanni believes, “happens when people do not have enough to survive.”³⁵ This feeling of frustration usually produces, “militant or violent laden consciousness,” in people. Although I do expect to discover a Boko Haram recruitment mechanism which feeds off of repression and limited economic opportunity, I do not believe that relative repression causes people to join terrorist organizations. Given that, there are other parts of countries where terrorism exists and other places around the world that are going through repression worse than, “those who are frustrated with the position they are in,” that still do not revert to violence.

Akanni also notes that this is very similar to narcissistic rage theory. Narcissistic rage theory is based on, “a reaction to narcissistic injury, which is a perceived threat to a narcissist’s self-esteem or self-worth.”³⁶ When applied to terrorism, Akanni shows that terrorists experience a “form of ‘displacement.’”³⁷ This theory focuses on individuals who pursue gratification from vanity or egotistic admiration of one's own attributes. When narcissists are blocked from this gratification and perceive someone or something as a threat,

³⁵ Akanni, “History of Terrorism, Youth Psychology and Unemployment in Nigeria.”

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

they act out and seek revenge against it or them. This could apply to countries, which are very impoverished, that house terrorist groups. However, Vaaseh explains that this frustration does not necessarily have to come from a lack of economic resources, but can come from, “injustice, lack of good livelihood opportunities, discrimination, marginalization, lack of education, and other basic necessities of life.”³⁸ Following the logic of narcissistic rage theory, all those who joined terrorist organizations would be considered narcissists. However, much of what some religious terrorist groups argue is not for personal status or economic/material reasons, but mainly religious considerations. Therefore, we cannot assume that everyone joining a terrorist organization, like Boko Haram, perceive a threat to self-esteem or self-worth and seeks revenge through a terrorist group.

Relative deprivation theory adds onto frustration aggression and pushes aside weaknesses of the theory in that people may be worse off than others and still not resort to violence. Relative deprivation theory relies on the fact that people compare themselves to other people and think they are worse off than those people. Relative deprivation theory asserts that people who have good livelihoods can still feel as though they are worse off than others become frustrated and act out on this frustration. Ted Gurr, author of “Why Men Rebel,” makes the claim that a divide between, “expected and achieved welfare creates collective discontent.”³⁹ Individuals begin to compare themselves to those around them and begin to believe themselves inferior. Gurr claims this discontent is a result of, “perceived discrepancy between value expectations and value capabilities.”⁴⁰ It does not matter if a

³⁸ Godwin A. Vaaseh, “Political Uncertainty And Violence In Nigeria: Politicising The Boko Haram Insurgency In Northeastern Nigeria.” *International Journal Of Arts & Sciences* 8, no. 8 (December 2015): 403-416. Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed September 26, 2016).

³⁹ Ted Robert Gurr, . *Why Men Rebel*. Princeton, NJ: Center of International Studies, Princeton UP, 1970.

⁴⁰ Gurr, *Why Men Rebel*.

person is the least deprived person in a country, as long as he feels deprived. Gurr states relative deprivation, “is the term ... used to denote the tension that develops from a discrepancy between the ‘ought’ and the ‘is’ of collective value satisfaction, and that disposes men to violence.”⁴¹ This can lead to individuals joining terrorist groups to obtain what they want relatively quickly and through force. However, improved as this theory may be over frustration aggression theory, it still does not explain why so many who are deprived or feel deprived still do not join terrorist organizations. For example, while a person may be deprived, they can at the same time desire to avoid conflict.

Ayodeji Bayo Ogunrotifa proposes a different theory to terrorism recruitment than Gurr. He proposes that the root of the problem lies with the classes, as seen in his hypothesis of class theory. One will find this theory is quite tailored to its founder, Karl Marx. Class theory maintains that all of a society’s problems and issues are a result of class. The theory separates people into two categories: the haves and the have-nots. The have-nots end up revolting against the haves as a result of oppression and their current state. Ogunrotifa claims that social class relations are producing a “ruling class and their counterpart.”⁴² He provides the analogies of the, “freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on and uninterrupted.”⁴³ As a result of these relations, each group poses a threat to the other and therefore is forced to resort to violence.

For example, Ogunrotifa presents:

[B]ecause of the danger that could be posed to the ruling class in power in west Africa

⁴¹ Gurr, *Why Men Rebel*.

⁴² Ayodeji Bayo Ogunrotifa, “Class Theory of Terrorism: A Study of Boko Haram Insurgency In Nigeria.” *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences* 3, no. 1 (February 2013): 1-35. Accessed September 2, 2016. EBSCOhost.

⁴³ Bayo Ogunrotifa, “Class Theory of Terrorism: A Study of Boko Haram Insurgency In Nigeria.”

(who are unrepentant stooges and allies of Western capitalist ruling class), Nigerian government announced the receipt of military aid in the training and re-training of military personnel, fixing of military jets, and acquisition of new boats, helicopters and technological devices that would be used in fighting Boko Haram.⁴⁴

However, there are flaws with this theory. One of these flaws is that it assumes that there is strictly a ruling elite and strictly a counterpart. This means that the two fighting groups cannot be a mix of those who rule and those who do not. Furthermore, it would seem as though the majority of the elite and the majority of the counterpart would need to be fighting against one another to make this claim.

Functionalist theory provides a much broader view than class theory. This theory generalizes that society, as a whole, is affected by many interacting independent factors. Godwin Vaaseh explains that functionalist theory assumes that society is a conglomerate of, “different interacting independent parts.”⁴⁵ These independent parts each have a certain purpose in human societies’ need for stability, “in maintaining peace and progress and security of the society as a whole.”⁴⁶ Functionalist theory explains why there is so much hardship in trying to get a nation to unify when there is such a wide demographic of people in a country. Functionalist theory shows why a terrorist group is able to unify together in such diverse societies and attract people from all forms of demographics. This explains why terrorist organizations break away from other societies and start to build their own instead. Because of diverse populations, it is sensible that people have different reasons for joining a terrorist organization. Still, many would criticize that this theory does not adequately explain why terrorist groups form in the first place. However, with this being said, the theory is still

⁴⁴ Bayo Ogunrotifa, “Class Theory of Terrorism: A Study of Boko Haram Insurgency In Nigeria.”

⁴⁵ Vaaseh,. “Political Uncertainty And Violence In Nigeria: Politicising The Boko Haram Insurgency In Northeastern Nigeria.”

⁴⁶ Ibid.

relevant in explaining how a terrorist group is able to function, survive, and attract individuals.

David Cook focuses more specifically on why people join terrorist organizations. Cook examines tribal particularism theory. This theory, specific to Boko Haram, examines how ethnic differences can play a part in terrorism recruitment. It reflects how a group transfers their aggression from another oppressed and frustrated group of which they were also a part. That is to say, a group of people will channel the frustrations of a particular people-group or tribe. This theory however solely relies on whether or not the group of people acting out share a common identity from their collective oppressed past. The theory revolves around the question of why most impoverished West African tribes have not produced violent groups. Cook argues that terrorist groups can channel, “frustrations,” from, “a particular people-group,” of which they used to be a part.⁴⁷ For example, terrorist organizations can be a result of a rivalry between ethno-religious societies just like the genocide in Rwanda. Cook explains that this tension could be because there is deep, “resentment against traditional elites,” as part of an ethno-religious society.⁴⁸ I believe much of the current recruitment in certain organizations can be explained by the religio-ethnic and tribal divides which is perpetuating societies to produce violence. This would also explain why many do not leave once recruited, because they feel a sense of identity in the group.

Although this is a relatively new hypothesis, there are still criticisms. One weakness is that a violent group may not be fully made up of a certain group or tribal identity. For example, terrorist groups made up of different individuals from different backgrounds could

⁴⁷ David Cook. “Boko Haram: A New Islamic State in Nigeria.” James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy, December 11, 2014, 1-30. Accessed August 4, 2016. EBSCOhost.

⁴⁸ Cook,. “Boko Haram: A New Islamic State in Nigeria.”

negate this theory. However, I would argue that while there may not be a majority of a particular tribe, it does not take away the fact that the terrorist group may still channel a certain tribe's anger. This can even be the case if a majority of the members of the group and those that continue to join the group are not associated with the tribe. Another criticism is that this theory usually does not explain why some violent groups do not transfer practices from their origin and form new practices.⁴⁹ This would lead one to assume that the terrorist group does not derive its anger from a particular group identity. However, I attribute this lack of comparable practices as a lack of evidence found or discovered to make these connections.

There are not many studies conducted on the phenomenon of Stockholm syndrome within terrorism. This is primarily because studies can only be through distant observation. Victims usually turn from seeing their captors taking life to captors giving it.⁵⁰ This is a phenomenon where hostages show positive feelings, empathy, and sympathy towards captors. In Stockholm syndrome, the captor, "serves as a mother figure protecting her child from a threatening outside world, including law enforcement's deadly weapons."⁵¹ Captives can be seen identifying and defending their captors. This unusual irrationality emerges when the victim is in danger. Often as a result, those who abduct individuals can find themselves being supported by those who they kidnapped and even find their victims not wanting to be rescued. The same can be said for terrorists who kidnap boys and girls for recruitment. Terrorists wish to make their newly acquired able-bodied captives accept them. Freud claims that individuals go through a defense mechanism that allows them to, "guard or distance themselves from and

⁴⁹ Cook, "Boko Haram: A New Islamic State in Nigeria."

⁵⁰ Nathalie De Fabrique, Stephen J. Romano, Gregory M. Vecchi, and Vincent B. Van Hasselt. "Understanding Stockholm Syndrome." *PsycEXTRA Dataset*, July 2007. Accessed October 1, 2016. doi:10.1037/e642442007-001.

⁵¹ De Fabrique, "Understanding Stockholm Syndrome."

remain consciously unaware of unpleasant thoughts, feelings, and desires.”⁵² As a result, some of those abducted by terrorists can be found helping them, blocking out what the terrorists did to them and even choosing to remain with them. However, many claim the weakness of this phenomenon is that it is hard to prove these captives did not have biased leaning towards the terrorists before they were abducted. Furthermore, captives who die in assisting their captors cannot be identified with Stockholm syndrome because they are now dead. However, I argue that through interviews with former terror organization members and captives, we can draw connections to the conditions created to form Stockholm syndrome, as outlined by the FBI law enforcement.

In this thesis, I attempt to prove that tribal particularism theory is why individuals join Boko Haram and how the terrorist organization’s recruiting targets a particular tribe. I will still maintain that some join Boko Haram from a rational choice perspective, and that others, not affiliated with the particular tribe, are coming together to form a stable group, in honor of functionalist perspective. Lastly, I attempt to prove that kidnappings and abductions committed by Boko Haram are done in an attempt to select and turn girls against their country, communities, and families.

III. Methods and Research Design

For my research design, I use a top-down approach in order to seek the root of why people join terrorist groups. In order to do this, I obtain my evidence through historical observation, textual analysis, and discourse analysis. I evaluate my evidence through qualitative research and content analysis. Historical observations, textual analysis, and

⁵² Sigmund Freud, *The Ego and the Id: The Standard Edition* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton and Company, 1960).

discourse analysis will be obtained through peer-reviewed articles, news sources, and interview recordings with Boko Haram members.

One of the largest potential problems I encounter is validity. Sources and evidence may be biased in analysis. To combat this, I try to be as objective as possible in my selection and interpretation. Furthermore, I familiarize myself with the common biased trends of all sides of the argument and am aware of such leanings. However, it must be stated that there is no objective reality in one's mind. As hard I may try, I may not be able to detach my emotions from these atrocities that I am investigating. One of the strengths of this research design is that it can provide details about terrorist recruit behavior, emotion, needs, desires, routines and personality characteristics that quantitative studies cannot match. The weakness, however, is that one cannot statistically prove any of the above assumptions. Furthermore, some of the sources are not first hand and may possibly contain their own bias. To combat this, I have included sources of first-hand accounts in interviews. Although some of these sources are too close to the situation to accurately examine it objectively. This is the reason for obtaining information from professional scholarly sources as well.

IV. History

A. Nigeria

At first glance, Nigeria may not seem a typical place for terrorism to foster. Upon further inquiry, however, one can see that the narrative of Nigeria and its people is much more complex than could ever be imagined. Nigeria's inter-connecting demographic and political factors allow for the situation Nigeria has found itself in today. As it will later be discovered, Boko Haram's recruitment is and can be explained in part, by the history of Nigeria.

Compared to other countries, Nigeria is atypical because it harbors terrorism. Nigeria,

as a country, has not been a failing state even with the presence of Boko Haram. Currently, Nigeria has a population of over 185 million people, and of that, nearly 43 percent are under the age of 15.⁵³ It possesses the largest economy and military in Africa.⁵⁴ In terms of geography, it is approximately twice the size of California.⁵⁵ Its political geography reflects 36 state governments and over 770 local governments.⁵⁶ Nigeria's population is roughly 50 percent Muslim and 40 percent Christian with the remaining ten percent belonging to indigenous religions.⁵⁷ There are more than 200 ethnic groups, each possessing "layers of authority and loyalty structures."⁵⁸ The main three ethnic groups, Hausa-Fulani, Igbo, and Yoruba, make up 80 percent of the population.⁵⁹ As a country, it is very unique. Thus, Nigeria needs to be examined in a historical context.

When describing the state of Nigeria, it is important understand how the demography of Nigeria has changed over time. One cannot miss the rifts between religions and the Western world in Nigeria. As Stuart Elden points out, the rift between Islam and the Western world dates back to the 1800's with British colonialism and the Sokoto Caliphate.⁶⁰ The Sokoto Caliphate was founded by a Fulani leader named Usman dan Fodio. Usman dan Fodio, "Commander of the Faithful," massed a successful revolt against the Northern Hausa kingdoms.⁶¹ As a result, a theocratic caliphate was formed. The caliphate was very critical of

⁵³ "The World Factbook: NIGERIA." *Central Intelligence Agency*. Accessed October 11, 2016. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/geos/ni.html>.

⁵⁴ Stuart Elden, "The Geopolitics of Boko Haram and Nigeria's 'war on Terror'." *The Geographical Journal* 180, no. 4 (2014): 414-425. Accessed August 10, 2016. doi:10.1111/geoj.12120.

⁵⁵ James J.F Forest, "Confronting the Terrorism of Boko Haram in Nigeria." *JSOU Report 12-5*, May 2012, 1-178. Accessed September 1, 2016. EBSCOhost.

⁵⁶ Forest, "Confronting the Terrorism of Boko Haram in Nigeria." 1-178.

⁵⁷ Elden, "The Geopolitics of Boko Haram and Nigeria's 'war on Terror'." 414-425.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Forest, "Confronting the Terrorism of Boko Haram in Nigeria." 1-178.

⁶⁰ Elden, "The Geopolitics of Boko Haram and Nigeria's 'war on Terror'." 414-425.

⁶¹ Forest, "Confronting the Terrorism of Boko Haram in Nigeria." 1-178.

Hausa elite, who were seen as greedy and corrupt.⁶² This is still an ideology that is held by northern impoverished ethnic societies. As time went on, however, the Sokoto Caliphate eventually became a, “loose confederation of about 30 emirates.”⁶³

Eventually, when the British took control of the region, geographical lines were drawn. Bamidele Oluwaseun explains, “The amalgamation of the Northern and Southern protectorates in 1914 attracted an influx of southern migrants responding to the emerging economic opportunities in Kano, Kaduna, and Zaria.”⁶⁴ As a result, eight million Muslims moved to Southern and Western regions of what is now Northern Nigeria and Cameroon, and two million Christians emigrated in the opposite directions.⁶⁵

Demography was changing radically. This was partially because the ruling elite in the, “caliphate era were territorial and not open to the idea of allowing ‘strangers’ into their areas.”⁶⁶ Furthermore, the British encouraged the preservation of the northern Islamic identity in order to avoid potential intergroup tensions.⁶⁷ Although, in as much as the British tried solving tensions by drawing lines, many contentious ethnic and religious groups were not able to settle their differences and resorted to the use of violence in disputes. Furthermore, according to James Forest, in addition to the main three ethnic identities, the remaining ethno-linguistic entities have been “historically marginalized and underrepresented among the political and economic elite.”⁶⁸

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Bamidele Oluwaseun, “Reign of Evil: (Re)casting the Socioeconomic Crisis of Boko Haram Islamic Extremist Terrorism in Nigeria.” *Journal of Applied Security Research* 11, no. 1 (2016): 61-77. Accessed August 12, 2016. doi:10.1080/19361610.2016.1104280.

⁶⁵ Oluwaseun, “Reign of Evil: (Re)casting the Socioeconomic Crisis of Boko Haram Islamic Extremist Terrorism in Nigeria.” 61-77.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Forest, “Confronting the Terrorism of Boko Haram in Nigeria.” 1-178.

B. Setting a Backdrop for Boko Haram

In order to understand what terrorism is in the context of Boko Haram, one must understand the formation of the Boko Haram. Starting from the 19th century, leaders like the Nigerian Jihadist legacy of Uthman Dan Fodio played an influential role in this group's formation. Azumah claims that Uthman "led a Fulani insurgency against the Hausa rulers of his day because the latter were deemed not to be Islamic enough."⁶⁹ In other words, Boko Haram's terrorist group had historical Nigerian inspirations to spark and form an organization of Jihadists.

Boko Haram also found formation through the activism of other pre-founded groups within the Nigeria region such as Izala and Ahlus Sunna. Nigeria's political discourse played a major role in the formation of the Izala movement. This movement provided Islamic political leaders like Bubakar Mahmud Gumi, a reformer of Uthman, "with the much needed organizational backing for his religio-political activism."⁷⁰ This cause and effect would eventually inspire Boko Haram. The chain of events is apparent with Azumah's claim that "Ja'far Mahmud Adam is one such Izala alumnus and Medina graduate who became a prominent Salafi-Ahlu Sunna leader in Northern Nigeria, and who, in turn, was the teacher of Muhammad Yusuf, the founder of Boko Haram."⁷¹

Through certain leadership, groups like Boko Haram are able to obtain their inspirations. Many religions have different branches or sects within them. The same is true for Islam. Boko Haram resides within Salafism in Islam. "The popular discourses of Salafi

⁶⁹ John A., Azumah. "Boko Haram in retrospect." *Islam And Christian-Muslim Relations* 26, no. 1 (January 2015): 33-52. ATLA Religion Database, EBSCOhost (accessed February 22, 2016).

⁷⁰ Azumah, "Boko Haram in retrospect." 33-52.

⁷¹ Ibid.

radicalism and Salafi counter-radicalism in Nigeria: a case study of Boko Haram”⁷² shows how Boko Haram tailors its sect for success. For example, Muhammed Yusuf’s reliance on Idris Taymizya, who is regarded by Salafi and Wahhabis as one of the most prominent authorities, helps enforce that Western education is forbidden and that employment by the government is also forbidden. These precepts encourage followers to commit to justified actions.

Boko Haram, however, no longer considers itself part of the Wahhabi Islam. Boko Haram now clings solely to Salafism because it refuses to subscribe to the interpretations of the Hanbali madhhab school of thought. Haykel explains that the difference between Salafi and Wahhabis Islam helped create the Boko Haram. Haykel states the six central concepts to Salafism are *tawhid*, *shirk*, *bid’a*, *takfir*, *ijtihad*, and *manhaj*.⁷³ All six of these concepts are central to Salafism. While Wahhabis, on the other hand, though similar in the six main aspects as Salafism, follows the *Hanbali madhhab*.⁷⁴ Hanbali madhhab, though the smallest population size, is one of the four orthodox Sunni Islamic schools of jurisprudence.⁷⁵ Salafi Muslims are usually divided between those who, in the name

⁷² Alex Thurston, “‘The Disease Is Unbelief’: Boko Haram’s Religious and Political Worldview.” Africa Portal. January 22, 2016. Accessed October 29, 2016.

⁷³ *Tawhid* means the oneness of God. Tawhid, the religion’s most fundamental concept of monotheism in Islam, holds that Allah is One and Single.

Shirk means ascribing partners to God. Shirk is an Arabic word that has a negative connotation because equates others with God. Shirk, considered the antithesis of Tawhid, allows for idolatry and supplication to those other than Allah or the belief that someone could hold the same attributes as God to an equal or lesser degree.

Bid’a means innovation in religious matters. Bid’a refers to innovation in religious matters. Many Salafi leaders claim that the decline of the Muslim world has been caused by pernicious foreign innovations (*bid’a*). This is why Boko Haram attacks Christians, Muslims, and the Nigerian government.

Takfir means excommunication. Takfir refers to the practice of excommunication, where one Muslim declares another Muslim as a non-believer. This is important because many Salafi leaders hold that anyone outside of Salafism is a polytheist and/or unbeliever. Leaders of Boko Haram have commonly exercised this term toward other Muslims in Nigeria.

Ijtihad means independent interpretation. Ijtihad means to expend efforts in a difficult situation. In its most technical terms, it means expending efforts to arrive at a Shar’ia ruling by an independent legal judgment.

Manhaj means path or method. Manhaj refers to the methodology of receiving, analyzing, and applying knowledge. Therefore, to live out and practice the correct understanding of the Quran and Sunnah one is on the correct Manhaj.

⁷⁴ *Hanbali madhhab* is an Arabic word, which translates to legal school.

⁷⁵ Bernard, Haykel. *Global Salafism: Islam’s New Religious Movement*. Edited by Roel Meijer. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009.

of *ijtihad*, reject strict adherence to the four schools of law and those who fully accept it. This is why Muhammad Yusuf eventually broke away from his Salafi-Wahhabi taught leader Ja'far Mahmoud. Ja'far Mahmoud actively followed the Alhaji Muhammadu Ndimi mosque (an Ahlus Sunna mosque) in Maiduguri.⁷⁶ Muhammad Yusuf, on the other hand, did not agree with following the Hanbali madhhab, and as a result, Boko Haram, due to its founder Yusuf, is solely Salafi Jihadist.

V. Results and Analysis

A. Examining Boko Haram's Tribal Particularism

A common trend in the results was discovered in Boko Haram. A notable amount of individuals from the Kanuri tribe were and are recruited by Boko Haram.⁷⁷ The Kanuri tribe makes up approximately four percent of Nigeria's population.⁷⁸ The tribe is primarily located in northeastern states of Nigeria and even northern Cameroon.⁷⁹ Forest point out that "Kanuri also inhabit regions across the northern border into Niger, and there is evidence to suggest that these tribal relationships facilitate weapons trafficking and other cross-border smuggling transactions," helping facilitate, "Boko Haram's activities outside Nigeria."⁸⁰ There seems to be a connection with the tribe's location and Boko Haram's location. Forest states, "It has thus far proven difficult for the group to find sympathizers or anyone who would help them facilitate attacks further south, thus the majority of attacks have taken place within the

Hanbali derives Shar'ia predominantly from the Quran, the Hadith, and the views of *Sahabah*. *Sahabah* refers to Muhammad's companions. In cases where there is no clear answer in sacred texts of Islam, the Hanbali school does not accept jurist discretion or customs of a community as a sound basis to derive Islamic law, a method only Sunni *fiqhs* accept. *Fiqh* refers to legal Islamic jurisprudence from Ulama. (A body of Muslim scholars recognized as having specialist knowledge of Islamic sacred law and theology.)

⁷⁶ Azumah, "Boko Haram in retrospect." 33-52.

⁷⁷ Cook, "Boko Haram: A New Islamic State in Nigeria." 1-30.

⁷⁸ Forest, "Confronting the Terrorism of Boko Haram in Nigeria." 1-178.

⁷⁹ Cook, "Boko Haram: A New Islamic State in Nigeria." 1-30.

⁸⁰ Forest, "Confronting the Terrorism of Boko Haram in Nigeria." 1-178.

north.”⁸¹ In 2014, the Cameroon Defense Ministry claimed that Boko Haram was growing in and around the Lake Chad Region.⁸² As it happens, the Kanuri tribe dwells within this region heavily.⁸³ This is primarily because of how integrated the Kanuri tribe is with Boko Haram.

Kanuri is seen by some to be in revolt against the Fulani-Hausa domination of northern Islam.⁸⁴ Forest explains that the Hausa and Fulani, who make up about 29% of the population, are more commonly found throughout most of Nigeria’s northern states and tend to be more westernized. Fulani-Hausa dominate northern Muslim leadership and reject and refuse to support Boko Haram. One can draw a connection between Kanuri and Boko Haram through shared tensions.

This shared tension can be linked to the westernization of Nigeria. Benjamin Barber explains that, “Tribalism and Reactionary Fundamentalism,” produces militants, “who detest modernity—the secular, scientific, rational and commercial civilization.”⁸⁵ This reflects how the Kanuri tribe feels about the Fulani-Hausa dominated north. Onuoha claims that one of the reasons Boko Haram turned to violence was due, “to perceived political marginalization of the North and particularly the Northeast.”⁸⁶ The Kanuri ethnic group is a large group in Northeastern Nigeria. Nigeria’s constitution requires that the Nigerian people receive equal geographic representation on a national level. However it has not, “sought greater representation for the Northeast within Nigeria’s democracy,” and has not been brought into

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Jacob Zenn, “Boko Haram: Recruitment, Financing, and Arms Trafficking in the Lake Chad Region.” Combating Terrorism Center at West Point. October 31, 2014. Accessed September 28, 2016.

⁸³ Cook, “Boko Haram: A New Islamic State in Nigeria.” 1-30.

⁸⁴ Cook, “Boko Haram: A New Islamic State in Nigeria.” 1-30.

⁸⁵ Benjamin Barber, “Terrorism, Interdependence and Democracy,” in *e Making of a Terrorist*, Volume 3: Root Causes, edited by James J.F. Forest (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2005), p. 210.

⁸⁶ Freedom C. Onuoha, “Why Do Youth Join Boko Haram?” United States Institute of Peace, June 2014, 1-12. Accessed July 5, 2016. doi:10.1163/2210-7975_hrd-0131-2014002.

the national rhetoric. This attempt to include members of the tribe and area in the government shows that relative deprivation may not be the case, since they are being given a seat at the table. The Kanuri tribe rejects not only this system but the Northern dominated Fulani-Hausa society. The Kanuri tribe has been alienated from society, and Onuoha points out that the Kanuri tribe completely rejects this society.

The Kanuri group is blending with Boko Haram and visa-versa. Boko Haram has a kinship affinity for Kanuri.⁸⁷ Akanni comments on this relationship saying, “As ethnic associations, they were based on strong loyalty and obligation to their kinship group.”⁸⁸ When Boko Haram started using remote detonation bombs, attacking civilians, many Nigerians claimed Boko Haram, “must be making use of people from Niger or other African states, because no Nigerian would do this.”⁸⁹ However, as we have learned, the Kanuri tribe does not see itself as a part of Nigeria but instead looks to its tribal identity. Akanni affirms this stating, “These associations were the organizational expression of strong, persistent feeling of loyalty and obligation to the kinship group, the town or village where the lineage is localized.”⁹⁰ It is through this psychological and group identity relationship that we see Kanuri providing able-bodied persons to Boko Haram, and Boko Haram protecting and up holding Kanuri tradition.

Although there is some evidence to suggest Kanuri tribal particularism is occurring, there is evidence to contradict this as well. Elden claims that many Boko Haram members come from Chad and instead of speaking Kanuri speak Arabic.⁹¹ Onuha also affirms this statement claiming Boko Haram, “[D]raws followers across the 19 states of northern Nigeria,

⁸⁷ Akanni, “History of Terrorism, Youth Psychology and Unemployment in Nigeria.” 66-76.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Elden, “The Geopolitics of Boko Haram and Nigeria's ‘war on Terror.’” 414-425.

⁹⁰ Akanni, “History of Terrorism, Youth Psychology and Unemployment in Nigeria.” 66-76.

⁹¹ Elden, “The Geopolitics of Boko Haram and Nigeria's ‘war on Terror.’” 414-425.

Niger Republic, Chad and Sudan.”⁹² It can be seen that even these out of country members are not part of the Kanuri tribe. This aspect of member differentiation and diversity was predicted. However the last piece of evidence severely contradicts Kanuri tribal particularism. Though the Kanuri tribal detests some of the same things Boko Haram does, there is no evidence reflecting the same brutality Boko Haram uses against these topics. Boko Haram utilizes beheadings, massacres, and suicide bombings, while there is no evidence the Kanuri tribe uses such aggression.⁹³ Cook exclaims that, “no evidence from traditional Kanuri practice or from the varieties of Islam known from the region would explain the extreme violence associated with Boko Haram.”⁹⁴ This would suggest that Boko Haram does not reflect the same aggression the oppressed and frustrated Kanuri tribe expresses. This is to say we cannot conclusively claim that Boko Haram channels their frustrations through the Kanuri tribe, which would reflect a recruitment target group.

B. Nigeria helping Boko Haram Recruitment

The Federal Republic of Nigeria is often considered to be a victim of the terrorist organization, Boko Haram. However, the conflict between the two entities is much more complicated than what this perception implies. The government of Nigeria has contributed to the group’s power and establishment in the country both directly, through giving political influence to Boko Haram leaders, and indirectly, through its alienation of its citizens.

Following its return to democracy in 1999, Nigerian politicians contributed greatly to the formation of radical groups like Boko Haram. Vaaseh claims that they manipulated

⁹² Onuoha, “Boko Haram: Nigeria's Extremist Islamic Sect.” 1-6.

⁹³ Zenn, “Boko Haram: Recruitment, Financing, and Arms Trafficking in the Lake Chad Region.”

⁹⁴ Cook, “Boko Haram: A New Islamic State in Nigeria.” 1-30.

religion to obtain political power.⁹⁵ Northern politicians intentionally associated with *ummah* and Islamic clerics and promised to, “reform Islam, purge it of bad elements, and introduce Shar’ia and rule.”⁹⁶ It was not uncommon for politicians to claim they were, “ready to die for Islam” or, “prepared to fight another civil war, [that they] cannot be blackmailed into killing Shar’ia.”⁹⁷ This rhetoric is very reminiscent of the dedication that Boko Haram members have for their cause. Boko Haram, as a group, gained popularity among those with political and economic sway at this time.

Despite support from eminent political and economic heavyweights, Mohammed Yusuf was skeptical of the popularity gained through hobnobbing. By 2002, Yusuf had established a formidable sect. He denounced all forms of Western values, education, governance structures, inequality, corruption, distortions of Islamic practices, and manipulation of Islam in Nigeria, especially by corrupt politicians.⁹⁸

Because of this skepticism, Yusuf had no qualms about utilizing these political agendas to benefit his group. After Boko Haram’s move from Kanama, Yobe state to Maiduguri in 2004, politicians and members of Boko Haram began interacting very intentionally. According to the Vaaseh, Boko Haram overwhelmed the constituency of these politicians and, “The large concentration of able bodied youth and its widespread nature across many Borno and Yobe states communities,” led candidates to campaign in and around Boko Haram. Prior to 2005, power-hungry candidates became corrupt and offered important political appointments to prominent Boko Haram members in Borno and Yobe states.⁹⁹ For

⁹⁵ Vaaseh, “Political Uncertainty And Violence In Nigeria: Politicising The Boko Haram Insurgency In Northeastern Nigeria.” 403-416.

⁹⁶ *Ummah* refers to “the people” or community of Muslims.

⁹⁷ Antoine, P.M. (ed). *Boko Haram: Islamism, Politics, Security* ., 2014. [SEP]

⁹⁸ Vaaseh, “Political Uncertainty And Violence In Nigeria: Politicising The Boko Haram Insurgency In Northeastern Nigeria.” 403-416.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

example, senior Boko Haram member Late Boju Foi was appointed a commissioner by former Governor Ali Modu Sheriff.¹⁰⁰ This appointment and others like it directly gave dedicated Boko Haram members a platform to make important decisions, establish relationships with others in power, and, most importantly, inspire more civilians to their cause.

In addition to Boko Haram members gaining political power through corruption, the group's leader, Mohammed Yusuf received political attention as a result of his public preaching.¹⁰¹ The cycle of constituencies flooded with Boko Haram members and group leaders gaining political power continued as group membership grew fervently.¹⁰² Eventually, Yusuf was, "included in the Borno state committee of clerics following the introduction of Shar'ia Law."¹⁰³ Vaaseh claims that this indicated official corruption and under-the-table connections between Boko Haram and influential government leaders. Monetary patronage was exchanged between the two groups and they became irreparably connected when after being arrested, Yusuf was, "released based on intervention by influential politicians."¹⁰⁴

This symbiotic relationship did not last long though. Prior to the 2007 elections, the Nigerian government made promises to provide, "basic incentives like financial and material resources to Boko Haram members to facilitate the actualization of their ideology," on a monthly basis.¹⁰⁵ After politicians reneged on these promises, Boko Haram members attacked the government officials' security agents.¹⁰⁶ Then, the government passed the Crash Helmet

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Vaaseh, "Political Uncertainty And Violence In Nigeria: Politicising The Boko Haram Insurgency In Northeastern Nigeria." 403-416.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ M. Lai, "Politicisation of Boko Haram Insurgency, Bane Of Nigeria's Anti-Terror Fight" *Leadership Newspaper*, Friday 12, September 2014.

¹⁰⁴ Lai, "Politicisation of Boko Haram Insurgency, Bane Of Nigeria's Anti-Terror Fight"

¹⁰⁵ Vaaseh, "Political Uncertainty And Violence In Nigeria: Politicising The Boko Haram Insurgency In Northeastern Nigeria." 403-416.

¹⁰⁶ R. Portia, "Framing and Blaming: Discourse Analysis of the Boko Haram Uprising, July 2009" in Antoine, P.M. (ed). *Boko Haram: Islamism, Politics, Security*.110-124.

policy which required all citizens riding a motorcycle to wear a helmet. If citizens were found riding a motorcycle without a helmet, they would be arrested and their motorcycle would be confiscated. This legislation was directed at Boko Haram as motorcycles were their primary mode of transportation. In addition to oppressing the group logistically, the policy was also seen by Boko Haram to be founded in Western ideas and therefore a direct insult to the group.¹⁰⁷ Members became angry at the government's heavy-handed tactics.

While Boko Haram once viewed the government as a means to promote their ideology, quickly that vision transformed to portray the government as the source of the group's problems. Beginning on July 26, 2009, Boko Haram took violent action and besieged the government for four days. They attacked police, government institutions, schools, and churches.¹⁰⁸ During the siege, about 50 civilians, 22 suspected militants, two police officers, and one prison officer died.¹⁰⁹ However, the violence exploded when the Nigerian army was deployed to provide aid to the police force. An estimated 800 people were killed by the army and about 1,000 Boko Haram members were arrested.¹¹⁰ Furthermore, Mohammed Yusuf and other sect leaders were executed publicly without a trial.¹¹¹ Needless to say, this event created even more enmity between the two sides.

The hostility between the government and Boko Haram left little room for civilians to remain in the middle. When forced to choose, many Nigerian nationals selected the side of the insurgents. This was largely due to the extreme measures taken by the Nigerian army. The army did not limit their crusade to Boko Haram members. The United Nations Integrated

¹⁰⁷ A.O. Emmanuel, "Civil Unrest in Northern Nigeria: Beyond the Literal Boko Haram" *the Constitution*. 78 or see Lai, M. "Politicization of Boko Haram Insurgency." 28. ^[1]_[SEP]

¹⁰⁸ Forest, "Confronting the Terrorism of Boko Haram in Nigeria." 1-178.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ademola Adedeji, "1000 Boko Haram Members in Prison, Awaiting Trial" *e Punch (Lagos)*, October 14, 2009. ^[1]_[SEP]

¹¹¹ Forest, "Confronting the Terrorism of Boko Haram in Nigeria." 1-178.

Regional Information Networks news service claimed that Nigerian, “soldiers began shooting in the air...breaking into homes, singling out male occupants and shooting them, and driving women out of the houses which they set ablaze.”¹¹² According to one Nigerian news source, community leaders believed men in villages were killed simply because, “they were from the Kanuri ethnic group from which the Boko Haram draws many of its members.”¹¹³ The Nigerian army also frequently committed atrocities like beheadings and torture.¹¹⁴ Oluwaseun Bamidele accredits these actions to, “corruption and ultimately the lack of sustainable, responsible, and responsive leadership.”¹¹⁵ As a result we start to see why it becomes hard for potential recruits to distinguish between the violence of the government and the violence of Boko Haram.

According to a study by the U.S. Institute of Peace in 2013, Nigerians criticize their own government security and military forces for, “their harsh tactics, which have injured civilians and damaged property.”¹¹⁶ The study determined that the extremist narrative so present in Nigeria is due in part to corruption in the government and disregard for the welfare of citizens. Rationally, citizens join an organization that provides safety and security for them – Boko Haram. USIP claims that the, “widespread corruption in Nigeria has not only deprived communities of needed amenities and infrastructure but has created an environment conducive for recruitment and radicalization.”¹¹⁷ Despite pouring more than a quarter of its national

¹¹² “Understanding Nigeria’s Boko Haram Radicals,” *IRIN News* (July 18, 2011). Online at: <http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?reportid=93250>.^[SEP]

¹¹³ “NIGERIA: Worsening Security Crisis.” *Africa Research Bulletin: Political, Social & Cultural Series 51*, no. 11 (November 2014): 20362B-20365A. Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed September 26, 2016).

¹¹⁴ “NIGERIA: Worsening Security Crisis.”

¹¹⁵ Oluwaseun Bamidele, “Reign of Evil: (Re)casting the Socioeconomic Crisis of Boko Haram Islamic Extremist Terrorism in Nigeria.” *Journal of Applied Security Research 11*, no. 1 (2016): 61-77. Accessed August 12, 2016. doi:10.1080/19361610.2016.1104280.

¹¹⁶ Onuoha, “Why Do Youth Join Boko Haram?” 1-12.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

budget into the defeat of Boko Haram, Nigeria is doing more harm than good.¹¹⁸ Nigeria is not only harming its own reputation, but it is improving the reputation of Boko Haram by allowing the group to provide for Nigerian citizens.

In addition to this unspoken dynamic, which benefits Boko Haram, the group has actively worked to take advantage of the government's descent in popularity. Posters commanding citizens to abandon the government began circulating in northern Nigeria in October of 2010.¹¹⁹ Nigerian citizens who perceived oppression from the government viewed Boko Haram as a vigilante group fighting for them. Onuoha explains "Itinerant preachers capitalize on the situation by preaching an extreme version of religious teachings and conveying a narrative of the government as weak and corrupt."¹²⁰ Once recruits have joined Boko Haram both Boko Haram and the government permanently mark them as members. This makes it extremely hard for recruits to change their minds and remove themselves for fear of being killed by either group. All of these factors together cause civilians to begin to see joining Boko Haram as a rational choice. Many people now joining Boko Haram do so because it is a logical choice rather than because they truly have radicalized beliefs.

C. Recruitment Tactics Used

From 2009 to 2012, Boko Haram's method for obtaining new recruits was largely person-to-person persuasion. Tactics used involved manipulation of individuals. Boko Haram also used tactics such as intimidation, coercion, and extortion.

One of the first ways recruitment began for Boko Haram was extortion through micro-

¹¹⁸ Brandon Kendhammer., "Nigeria's New Democratic Dawn?" *Current History* 114, no. 772 (May 2015): 170-176. Accessed July 5, 2016. EBSCOhost.

¹¹⁹ US Department of State 2010, 22; Maiangwa *et al.* 2012, 47-8

¹²⁰ Onuoha, "Why Do Youth Join Boko Haram?" 1-12.

lending. In the beginning of Boko Haram's campaign, it obtained a fair amount of financial resources from both inside and outside of Nigeria.¹²¹ This money was used to provide "welfare services to the hordes of jobless, homeless and illiterate."¹²² However, it was not only impoverished people to whom Boko Haram lent. Boko Haram also obtained wealthy recruits through "coercive micro-lending scheme[s]."¹²³ Boko Haram primarily did this by, "offering young entrepreneurs loans for small businesses like shops, salons and tailors and then forcing them to join the group when they couldn't repay the loan."¹²⁴ As a result of feeling "owned" due to indebtedness, new recruits were sucked into Boko Haram.

Another way Boko Haram recruits its membership is through coercion. This type of coercion comes from individuals that surround and are well known to the person targeted. Mercy Corps interviewed many former members who claimed that they were pressured into joining the group by their peers. Boko Haram utilizes, "extreme pressure from friends, family, or colleagues," to do their recruiting.¹²⁵ However, some members considered this excessive pressure more as a threat than an effect of social factors. Still, others saw their membership more as a result of their own free choice and less so from those pressuring them to join. In all, coercion from others plays a large role in Boko Haram's recruitment playbook.

Although this coercion may seem like simple intimidation to some, intimidation from Boko Haram has a more menacing side. Boko Haram's intimidation tactic includes overwhelming violence. In an interview with Mercy Corps, a young girl explained that as

¹²¹ Vaaseh, "Political Uncertainty And Violence In Nigeria: Politicising The Boko Haram Insurgency In Northeastern Nigeria." 403-416.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Alfred Charlotte, "Why People Join Nigeria's Boko Haram." The Huffington Post, April 16, 2016. Accessed August 23, 2016. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/boko-haram-recruitment-tactics_us_571265afe4b06f35cb6fc595.

¹²⁴ "Motivations And Empty Promises" Voices of Former Boko Haram Combatants and Nigerian Youth. Publication. Mercy Corps. 1-24.

¹²⁵ "Motivations And Empty Promises" 1-24.

“tactics became more violent, community acceptance started to go;” Boko Haram began threatening individuals to join.¹²⁶ One former member confessed, “I officially joined [Boko Haram] when they started killing indiscriminately. I needed protection and immunity from persecution by them, so I could continue with my business.”¹²⁷ Although this man’s motivations might seem economically based, it really is a result of his fear of Boko Haram. Similar situations have been seen many times. Boko Haram uses violence to maintain fear and – as a result – power over members. James Forest claims, “Boko Haram is an enemy of moderation and stability; they have chosen to promote a violent ideology.”¹²⁸ As a result of this ideology, anyone not with Boko Haram is an enemy against it, creating a motivation for individuals to join for survival.

D. The Changes in Boko Haram’s Recruitment Tactics

After 2012, there was a shift in Boko Haram’s recruitment tactics. Boko Haram started kidnapping people in 2012. Boko Haram began abducting, “local rulers, politicians or their family members.”¹²⁹ This soon changed as Boko Haram quickly resorted to targeting young adults and children without the intention of returning them. The International Crisis Group (ICG) reported young men were forced to join Boko Haram because the group, “threatened to behead whomever refused to join.”¹³⁰

In the context of Boko Haram, the terroristic tool of kidnaping has given them much success in that they are able to take whomever they want without investing an excessive amount of time. They are then brain washed, sold, bred, and used as weapons. According to

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Forest, “Confronting the Terrorism of Boko Haram in Nigeria.” 1-178.

¹²⁹ I. Aghedo, “Sowing Peace, Reaping Violence: Understanding the Resurgence of Kidnapping in Post-amnesty Niger Delta, Nigeria.” *Insight on Africa* 7, no. 2 (2015): 137-53. Accessed August 1, 2016. doi:10.1177/0975087815580729.

¹³⁰ Onuoha, “Why Do Youth Join Boko Haram?” 1-12.

the work I did, Boko Haram kidnapped approximately 6,277 boys and girls from 2008 to July 2015.¹³¹ These abductees are trained for, “activities ranging from errand running to suicide bombings.”¹³² Jacob Zenn further explains that untrained abductees are used to, “acquire intelligence and carry out the first wave of attacks on villages or barracks.”¹³³ If they fail to carry out such acts for Boko Haram or show “cowardice,” they, “risk death at the hands of their commanders.”¹³⁴ As a result, these abductees have become forced members of Boko Haram.

Boko Haram not only abducts men and boys, but they also abduct women. Boko Haram seeks to abduct women because according to David Cook, “female suicide-attackers have the advantage, inside Nigeria’s conservative Muslim environment, of being able to conceal explosives under their garments without attracting undue attention.”¹³⁵ In Nigeria, it is dishonorable to search a Muslim woman. As a result, Boko Haram is able to place explosives, “under the girls’ hijabs or clothing and detonated remotely, possibly without [the women] knowing.”¹³⁶ Hence, Boko Haram sees women as valuable and controllable resources or members.

E. Stockholm Syndrome

The question then arises as to how Boko Haram is able to control these hostages.

¹³¹ Elizabethtown College Team, Office of Public Witness, Global Mission, and Centre for Caring, Empowerment, and Peace Initiative. *Crisis in Nigeria: Initial Analysis of Boko Haram Attacks*. Issue brief. Church of the Brethren 1-2. August 23, 2016. Accessed August 23, 2016. <http://blog.brethren.org/2016/brethren-collaborate-on-nigeria-research/>

The Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Research provided me a research grant to help compile comprehensive qualitative evidence of Boko Harams committed atrocities. I was one of the three staff members at Elizabethtown College Boko Haram research team.

¹³² Onuoha, “Why Do Youth Join Boko Haram?” 1-12.

¹³³ Zenn, “Boko Haram: Recruitment, Financing, and Arms Trafficking in the Lake Chad Region.”

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Cook, “Boko Haram: A New Islamic State in Nigeria.” 1-30.

¹³⁶ Zenn, “Boko Haram: Recruitment, Financing, and Arms Trafficking in the Lake Chad Region.”

Stockholm syndrome may be the answer. Stockholm syndrome is imbued through four factors throughout the kidnapping. The first is that the attacker, “threatens to kill the victim,” and appears to have, “the capability to do so.”¹³⁷ The second factor is that the captive or victim is dependent upon the abductor for life. The third factor is that the hostage is isolated from other people and only has the captor’s perspective available to him or her. The last factor is seen as a cornerstone of Stockholm syndrome; the “captive sees the perpetrator as showing some degree of kindness.”¹³⁸ Through these tactics Boko Haram is able to engraft Stockholm syndrome into their kidnapped victims.

One of the first signs of instilling Stockholm syndrome into their victims is through threatening to kill them. This sign can clearly be seen in almost every instance where Boko Haram kidnaps a victim. An interview with a victim, who was kidnapped by Boko Haram, shows that Boko Haram threatened to kill her during the abduction. The kidnapped girl explained that Boko Haram members, “said that they would kill us and our families and that they had complete control over us.”¹³⁹ Jones explains that this teaches the captive to judge, “[I]t safer to align with the perpetrator, endure the hardship of captivity, and comply with the captor than to resist and face murder.”¹⁴⁰ Hence, the kidnapped of Boko Haram start to comply with the deadly group’s bidding.

Not only do victims comply with the kidnappers but they also rely on them. The interview with the victim also revealed the victims’ dependency on their kidnappers. The unnamed female victim explained, “They put up simple perimeter fences made of thorny

¹³⁷ Anne Jones, “Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Rape Trauma Syndrome, and Battering”; retrieved from <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/new/victempow/student/postram.htm>.

¹³⁸ Jones, “Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Rape Trauma Syndrome, and Battering”

¹³⁹ Christina Ijabla, “Exclusive: Boko Haram Victim Tells DW of Captivity near Chibok Girls.” Interview by Muntaga Ahiwa and Jan-Philipp Scholz. DW. May 30, 2016. Accessed August 19, 2016.

¹⁴⁰ Jones, “Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Rape Trauma Syndrome, and Battering”

bushes around the individual camps. ... And there are guards to ensure that nobody escapes. There are headcounts mornings and evenings. There is only maize to eat, no meat or spices.”¹⁴¹ This statement reflects the detainment of the victims and how they had to depend on the Boko Haram members for survival. Jones explains, “A person held in captivity cannot escape and depends on the hostage taker for life. The captor becomes the person in control of the captive’s basic needs for survival and the victim’s life itself.”¹⁴² As a result, it is much easier to control and manipulate victims.

The reality of captors’ threats and their control of victims’ survival are masked when select acts of kindness are shown by captors to the victims. For example, two girls who escaped Boko Haram explained how Boko Haram showed kindness after they were threatened and captured. Boko Haram members promised to let the girls go home, then later explained that they were saving the girls from going, “to school for prostitution.”¹⁴³ This show of kindness from the perpetrator causes the victim to, “submerge the anger they feel in response to the terror and concentrate on the captors ‘good side’ to protect themselves.”¹⁴⁴ The act of survival affects victims’ actions and mindset.

One additional factor that changes victims’ mindsets is isolation. Isolation gives the victim only one perspective of the world – that of the kidnapper. One former Boko Haram member explained that they would tell the girl, “‘It’s OK to be a suicide bomber. It’s normal’... that they will go to paradise if they commit suicide for Allah. So, they ask girls,

¹⁴¹ Ijabla, “Exclusive: Boko Haram Victim Tells DW of Captivity near Chibok Girls.”

¹⁴² Jones, “Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Rape Trauma Syndrome, and Battering”

¹⁴³ Lami, Maria, and Hajara. “Escaping Boko Haram: How Three Nigeria Girls Found Safety.” BBC News. October 27, 2014. Accessed July 10, 2016. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-29762252>.

¹⁴⁴ Jones, “Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Rape Trauma Syndrome, and Battering”

‘Who wants to go to paradise?’”¹⁴⁵ It is common for “perpetrators [to] routinely [hide] information about the outside world ... to keep [victims] totally dependent.”¹⁴⁶ Showing only this view wears down the girls’ resolve and beliefs until they start to believe what Boko Haram is telling them. Some of those who were kidnapped and have since been returned or rescued are no longer the same. Psychologically some of these girls and boys no longer identify with their former lives. Boko Haram’s beliefs have been engrained in them. As a result, the government and Nigerian society have an extremely difficult time viewing these youths as victims, but rather see them as current Boko Haram members.¹⁴⁷

As a result of all of these factors, Boko Haram is able to control their victims. A former Boko Haram member described this control by showing how they use these kidnapped girls. A member uses a false romantic relationship with a kidnapped girl and tells her that they both will wear bombs and meet in paradise after they detonate the bombs.¹⁴⁸ However the member does not detonate the bomb and lets the girl detonate her own.¹⁴⁹ The member then, “goes to the next girl to lure her to do the same thing.”¹⁵⁰ Death then completes the cycle for abducted members of Boko Haram.

VI. Policy Recommendations

Although Nigeria has had difficulty stemming Boko Haram’s activity, Nigeria does have the resources to defeat the terrorist organization. Nigeria has the man-power to

¹⁴⁵ Chika Oduah, “The Women Who Love Boko Haram - News from Al Jazeera.” Aljazeera. September 22, 2016. Accessed October 1, 2016. <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2016/08/women-love-loved-boko-haram-160823120617834.html>.

¹⁴⁶ Jones, “Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Rape Trauma Syndrome, and Battering”

¹⁴⁷ Human Rights Watch. “Nigeria: Officials Abusing Displaced Women, Girls.” Human Rights Watch. October 31, 2016. Accessed December 1, 2016. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/10/31/nigeria-officials-abusing-displaced-women-girls>.

¹⁴⁸ Oduah, “The Women Who Love Boko Haram - News from Al Jazeera.”

¹⁴⁹ Oduah, “The Women Who Love Boko Haram - News from Al Jazeera.”

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

physically combat Boko Haram, and it has a significant financial income to counter Boko Haram. It has a government infrastructure and legal system to maintain law and order. Lastly, one of the most important things Nigeria has to combat Boko Haram is its own demography. It is through these aforementioned attributes that Nigeria can respond to and defeat Boko Haram effectively.

Recently the Nigerian government and Boko Haram exchanged four Boko Haram prisoners for 21 of the Chibok girls.¹⁵¹ What seemed like a happy ending is actually a grave set back. Continuing to negotiate with these terrorist only put more Nigerians at risk. This negotiation only teaches Boko Haram that kidnapping more people will get them what they want. As a result, Nigeria should institute a policy where it does not negotiate with terrorists for the sake of those who could be taken or killed.

Another thing the Government can do is to focus on “Countering Violent Extremism” (CVE). This model, promoted by the US State Department and the US Agency for International Development in the late 2000, does not prevent Nigerians from believing in their religions, ideologies, and beliefs that may seem ultra conservative, radical, or extreme. Again, it is not what people believe that makes them dangerous, but it is how people execute and deploy their beliefs that cause concern. The Nigerian government must prevent its people from turning to violence. Kendhammer explains the CVE approach as “drying up the recruitment pool for extremist groups by building civic engagement, promoting employment, and spreading peace-building messages through local media to ‘inoculate’ vulnerable

¹⁵¹ Burke, Jason, and Emmanuel Akinwotu. “Boko Haram Frees 21 Schoolgirls from Group Abducted in Chibok.” *The Guardian*. October 13, 2016. Accessed December 01, 2016. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/oct/13/boko-haram-frees-21-schoolgirls-from-group-abducted-in-chibok>.

populations against the appeal of radical ideologies.”¹⁵² If this message of peace begins to spread, Nigerians will start to think Nigeria holds a brighter future and not be tempted to join Boko Haram.

The Nigerian government must institute programs to de-radicalize Boko Haram suspects already in custody. Killing suspects only enrages the Nigerian people. Releasing suspects may only aid to Boko Haram. By de-radicalizing and encouraging these suspects not to use violence, the Nigerian government wields a double edge sword. Evidence of this program working can be found in other countries including Singapore, Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Malaysia “have taken steps to keep an eye on released prisoners through police surveillance and family cooperation.”¹⁵³ This sword allows citizens to rally behind the peaceful tactics the government is using and allows these suspects to be released and produce an impact in their communities because of their de-radicalization.

Northern Nigeria must be approached just as the “Marshall Plan” was executed in Western Europe. There must be funding for economic and social development in impoverished areas. One of Boko Haram’s tactics in recruiting people is by helping them with economic and social development through loans and their support of businesses.¹⁵⁴ Once recruited, Boko Haram forces them to join the group when they cannot repay the loans, or the group demands payment if the business succeeds. If the government provides communities economic and social development along with employment opportunities, people will have the option of not taking a loan from Boko Haram, hence depriving the group of its recruitment

¹⁵² Kendhammer, “Nigeria's New Democratic Dawn?” 170-176.

¹⁵³ Selina Adam Khan,. “Deradicalization Programming in Pakistan.” United States Institute of Peace. September 14, 2015. Accessed December 1, 2016.
<http://www.usip.org/publications/2015/09/14/deradicalization-programming-in-pakistan>.

¹⁵⁴ Alfred Charlotte,. “Why People Join Nigeria’s Boko Haram:”

The government must also provide new educational opportunities in these regions. In the 1990's states of Borno and Yobe, Islam education was the only form of education taught in primary and secondary schools.¹⁵⁵ Many northern communities still do not have access to public schools and are forced to send their children away to Islamic schools. Although there is nothing inherently wrong with sending a child to an Islamic school, many Boko Haram members prey on students from these schools. Forest explains that children in northern Nigeria Islamic schools "receive little education beyond rote memorization of the Koran. They receive no money, and are forced to beg in the streets in order to survive."¹⁵⁶ Critics of these schools see the schools as "recruiting centre[s] for Jihad and Jihadists to fight the state or training school for fanatics, die-hard members, and future suicide bombers."¹⁵⁷ While Islamic schools should not be banned, parents should have the opportunity to send their children to a different school. The government should offer funding many different types of public schools and provide security for these schools to prevent and deter Boko Haram from abducting children in its own efforts to recruit.

However, much of countering violent extremism relies on religion. The Nigerian government must integrate local community and religious leaders in the fight against Boko Haram. As James Forest points out, "Muslim leaders in northern Nigeria are seen by many in their communities as powerbrokers and trusted mediators of disputes. They draw tacit authority by nature of a deep historical Muslim influence in social and political life throughout the region."¹⁵⁸ The government must challenge religious leaders to come up with

¹⁵⁵ Antoine, P.M. (ed). *Boko Haram: Islamism, Politics, Security*.

¹⁵⁶ Forest, "Confronting the Terrorism of Boko Haram in Nigeria." 1-178.

¹⁵⁷ Bayo Ogunrotifa, "Class Theory of Terrorism: A Study of Boko Haram Insurgency In Nigeria." 1-35.

¹⁵⁸ Forest, "Confronting the Terrorism of Boko Haram in Nigeria." 1-178.

counter narratives to challenge *fatwas*, like those ISIS and Boko Haram are issuing, which justify their violence. Muslim leaders also play an important role in discussions about economics, religious insecurities, security, and development projects. In order to do this, Forest advises the government to “foster nationwide respect toward all religious faiths, equitable distribution.”¹⁵⁹ As a result, stability will ensue, and channels of communication between government and religious leaders will serve as a way for locals who voice their opinions.

In order to start winning over the people of Nigeria, the government needs to start cracking down on its own corruption and establish legitimacy. Forest claims that sometimes there is violence between the army and the police over resources.¹⁶⁰ In addition to changing the focus and corruption of the security forces, authorities should address human rights violations that have been committed against Boko Haram. Though Boko Haram is committing many atrocities and not being held accountable for its actions, it does not excuse the army and police forces of Nigeria to do the same. Atrocity for Atrocity is never justified. Both sides are guilty of human rights violations.

Vaaseh states that it would be a start for the government to:

[I]dentify and prosecute the killers of Muhammad Yusuf, Boko Haram’s founder; hold fair trials for accused sect members; end torture of detainees and extra-judicial executions of civilians, and prosecute those responsible; investigate the involvement of political elites in sponsoring the early Boko Haram; and hold C-JTF leaders accountable for abuses.¹⁶¹

By holding itself accountable, the government will be seen as, and will ultimately be, more reliable. This will also remove some of its scrutiny and put it on a level above Boko Haram.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Forest, “Confronting the Terrorism of Boko Haram in Nigeria.” 1-178.

¹⁶¹ Vaaseh, “Political Uncertainty And Violence In Nigeria: Politicising The Boko Haram Insurgency In Northeastern Nigeria.” 403-416.

By the Government holding itself accountable trust will start to be rebuilt between it and the Nigerian Citizens. It will also portraying a more powerful narrative of the reliability of the government. The Nigerian government is currently seen as being against Muslims. Instead it should invest in portraying itself as a force against Boko Haram. Vaaseh explains that this would curtail “investigating inter-religious violence, empowering prosecutors to hold perpetrators accountable, and promoting reconciliation for past conflicts.”¹⁶² By establishing its moral and political legitimacy, the Nigerian government would be able to counter the narrative of Boko Haram. Forest claims, “Legitimacy and trust are key aspects of any audience’s willingness to accept a message.”¹⁶³ Furthermore, if the country regains the trust of the people, Boko Haram members may start to develop doubt and fear, “undermin[ing] confidence and diminish the organization’s operational capabilities” within.¹⁶⁴

An additional strategy for Nigeria to combat Boko Haram is to improve its operational intelligence. Forest concurs saying that “members of the Nigerian Army have come to despise the local police.”¹⁶⁵ However, it is in repairing this relationship that may be the difference in defeating Boko Haram. The two need to exchange information and keep communication channels open. Having a rivalry and animosity between them only jeopardizes the Nigerian people.

This improved intelligence will help uncover difficult to find Boko Haram members. Haybeck claims that terrorist groups like Boko Haram have “embed[ed] themselves in the population.”¹⁶⁶ She explains further that these groups “intermarry, ... creat[ing] communities

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Forest, “Confronting the Terrorism of Boko Haram in Nigeria.” 1-178.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Forest, “Confronting the Terrorism of Boko Haram in Nigeria.” 1-178.

¹⁶⁶ Mary Haybeck, Ph. D. “The Evolving Threat: Islamist Terror 15 Years after 9/11.” Lecture, Heritage Foundation, Washington D.C., September 8, 2016.

that are ethnically distinct, and then merge themselves with the local population ... creating radicalized communities.”¹⁶⁷ By communicating and exchanging intelligence, security forces can unearth Boko Haram members and begin to disrupt these radicalized communities.

VII. Conclusion

My research showed surprising results. In light of my borrowed theory from David Cook, I was not able to show a direct correlation from tribal particularism to Boko Haram’s recruitment. These tribal ethics, tactics, and anger are not transferred as much as I had hypothesized. However, the tribal community of Kanuri is very much a part of who Boko Haram is and chooses to be. While I was incorrect in my hypothesis with tribal particularism, I was able to discover evidence that supports the expectations of the rational choice theory and the Stockholm syndrome phenomenon. Surprisingly, the Nigerian government in many ways has forced citizens to choose between the lesser of two evils, causing many to support and join Boko Haram over the government. Furthermore, as it turns out, Boko Haram’s selection of young male, but most recently female, recruits through abductions heavily involves brainwashing. This brainwashing causes youth to turn against previous beliefs and join Boko Haram in its fight.

The Nigerian government will most likely never find a silver bullet to take out terrorism. This is the case for all countries involving terrorism. The only way to not have terrorism in a country, is by not having terrorists. However because of allowing and nourishing the seed of a terror group in Nigeria, it is impossible to eliminate all terrorist ideologies, but, as indicated in this thesis, there are steps the Nigerian government can take to

¹⁶⁷ Haybeck, “The Evolving Threat: Islamist Terror 15 Years after 9/11.”

minimize the effect these groups have.

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