Volume 20 Issue 50
Originally issued as A12



Global Journal of human-social science: A
Arts & Humanities - Psychology
Volume 20 Issue12 Version 1.0 Year 2020
Type: Double Blind Peer Reviewed International Research Journal
Publisher: Global Journals
Online ISSN: 2249-460x & Print ISSN: 0975-587X

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GJHSS-A Classification: *FOR Code: 220499*



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Assessment of the Impact of Boko-Haram Insurgency on Food Crop Production in Chibok Local Government Area of Borno State, Nigeria

Adewuyi, K.A.[α] & Michael, A.[σ]

Abstract- **Boko Haram Insurgency has affected the livelihood of rural households in the North-Eastern region of Nigeria. This research was carried out to assess the impact of insurgency on the food crop production in Chibok Local Government Area of Borno State, Nigeria. Data for this study were collected from 80 randomly sampled farmers in the study area. Simple descriptive statistics were used in analyzing the data. The study revealed that there was a considerable decline in the production capacities of the rural farmers in the area as a result of increased insurgent activities. It was therefore recommended that Government should prioritize ending insurgency in the area in order to sustain food production in Nigeria.**

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I. Introduction

In Nigeria, agriculture is the most critical sector of the economy from the standpoint of rural employment, sufficiency in food production and export earning prior to the discovery of oil (Towobola *et.al*, 2014). Many government policies enacted to develop the agricultural sector have not achieved much. The situation is further worsened by the insurgent activities Boko Haram in major parts of the North-Eastern region of Nigeria. Boko Haram which means "denouncing western education" has led to the displacement of farmers in these parts of Nigeria. Ojo *et al* (2018) sressed that insurgency has led to scarcity of labour to agricultural sector which negatively influenced the productivity of farmers in the crisis region of North-east Nigeria. Ojo *et al* (2018) noted further that Boko Haram insurgency in the North-east Nigeria has made many farmers relocate to other places where there is peace in other to save their lives, causing them to leave their farmlands behind thereby abandoning their farming businesses. Saskia (2019) reported that the Boko Haram group first emerged as an Islamic reform movement in the northeastern town of Maiduguri in the early 2000s. Its members followed the charismatic Salafi preacher Muhammad Yusuf, who condemned Western-style education and corrupt, secular governance while also cultivating strategic ties to the city's elites. According to Saskia (2019) more than 1.5 million people, mostly farmers, have been forced to flee their homes as Boko Haram intensified its insurgency in the past years. The worst-hit states in the North-east Nigeria are Borno, Yobe and Adamawa which produce staple foods such as cowpeas, rice, millet, sorghum, corn, tomatoes, onions, fish and livestock for both local consumption and export markets. The aftermath of Boko Haram insurgency in the North-eastern Nigeria invariably is hunger as many farmers were displaced from their settlements and farmlands thereby hampering food production in these areas. This study therefore aimed at assessing the impact of Boko-Haram insurgency on the food crop production in Chibok Local Government Area of Borno State, Nigeria.

II. Methodology

a) Study Area

The study was carried out in Chibok Local Government Area of Borno State, North-east Nigeria. Chibok local government area is located in Borno State which has recorded high rate of insurgent attacks in recent times. Chibok local government area has an area of 1,350 km^2. It is bounded by Damboa local government area in the north-west, in the north and in the north-east, by Askira/Uba local government area in the south. It is located between latitude $90^0$26', and $10^0$10'N and between $13^0$11[1] and 13^0-44'E. It has land area of 500 km^2. Farmers in Chibok Local Government are predominantly involved in growing food crops such as maize, cowpea, groundnut, onion, tomato etc. Some livestock including cattle, goats, and sheep are reared as well.

b) Sampling Techniques

The Chibok Local Government was purposively selected for this study because it has been mostly hit by frequent Boko Haram insurgency. The kidnapping of over two hundred girls by the Boko Hara insurgents from their school in April 2014 that drew international attention occurred in the Chibok Local Government area of Borno State, Nigeria. Random sampling technique was used to select eighty (80) respondents from the 11 wards within the study area. In selecting the sample size, structured questionnaires were administered in each ward using random sampling proportionate to the population of farmers in each ward.

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c) *Data Analysis*

The data collected were analyzed using Descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution and percentages.

III. Results and Discussion

a) *Socio-economic Characteristic of the Farmers*

Boko Haram insurgency has assumed more deadly dimension with attendant negative impacts on the livelihoods of many communities in the North-east Nigeria. The results in Table 1 showed that majority of the farmers (55%) in the study area were within the active age group of 21-40 years. This is an indication that farming activities require agile and able-bodied class of the society to cope with the various rigours of farm works. Within this working age, farmers are more likely to participate effectively in most agricultural practices. Similar result was reported by Umeh and Olojade (2016) that farming involves people within an active age group. Furthermore, 50% of the farmers were married. Many researchers (Joseph *et al.,* 2018*;* Adewuyi *et al.,* 2017) have also reported that marital status is an important factor for farmers' productivity. The results of this study also revealed that most of the farm households (above 53%) consist of large family size which is typical of rural farmers as butressed by Adebayo (2001). Moreover, the findings showed that 75% of the farmers in the area have had at least 10 years farming experiences. This implies that majority of the farmers had been in the business for a reasonable length of time which would be beneficial in adjudsting to unfavourable farming situation and crisis period. The results in Table 1 also indicate that over 90% of the farmers in the study area had formal education. Educational status of rural farmers have been shown to significantly influence the efficiency of farmers as butressed in the findings of Ayinde *et al* (2012) and Sheikh (2006).

Table 1: Socio-economic Characteristics of Farmers

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
≤ 20	8	10
21- 40	44	55
41 - 60	17	21.25
≥ 60	11	13.75
Total	80	100
Marital Status		
Single	32	40
Married	40	50
Divorced	7	8.75
Window	1	1.25
Total	80	100
Household Size		
≤ 5	12	15
5-10	17	21.25
11-15	43	53.75
> 15	08	10
Total	80	100
Farming Experiences (Yrs.)		
≤ 5	28	35
6 - 10	32	40
11 – 20	16	20
> 20	04	05
Total	80	100
Education		
Non formal	2	2.5
Primary	10	12.5
Secondary	40	50
Tertiary	28	35
Total	80	100

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

b) *Impact of Insurgency on Food Crops Production in the Area*

The Boko Haram activities have impacted negatively on the livelihoods of rural communities in the major parts of Northern Nigeria especially North-eastern States of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa. Boko Haram is one of the deadliest terrorist groups in the world today as supported by Jerom (2015). Many people were living in devastating conditions, with little access to food or basic supplies. The kidnapping of over two hundred girls by the Boko Hara insurgents from their school in April 2014 that drew international attention occurred in

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the Chibok Local Government area of Borno State, Nigeria. The results in Table 2 revealed that the farming activities in the area were appreciable prio to the onset of Boko Hara attacks, because farmers were operating under conducive atmosphere. The study revealed that large numbers of farmers in the area were able to obtain high outputs of between 21 – 40 bags the various crops during the pre-insurgent periods. The results in Table 2 showed that before the onset of insurgency; the farmers who obtained outputs within the range of 1,050 – 2,000 Kgs in Maize, Rice, Cowpea and Groundnuts were 40, 64, 43 and 43 respectively. Few farmers recorded outputs above 4,000 Kgs in the selected food crops during the same period. This indicates that most farmers in the area were still operating at a subsistent levels. Adebayo (2001) also observed that most Nigerian rural farmers were producing on subsistent scale and holding small plots of farmland. Moreover, the impact of Boko Haram insurgency in the North-east Nigeria not only led to the decline in food supply; but also deterioratedthe food security in the country because the traders from the North-eastern Nigeria are finding it extremely difficult to transport their commodities to other parts of the country as stressed by Nkwede *et al* (2015).

Table 2: Production of Food Crops in Chibok Local Govt. Area (Pre-Insurgency)

Quantity (KGs)	Maize	Rice	Cowpea	Groundnuts
≤ 1000	16	10	26	15
1,050 – 2,000	40	64	43	43
2,050 – 3,000	08	01	05	17
3,050 – 4,000	09	03	01	04
> 4,000	07	02	05	01
Total	80	80	80	80

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

The findings in Table 3 revealed the extent to which the activities of insurgents affected the farming activities in the study area. The volumes of production of food crops in the study area as observed at the post-insurgency period had drastically declined. The results showed that the number of farmers who got farm output within the range of 1,050 – 2,000 Kgs for Maize, Rice, Cowpea and Groundnut during this period were 14, 07, 06 and 08 respectively. This was a far low outputs when compared with what was achieved before the insurgency struck in the study area. The few farmers who managed to return to their farming activities after the Boko Haram insurgency could not operate at a maximum level of prodution.

IV. Conclusion and Recommendations

The activities of Boko Haram in surgents in Nigeria has become a growing concern in recent times. This study has examined the impacts of insurgency on the food production in Chibok Local Government Area which is one of the major Local Government Areas bady hit by this menace in the North-east Nigeria. Most of the farmers in the study area were within the active age group of 21-40 years that would enable them to cope with the rigorous farming activities. The farmers in the area had access to formal education with reasonable years of farming experiences. The results of the study showed that the incessant insurgent attacks in the area had led to a general decline in the food production with its attendant food insecurity in the country.

Therefore, the need to prioritize the issue of stopping the continual insurgent attacks in the area cannot be over-emphasized. Government at all levels must intensify efforts at bringing the insurgency in the region to a halt. The affected communities should be compensated with palletives that will enable the farmers regain their capacities for efficient food production. Furthermore, youth empowerment programmes can be organized by the Government in the area so as to discourage more youths from being recruited to the sect.

Table 3: Production of Food Crops in Chibok Local Govt. Area (Post-Insurgency)

Quantity (KGs)	Maize	Rice	Cowpea	Groundnuts
≤ 1,000	55	62	64	59
1,050 – 2,000	14	07	06	08
2,050 – 3,000	06	03	09	10
3,050 – 4,000	05	08	01	02
> 4,000	0	0	0	01
Total	80	80	80	80

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

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