

# The Co-Option of the Nigerian Police in the Fight against Boko Haram Terrorism in Nigeria

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**ABSTRACT:** Terrorism is on the rise in Nigeria, which has resulted in an increase in policy debates and academic interest. The involvement of the Nigerian police in counter-terrorism operations in Nigeria was examined in this study. By sampling the opinions of police officers who have been active in combatting Boko Haram terrorism in North-East Nigeria, this study filled a knowledge vacuum by determining the function of police personnel within the created Joint Task Force in combating terrorism. This was done in the hopes of reorienting policy in a way that would eventually help to improve public safety. The study was conducted in Borno state of the Northern Nigeria, purposively selecting units such as Police Mobile Force (PMF), the Counter-Terrorism Unit (CTU), the Anti-Bomb Squad (EOD), the Sniffer Dog Section, and the “Crack Team” which are units believed to have men with relevant experience on police activities in counterterrorism. The population of these units as at 2021 stands at 5,500, from where 322 respondents were sampled for data collection using the questionnaire. The data collected through the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics such as frequencies, rating scales and multiple regression for testing of hypotheses. Findings show that there is insufficient use of electronic surveillance/reconnaissance by the Nigeria police in fighting terrorism. Nevertheless, the police still play their role in peace building/conflict resolution. Also, there is enough synergy between the police and the host communities, such that some more effort from the government can help them be more effective. In addition, Nigerian police face many challenges, among which are, lack of specialized training and retraining, misappropriation of funds and political interference among others. The conclusion and policy implication arising from these findings is the fact that the escalation in crime wave and insecurity has pushed back the frontiers of police role, going beyond their traditional roles of internal security, law enforcement and order maintenance, to include counterterrorism operations. This calls for a strategy for the retraining of the Nigerian police in counterterrorism particularly when they are selected to be members of the Joint Task Force fighting terrorism in the Northeast of Nigeria.

**KEYWORD:** Nigeria, Police, Terrorism.

## Introduction

Terrorism is a premeditated organized violent crime embarked upon by a sub-cultural group whose aims are to cause insecurity, destroy lives and public properties, trample on the citizens fundamental human rights especially right to life, right to freedom of movement and right to freedom of worship; It is a calculated and repeated violent attack perpetrated by an organised clandestine group without

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excuse or justification, targeted against the State and its military, paramilitary and civilian populations.

This further underscore the act as a cataclysmic event and ideologically framed violent extremism adopted as a weapon by disillusioned and disgruntled elements in a State, with the aim of changing the status-quo and influencing the government or international organization to effect changes that will suite the interest of the perpetrators. Siegel (2008) theorized that defining a crime as terrorism depends on the kind of legal response the act evokes from those in power. For an act to be considered terrorism, which is a political crime, an act must carry with it the intent to disrupt and change the government and must not be merely a common-law crime committed for greed or egotism.

Also, Siegel (2010) and Ugwuoke, Ngwu & Iziga (2016) identified different types of terrorism ranging from; Non-political; Nationalist; Cultist; Retributive; Civil Disorder; Revolutionary; and State-Sponsored or politically-related. However, a common feature observed to run parallel to all terrorist groups, is that the crime is a premeditated, politically-motivated, violence-perpetrated against non-combatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience. Relatively, Behr, Reding, Edwards, & Gribbon (2013) see terrorism as an action which endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electoral system. The use of Force or threat of it must be designed to influence the government or intimidate the public with the aim to advance political, religious or ideological cause.

The Nigeria's Terrorism (Prevention) Act 2011, as Amended in 2013, describes a terrorist as a person who does, attempts, or threatens to do an act of terrorism, which may seriously harm or damage a country or an international organization by unduly compelling a government or international organization to perform or abstain from performing any act that will seriously intimidate a population, seriously destabilize or destroy the fundamental, political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country, or otherwise influence such government by information or coercion.

Terrorist events all over the world have re-shaped the way terrorism is being construed by governments, security experts and academics globally. As a consequence, there is the need to adopt stringent antiterrorism measures in the United States and the world over with the sole aim of countering terrorist financing, among others (Walker *et al.*, 2018). In Nigeria, the Police have been heavily integrated into the Joint Task Forces to tackle Boko Haram terrorism when it became imperative to form synergy by all security agencies as the only way to tackle Boko Haram.

Consequently, there is a kind of paradigm or role shift in the Nigeria Police, from that of internal security which entails law enforcement and order maintenance, to that of countering overwhelming internal, and to a degree, what now appears as external aggression and terrorism. As supported by the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria (As Amended) Section 214(1), the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) has derived its powers, roles and responsibilities from the Police Act Cap 19, Law of the Federation of Nigeria 2004, Section 4, which provides the duties of the NPF, *inter alia*, "apprehension of offenders; preservation of law and order; protection of lives and property; prevention and detection of crime; and enforcement of all laws and regulations with which they are directly charged".

In the theater of violent extremism, such as the one being exhibited by Boko Haram terrorists, Akinwale (2010) have argued that the NPF have continued to play a significant role as a counterterrorism Force, and has shown high sense of functional competence with the constant deployment of its operational wing the Police Mobile Force as well as other tactical units to hostile areas.

## Problem of the Study

The issue around the double, but conflicting roles it appears the Nigeria Police play within the JTF as response to the Boko Haram sect, (element of successful peace operations and counterterrorism campaigns) has not been given any scholarly attention, especially when placed side by side with the roles of the Police in counterterrorism in other climes. By and large, in Nigeria, there is a growing robust literature on Boko Haram, even as most are reviewed papers supported mainly with secondary data, including media reportage (Ugwuoke *et al.*, 2016; Ogbonna and Jimenez, 2017; Olaniyi, 2017; Itua, 2018).

In Nigeria, it is majorly the activities of the Boko Haram which have been intensified and expanded, making it clearer to the Nigerian State and the Police that the sophistry the terrorists bring to bear are beyond the capacity of the Nigeria Police. This led to the establishment of a Joint Task Force comprising the Military Armed Forces, Police Force and civilian population to counter the terrorists; (Dyrenforth, 2018; Ike, 2018). The setting up of Joint Task Force may have undoubtedly altered the roles of the Nigeria Police as the lead agency concerned with traditional law enforcement and maintenance of law and order. It is possible that the Police component of the JTF may now be fully involved in the frontline of the war or assigned other duties which ordinarily are outside their constitutional and core mandate. This may be argued as one of the reasons the attack on Police personnel and their units were intensified and sustained.

Therefore, the established gap in literature on the complexity of roles introduced by the involvement of the Police among the JTF in the fight against Boko Haram, is the interest of this study. Filling this gap is believed to be a beneficial impact on policy formations in the manner we prepare the Nigeria Police for the 21st century policing in a world with increasing threat to global peace and security.

## Objectives of the Study

The major objective of this study is to investigate the role of the Nigeria Police in combating the Boko Haram terrorism. The specific objectives are:

1. To describe the various kinds of peace building/conflict resolution approaches used by the Nigeria police in combating Boko Haram.
2. To examine the use of electronic surveillance (modern police method) by the police in the fight against Boko Haram.
3. To assess the synergy between the Nigeria police and host communities in the Northeastern States of Nigeria in counterterrorism operations against Boko Haram.
4. To examine the challenges facing the Nigeria police in the fight against Boko Haram terrorism within the Joint Task Force.

## Research Hypotheses

In line with the objectives of the study, the following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study as stated in the null form thus:

1. There is no significant relationship between the adopted peace-building/conflict resolution approach of the Nigeria Police and the fight against Boko Haram.
2. There is no significant relationship between the use of electronic surveillance by the Nigeria Police and the fight against Boko Haram.

3. There is no significant impact of the synergy between the NPF and the host communities in the North East, on the fight against Boko Haram.

## Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

### General Overview of Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria

The historical origin of terrorism is often complex; this is because there is no unified trend regarding its development and spread across the globe (Crime Museum, 2017). Terrorist acts date back to history, despite differences in form, intentions, and activities; for example, the terror cimbricus was coined by ancient Romans in 105 BC to characterize the panic that erupted as they prepared for an attack by a formidable warrior tribe. Many years later, during the brutal reign of Maximillian Robespierre during the French Revolution (Crime Museum, 2017), the fact was remembered.

Explaining origin of terrorism in Africa, Onwudiwe (2012) narrated that terrorism on the continent resulted from internal civil unrest and spill over from the regional wars. For him, African rebel movements and opposition groups employed terrorist tactics in the pursuit of their political, social, and economic goals. Onwudiwe (2012) maintained that terrorism in Africa stems from revolutionary pressures at home, regional battles, economic conflicts, and regime tyranny.

A significant early signal of what is to become of Nigeria as part of a global terrorist act was when a Nigerian passenger aircraft with 150 people on board in a routine flight from Lagos to Abuja was hijacked and diverted to Niamey, Niger Republic in October 1993. An organisation, 'Movement for the Advancement of Democracy' (MAD), claimed responsibility for the attack and vowed not to relent until true democracy is restored in Nigeria (Igbo, 1999). In the same vein, a Presidential Jet carrying the son of the Head of State, Ibrahim Abacha and some of his friends, crashed near Kano Airport on 17 January, 1996, killing all the 14 people on board. A group that called itself the United Nigerian Liberation Front (UNILF) claimed responsibility and warned that it is ready to end dictatorship in Nigeria (Igbo, 2007).

Boko Haram is the acronym for Jama'atu Ahl as-Sunnah li Da'awatiwal-Jihad, or Group of the Sunni People for the Calling and Jihad, which loosely translates to "Western education is banned." It first appeared in northeastern Nigeria in the early 2000s among the Kanuri ethnic group and its neighbors. The Kanuri, an ethnic elite, ruled a powerful, Muslim multiethnic state known as the Kanem-Bornu Empire for about nine hundred years as various ethno-political forces competed for power and influence.

The 'Jamaal Ahl as-Sunnah lid-Dawah wal-Jihad' (People of the Ways of the Prophet for Proselytisation and Jihad), now known as 'Boko Haram' (Western education is forbidden) was founded in the mid-1990s in Northeast Nigeria by an Islamic cleric named Mohammed Yusuf. The original name was Anglicised to Boko Haram in 2002 following a radical change in the group's ideology of purging Nigeria of Western cultures and civilisations, establishing Islam as a State religion, and purportedly fighting corruption and maladministration by government functionaries (Sergie and Johnson, 2014). What then began as a mere social movement or religious order about two decades ago has now escalated into terrorism as we see it today.

### State's Response to Boko Haram Insurgency

The Boko Haram insurgency, which has lasted eleven years, is one of the most brutal, destructive, and crippling of the country's internal security concerns since independence. The civil war in Nigeria from 1967 to 1970, known as the Biafran War, had a larger death toll but was shorter in duration. The current insurgency must be understood in the perspective of Nigeria's political power sharing history (Abdul, 2014). A tendency toward apocalyptic beliefs, similar to those of long-established Muslim

communities in the Sahel, in which a Mahdi figure, a spiritual savior, is always expected to appear to restore well-being and justice, is another component. Meanwhile, the cult wants to replace Nigeria's Western constitutional system with a caliphate administered by "genuine" Islamic law (Andrew, 2012). By 2015, the Institute for Economics and Peace's annual Global Terrorism Index ranked it as the world's deadliest militancy (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2018).

Late President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua of Nigeria intervened in 2009, starting a predominantly military assault aimed at eradicating the insurgents. President Goodluck Jonathan's successor administration ramped up similar operations, with the same goal of killing rebels while also regaining land, stabilizing the region, and enforcing state authority. In May 2013, the northeastern states of Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa announced a state of emergency (The Telegraph, 2013). Civil authority was not taken away from local elected officials, unlike previous states of emergency imposed in Plateau State in 2004 and Ekiti State in 2006. However, many authorities, as well as traditional rulers, were driven out by Boko Haram's deaths, damage, and threats. As a result, there was a legitimacy vacuum, which the insurgents soon filled to wield de facto rule.

The state of emergency was declared ineffective in 2014, and the Nigerian House of Representatives refused to prolong it (VOA, 2014). Military actions, on the other hand, continue to obstruct the restoration of complete civil power. When President Buhari assumed office in 2015, he immediately ramped up military operations against Boko Haram as part of a strategy to provide security, safety, peace, and economic revival in Nigeria's northeast. The Nigerian military's counterinsurgency offensives known as Operation Lafiya Dole, a follow-up to Operation Zaman Lafiya and its precursor offensives performed under the Jonathan government, were aimed at degrading and defeating rebels and regaining land (Akintayo, 2015). The Nigerian military collaborated and coordinated with forces from neighboring countries in each operation through the Multinational Joint Task Force, originally established in 1994 to check cross-border crime and banditry. In 2015, the task force was reconstituted—under the auspices of the African Union and the four governments of the LCBC—to meet the challenge of the Boko Haram insurgency (Multinational Joint Task Force, 2018).

The Police Mobile Force (PMF) is part of the Multinational Joint Task Force. The PMF was founded in 1961 and has 79 squadrons dispersed around the country, and is the Nigeria Police's striking unit. Combating violent crime; anti-terrorism operations; guarding critical national infrastructure; active engagement in the war on insurgency; mob dispersal/suppression of rioters and communal conflicts are among its responsibilities (Iwarimie-Jaja, 2010).

In general, the PMF has played an important role in Joint Task Force operations such as Operation Lafia Dole (OLD), Operation Safe Heaven (OSH), Operation Delta Safe (ODS), and Operation Whirl Stroke (OWS), as well as the Maitatsine riot, Jukun/TIV crisis, Ife/Modakeke, and overall Boko Haram counter-operations in North East Nigeria. In this context, the NPF's position has become increasingly important and unavoidable, ranging from being the gatekeeper of the criminal justice system to being the first point of contact in Nigeria's internal law enforcement activities (Adegoke, 2014). The government has set up the institution as a paramilitary organization whose mission is to prevent and control crime while also ensuring that the law is followed (Iwarimie-Jaja, 2010). The Nigeria Police Force is one of the country's oldest colonial "migrated entities," and according to Eke (2010), has proven to be a crucial component in maintaining national security and progress.

## Theoretical Framework

### The Structural Functionalist Theory

Structural Functionalism is a sociological theory that explains why society functions the way it does by emphasizing on the relationships between the various social institutions that make up society. The

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basic underpinnings of Structural Functionalism were built by French Sociologist Émile Durkheim in the late nineteenth century, at least in part as a response to evolutionary theories of thinkers such as E. B. Tylor (Porth, Neutzling & Edwards, 2015). Durkheim's original goal was to explain social structures as a shared means for individuals in society to meet their own biological needs; he also wanted to explain the worth of cultural and social features in terms of their contribution to the general operation of society and life. Later, structural functionalism's focus shifted to the manner in which social structures in society meet the social requirements of individuals inside that society.

This theory was adopted as a theoretical framework for the study, because of its strengths and strategic importance. The theory placed emphasis on interdependency and interconnectedness of security formations—be it military or paramilitary—and the necessity and urgency for them to form a synergy with the local civilian security formation in the host community for harmonious living. It was reported by Stearns (2013) that structural functionalism views society as functioning as an organism with the various social institutions working together as organs in the human body to maintain stability and integration. Radcliffe Brown espoused the interaction or interdependence of human activities in the social institutions that give rise to the cohesion, stability and peaceful coexistence of human society (Mediha, 2013; Palmer, 2013). Seeing the imperativeness of structural functionalism in understanding and explaining the armed Forces as a subset of security organization that contributes meaningfully to the existence and survival of the whole social system, we found the theory much more relevant to and apt in examining military involvement in community security.

## Research Methodology

The research design of the study is descriptive survey, employing the quantitative method of analysis in examining the role of the Nigerian Police in Combating the Boko Haram insurgency Nigeria. The study is concentrated in Borno state of the Northern Nigeria, which have been declared as the most affected by Boko Haram's deadly attacks between 2011-2021 (Statistica, 2022). The study purposively selected units such as Police Mobile Force (PMF), the Counter-Terrorism Unit (CTU), the Anti-Bomb Squad (EOD), the Sniffer Dog Section, and the “Crack Team” which are units believed to have men with relevant experience on police activities in counter-terrorism. The population of these units as at 2021 stands at 5,500 officers (News Agency of Nigeria, 2021). Since the whole population cannot be studied, the Taro Yamane formula for determining sample from finite population, is used to determine the sample size to be 373.

Since the officers are not located in one police command and unit, the snowball sampling method was used to select the respondents to provide answers to the research questionnaire, such that one respondent gotten, leads the researcher to the next officer who is known to him to be of any of the selected units, and so on, until the sample size is exhausted. By this technique, a total of 373 questionnaires of 4-Point rating scale were shared to respondents who filled and returned immediately. From the 373 questionnaires distributed, 322 were completely and correctly filled to be judged usable for analysis. The data collected through the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics such as frequencies, rating scales and multiple regression for testing of hypotheses.

## Data Analysis and Discussion of Findings

In this section, the analysis of the data collected through the questionnaire, is presented with the socio-demographic data of respondents in tabular form using percentages to show weight of response. Mean was used to describe the findings according to the objectives of research, while the multiple regression method is used to test the hypotheses, in order to determine strength and direction of association as well as impact of the variables.

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Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Description	Demographic Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	298	92.5
	Female	24	7.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>100</b>
Age	25-29	10	3.1
	30-34	16	4.9
	35-39	196	60.9
	40-above	100	31.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>100</b>
Marital Status	Married	146	45.3
	Single	70	21.7
	Divorced	18	5.6
	Separated	25	7.8
	Widowed	63	19.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>100</b>
Educational Qualification	First school leaving	38	11.8
	WASSCE/Equivalent	197	61.2
	OND/NCE	55	17.1
	B.Sc/Equivalent	30	9.3
	Post Graduate Degree	2	0.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>100</b>
Ranks	Senior Officers	90	27.9
	Junior Officers	232	72.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>100</b>
Religious Affiliation	Christianity	78	24.2
	Islam	220	68.3
	Traditional	13	4.0
	Other, specify	11	3.4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 1 shows the socio-demographic data of respondents, which reveals that majority of the respondents are male (92.5%) than female (7.5%) which is most significantly due to nature of the roles assigned to the units of interest that more male police officers are deployed into the counterterrorism operations. The age distribution reveals a higher percentage of the respondents within the age bracket 35-39 (60.9%), those in bracket 40 and above constitute 31.1%, while few were found in 30-34 and 25-29 (4.9 and 3.1%) respectively. For the ranks, it is observed that there are more junior officers (72.1%) than senior officers (27.9%) among the respondents. It is observed that a significant number (19.6%) are widowed, compared to the percentage of other marital status. There is high percentage (45.3) for the married respondents, followed by the single (21.7%). There is low rate of divorce and separation (5.6% and 7.8%) respectively, which could be due to the religious and cultural believe of the host community which condemns divorce in strong terms.

Educationally, there are more of WASSCE/Equivalent holders (61.2%), than the OND/NCE holders (17.1%), First school leaving (11%), B.Sc. (9.3%) and Post graduate degree (0.6%). This indicates

that high level of education attainment is not considered in deploying people to these units, and this needs to be looked into as the level of understanding of a graduate may not be the same with that of a secondary school certificate holder in grasping the gravity of the crime they are fighting. More than half of the respondents (68.3%) are Muslims, followed by Christians (24.2%), Traditionalist (4%) and other religion which includes Judaism, Bhudism, Atheists and so on.

### Descriptive Statistics on the Role of Police in the Fight against Boko Haram

**Table 2: Showing the Descriptive Statistics on the Role of Police in the Fight against Boko Haram.**

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Descriptive			
		Freq.	Freq.	Freq.	Freq	Total	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remark
Peace building/conflict resolution approaches used by the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) in combating Boko Haram Insurgency									
1	Nigerian Police are actively involved in peace building/conflict resolution in the fight against Boko Haram terrorism.	81	149	61	31	322	2.87	.90	Agreed
2	There is Police Community Relations Committee for conflict resolution and peace building	29	70	138	85	322	2.13	.91	Disagreed
3	Police reuniting escaped and/or rescued victims of Boko Haram terrorism with their families, host communities and government agencies for treatment.	90	133	69	30	322	2.88	.92	Agreed
4	Nigeria Police grant free bail to non felonious offenses committed by community members.	79	143	67	33	322	2.83	.92	Agreed
5	Police Partner with local businesses for information elicitation and dissemination.	89	138	70	25	322	2.90	.89	Agreed
Surveillance/Reconnaissance tools in the fight against Boko Haram Terrorism									
6	Nigeria Police use electronic surveillance/reconnaissance in the fight against terrorism.	34	59	150	79	322	2.15	.91	Disagreed
7	There is frequent use of electronic surveillance and reconnaissance in the fight against Boko Haram.	31	68	141	82	322	2.15	.91	Disagreed
8	The use of electronic surveillance/reconnaissance by Police in the fight against Boko Haram is effective.	38	77	114	93	322	2.19	.98	Disagreed
9	The use of electronic surveillance is necessary for the Police in the fight against Boko Haram.	69	140	70	43	322	2.73	.95	Agreed
10	There is increase in protective patrolling and collection of more intelligence on Boko Haram by the Nigeria Police.	80	138	79	25	322	2.85	.89	Agreed
The synergy between the NPF and the host communities in counterterrorism operations									
11	Nigerian Police partner with local leaders and youths in the Northeast to counter Boko Haram terrorism.	79	160	49	34	322	2.89	.89	Agreed
12	Nigeria Police actively engage host communities in the Northeast to build security trust and co-operation.	62	161	69	30	322	2.79	.86	Agreed
13	Police sometimes mobilize some host community members for effective prevention and control of Boko Haram	93	134	62	33	322	2.89	.94	Agreed



	terrorism.								
14	The use of host community members as Police informants has been effective in the fight against Boko Haram terrorism.	79	160	51	32	<b>322</b>	2.89	.89	<b>Agreed</b>
15	Community policing is an effective counterterrorism measure adopted by the Police.	83	143	22	74	<b>322</b>	2.73	1.08	<b>Agreed</b>
	<b>Challenges facing the NPF in the fight against Boko Haram terrorism within the Joint Task Force</b>								
16	There is insufficient training for the Officers facing Boko Haram terrorists	79	160	49	34	<b>322</b>	2.88	.99	<b>Agreed</b>
17	Misappropriation of funds allocated for counterterrorism operations challenges the operations.	62	161	69	30	<b>322</b>	2.79	.86	<b>Agreed</b>
18	Political interference and corrupt practices among policymakers delays actions against terrorism.	93	134	62	33	<b>322</b>	2.89	.94	<b>Agreed</b>
19	Command friction between the police and their military partners in the Joint Task Force is a challenge.	79	160	51	32	<b>322</b>	2.89	.89	<b>Agreed</b>
20	There are some moles (spies or traitors) in the joint military-Police-civilian Task Force on counter Boko Haram terrorism.	83	143	22	74	<b>322</b>	2.73	1.08	<b>Agreed</b>

**Source: SPSS 23**

**LEGEND: 4.00-2.50= Agreed: 2.49-1.00= Disagreed**

The table 2 above shows that the respondents with mean score 2.87 agree that the Nigeria Police are actively involved in peace building/conflict resolution as part of their roles in the counterterrorism operations, there is agreement to other items describing the peace building/conflict resolution roles of the police including the Police reuniting escaped and/or rescued victims of Boko Haram terrorism with their families, host communities and government agencies for treatment (2.88), Nigeria Police grant free bail to non felonious offenses committed by community members (2.83) and Police Partner with local businesses for information elicitation and dissemination (2.90). Nevertheless, the respondents disagreed to the statement that, 'there is Police Community Relations Committee for conflict resolution and peace building' (mean score = 2.13). This indicates that in as much as the police have been performing their role in peace building and conflict resolution, the government has not done as much to set a committee that should make this effort much productive.

The study is also interested in finding out police use of surveillance/reconnaissance tools in the fight against Boko Haram. It is observed as shown in the table, that the Nigerian Police does not use electronic surveillance/reconnaissance devices in the fight against Boko Haram (mean = 2.15) as a result there is no frequent use of such devices (mean = 2.15) and consequently, it cannot be said that the use of electronic surveillance devices have been effective in the fight against Boko Haram. Nevertheless, it is observed that the respondents agreed that the use of electronic surveillance is necessary for the Police in the fight against Boko Haram (mean = 2.73) and also that there is increase in protective patrolling and collection of more intelligence on Boko Haram by the Nigerian Police. This goes to say that the Nigerian Police have been putting effort in the execution of their roles in the fight against Boko Haram, but can do better if necessary equipment like the electronic surveillance/reconnaissance tools are put in place for their use.

On the synergy between the NPF and the host communities in counterterrorism operations, it is observed that the respondents agreed to all the statements as follows: Nigerian Police partner with local leaders and youths in the Northeast to counter Boko Haram terrorism (mean = 2.89), active

engagement of host communities in the Northeast to build security trust and co-operation (mean = 2.79), mobilizing some host community members for effective prevention and control of Boko Haram terrorism (mean = 2.89), The use of host community members as Police informants has been effective in the fight against Boko Haram terrorism (mean = 2.89) and community policing being an effective counterterrorism measure adopted by the Police (mean = 2.73). These imply that the police is enjoying a good synergy with the host communities and that this relationship is being productive.

It is also observed that the respondents agreed to all the perceived challenges which indicates that there is insufficient training for the officers facing Boko Haram (mean = 2.88), misappropriation of funds allocated for counterterrorism operations challenges the operations (mean = 2.79), Political interference and corrupt practices among policymakers delays actions against terrorism (mean = 2.89), Command friction between the police and their military partners in the Joint Task Force is a challenge (mean = 2.89) and the existence of some moles (spies or traitors) in the joint military-Police-civilian Task Force on counter Boko Haram terrorism (2.73).

### Testing of the Hypotheses

#### Hypothesis One

The aim of this hypothesis is to find out if the adopted peace-building/conflict resolution approach of the Nigeria Police has helped in the fight against Boko Haram insurgency. So, the null hypothesis is thus stated:

**Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between the adopted peace-building/conflict resolution approach of the Nigeria Police and the fight against Boko Haram.**

**Model Summary<sup>b</sup>**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.849 <sup>a</sup>	.721	.720	.47607	.066

a. Predictors: (Constant), Peace building/conflict resolution approaches

b. Dependent Variable: Fight against Boko Haram Insurgency

**ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	186.989	1	186.989	825.030	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	72.526	320	.227		
Total	259.516	321			

a. Dependent Variable: Fight against Boko Haram Insurgency

b. Predictors: (Constant), Peace building/conflict resolution approaches

From the regression analysis, the result shows a good fit for our model, with the adjusted r-square value of .720, and a significant figure of the F-probability, implying a significant relationship between the dependent and independent variables. This explains that a change in the independent variable explains 72% change in the dependent variable. This implies that the adopted peace building/conflict resolution approaches by the Nigerian police has contributed to the fight against Boko haram insurgency. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate, that there is a significant relationship between the NPF - adopted peace building/conflict resolution approaches and the fight against Boko Haram terrorism.

### Hypothesis Two

This hypothesis is aimed at finding out if there is sufficient use of electronic surveillance by the NPF in the fight against Boko Haram, and is thus stated:

**Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between the use of electronic surveillance by the Nigeria Police and the fight against Boko Haram.**

#### Model Summary<sup>b</sup>

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.951 <sup>a</sup>	.905	.904	.27787	.222

a. Predictors: (Constant), Use of Electronic surveillance

b. Dependent Variable: Fight against Boko Haram Insurgency

#### ANOVA<sup>a</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	234.808	1	234.808	3041.172	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	24.707	320	.077		
	Total	259.516	321			

a. Dependent Variable: Fight against Boko Haram Insurgency

b. Predictors: (Constant), Use of Electronic surveillance

The regression for hypothesis two shows a significance of the data in explaining the null hypothesis. This confirms that at 95% interval and a significant F-probability, the study's null hypothesis can be rejected and the alternate accepted. The adjusted R square of .904 shows that our independent variable explains 90% change in the dependent variable, which implies that a change in the use of electronic surveillance will result in 90% change in the fight against Boko Haram insurgency. Nevertheless, it is worthy of note that the descriptive statistics had shown that there is no sufficient use of such devices.

### Hypothesis Three

This hypothesis is set to test the synergy between the Nigerian Police and the host communities in the North East in the fight against Boko Haram. The hypothesis states as follows:

**Ho<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant impact of the synergy between the NPF and the host communities in the North, on the fight against Boko Haram.**

#### Model Summary<sup>b</sup>

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.938 <sup>a</sup>	.881	.880	.31104	.156

a. Predictors: (Constant), NPF/Host community synergy

b. Dependent Variable: Fight against Boko Haram Insurgency

#### ANOVA<sup>a</sup>

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	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	228.557	1	228.557	2362.500	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	30.958	320	.097		
	Total	259.516	321			

a. Dependent Variable: Fight against Boko Haram Insurgency

b. Predictors: (Constant), NPF/Host community synergy

The result of the regression for hypothesis three shows a significance of the data in explaining the null hypothesis. Therefore, at 95% interval and a significant F-value, the study's null hypothesis can be rejected and the alternate accepted. The adjusted R square of .880 shows that our independent variable explains 88% change in the dependent variable, meaning that any adjustment in the synergy existing between the police and the host communities in the fight against Boko Haram will result in 88% change in the fight against Boko Haram insurgency.

### **Discussion of Findings**

This study was set out to explore the co-option of the Nigerian police in the fight against Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria. The study wants to know the various kinds of peace building/conflict resolution approaches used by the Nigerian police in combating Boko Haram; examine the use of electronic surveillance by the police in the fight against Boko Haram; assess the synergy between NPF and host communities in the Northeastern states of Nigeria in counterterrorism operations and examine challenges faced by the NPF in the fight against terrorism within the joint task force. The findings are as follows:

#### **Kinds of peace building/conflict resolution approaches used by the Nigeria police in combating Boko Haram**

The study finds that peace building/conflict resolution is part of the roles of the Nigeria Police who are therefore actively involved in brokering peace between the Boko Haram terrorist and the Nigerian community. In their roles at pursuing peace and resolving conflict, it is found that the police uses tools such as reuniting escaped and/or rescued victims of Boko Haram terrorism with their families. This is believed to help in reducing the psychological trauma of the victims. They also ensure that the government agencies are involved in the treatment of the rescued victims to ease their pain. It is also observed that the Nigerian Police grant free bail to non-felonious offenses committed by community members. Also, there is Police/community Partnership for information sharing which is believed will make it easier to secure the community against the threats the insurgents and help the police fight Boko Haram terrorism. But unexpectedly, it is observed that notwithstanding the role of the police in peace building/conflict resolution, the government has not seen enough reason to constitute Police Community Relations Committee for conflict resolution and peace building. This finding is in line with Ademowo (2015) who opined that, despite the undesirable insecurity woes that have bedeviled the entity called Nigeria, there is a way out, which is to institutionalise the culture of peace while policing the society.

#### **The use of electronic surveillance by the police in the fight against Boko Haram**

The role of the police in peace building/conflict resolution puts them in a position where intelligent information is golden. Therefore, the study was interested in finding out how much of the modern tools for surveillance is employed. It was observed that the electronic surveillance is a necessary tool for the fight against Boko Haram, yet surprisingly, it was observed that the Nigerian Police does not yet use electronic surveillance/reconnaissance devices in the fight against Boko Haram and consequently, surveillance in the fight against Boko Haram is limited only through protective

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patrolling. Nevertheless, the police have been putting much effort and showing their readiness through protective patrolling and collection of more intelligence on Boko Haram, but can do better, if the necessary equipment like the electronic surveillance/reconnaissance tools are put in place for their use. These findings agree with the findings by Umar (2013), who examined the growth and activities of the Boko Haram sect in Nigeria with the aim of suggesting a strategy for resolving the crisis and reveals that the present response of the government is more focused on addressing the symptoms of terrorism rather than providing advanced scientific and technology-driven strategies or devices that would effectively address the core of the problem.

### **The synergy between the Nigeria police and host communities in the Northeastern States of Nigeria in counterterrorism operations against Boko Haram**

Following the structural functionalist theory as employed in the study, the synergy between the police and the host community was explored. It was found that the police are enjoying good relationship with the host communities. This good relationship is expressed in their partnership with local leaders and youths in the Northeast to counter Boko Haram terrorism. The police also actively engage host communities in the Northeast to build security trust and co-operation, mobilizing some host community members who they use as informant for effective prevention and control of Boko Haram terrorism. Finally, this synergy enjoyed between the police and the host community, with the result it yields, leads this study to conclude that community policing is an effective counterterrorism measure adopted by the Police. These findings go to explain the tenets of the structural functionalist theory as espoused by Stearns (2013), Mediha (2013) and Palmer (2013), that the society, as a whole, functions effectively if the constituent parts are working healthily in synergy.

### **The challenges facing the Nigeria police in the fight against Boko Haram terrorism within the Joint Task Force.**

The role of the police in counterterrorism has not gone unchallenged, so the study explored some challenges facing the police in their fight against Boko Haram terrorism and found as follows: First, there is insufficient training for the officers facing Boko Haram, and being sent to fight well trained and equipped terrorist sounds like suicide mission. Second, there is allegation of misappropriation of funds allocated for counterterrorism operations. This leaves the police with insufficient funds and resources that in turn affects their efficiency in the fight against the terrorist. Third, political interference and corrupt practices among policymakers is also alleged. This kind of interference and corruption can always delay actions against the terrorist, thereby limiting the efficiency and productivity of the police. Fourth, command friction between the police and their military partners in the Joint Task Force. This fourth challenge is to be expected between military and paramilitary agencies whose ranking and protocols are similar but still unique. So the issue of superior and subordinates in the face of command and order controlled organization can always be an issue, especially when there are no laid down rules of operation and command protocols. Therefore, it becomes necessary to take further study into the rules of engagement of the Joint task force in order to find out the cause of this challenge and root it in the bud. The fifth challenge found is the existence of some moles (spies or traitors) in the joint military-Police-civilian Task Force on counter Boko Haram terrorism, which jeopardize their operations. These findings support previous research reports (Olojo, 2013; Hill, 2014; Bamidele, 2016; Nnam, *et al.*, 2020) who all agreed that concerted efforts to overcome the odious act of terrorism have been sabotaged and frustrated by some civilians in the host communities, politicians and security personnel, who provide corresponding assistance (such as leaking of security tactics and strategies, intelligence and information) to the terrorists.



## Conclusion

This study investigated the cooption of the Nigerian police in the fight against Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria. It is obvious that the involvement of the police in Joint Task Force has altered their latent role of enforcement and maintenance of law and order thereby exposing the police to duties including fight against terrorism. It is concluded that the roles of the Police are multi-faceted and vital in solving crime problems, including terrorism. These have gone beyond their traditional roles of internal security, law enforcement and order maintenance to include the use of technology in counterterrorism operations. The Police engage the services of youths, hunters, vigilante group, business-persons, local chiefs, opinion - leaders, other useful host community members and technology experts for information elicitation to strengthen their security and intelligence networks.

Further to these roles include their ability to reunite escaped and/or rescued victims of Boko Haram terrorism with their families, communities, and government agencies for rehabilitation and reintegration. There are also the active involvements of the Police in peace-building as a democratic conflict resolution approach to counterterrorism; inter-security agency collaboration, Police-community relations, motivation and welfare of personnel. However, there are several psychosocial, economic, political, and structural factors militating against the Nigeria Police in the arduous task of counterterrorism such as lack of sufficient surveillance/reconnaissance by the Force; inadequate training in counterterrorism before deployment; and insufficient human and material resources to combat terrorist groups.

## Recommendations

The study therefore recommends as follows:

First, it is imperative that police officers undergo regular specialized training and retraining prior to deployment. This will equip them against the well trained and equipped terrorists.

Secondly, the funding and deployment of police officers for the counterterrorism operations should be depoliticized. The influence of the politicians on the processes of operation of the counterterrorism is affecting the smooth operation of the units, if the funds set apart for their operation is misappropriated.

Third, there should be a very strict and unbiased screening of the officers deployed into the counterterrorism units. This screening should be done by external bodies outside the government and its agencies. This will help rid the ranks and files of the moles that jeopardize their operations.

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