Resolving Boko Haram Conflict for Sustainable Economic Development in Nigeria’s North-East Region; A Survey on Geidam Local Government Area of Yobe State

Abstract: The study examined possible alternatives capable of resolving Boko Haram conflict so as to promote sustainable economic development in Nigeria’s North-East region. Primary and secondary methods of data collection were utilized in the research. The study investigated the possibility of resolving Boko Haram conflict in North-East Nigeria, identified means of promoting sustainable economic development in the region after resolving the conflict and found out alternative ways for integrating peace with economic development in the region. It found that, Boko Haram conflict in North- East Nigeria can be resolved through multi-track diplomacy and negotiation. Post conflict rehabilitation and economic empowerment as the research found out is an effective means of promoting sustainable economic development in the region in the post conflict era. The study recommended the adoption of multi-track diplomacy and unconditional amnesty for Boko Haram fighters willing to surrender to the government forces as measures necessary for resolving the ongoing Boko Haram conflict for the promotion of sustainable economic development in Nigeria’s North-East region.

Keywords: Boko Haram, Conflict, Development, Economic, Resolving, Sustainable

INTRODUCTION

Conflicts of various forms and dimensions were witnessed in Nigeria before amalgamation in 1914. However, this trend of hostility continued even after independence in 1960 probably because of mismanagement of national resources, political repression and to some extent electoral manipulation. As such, this led to a series of riots and political upheavals that eventually brought the first republic to a halt. Ethnic rivalry within the rank and file of the military and political class resulted in a 30 months civil war, 1967-70 (Ahmed, 2009). Meanwhile, (Adesoji, 2010) provides chronological data on the various uprisings in Nigeria since the Maitatsine crisis of 1980s. These are Kano city riot of October 1982, the protest against Nigeria’s membership of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) in 1986, Katsina - Kaduna - Zaria -Funtua religious riots of March 1987 and Kaduna Polytechnic riot of 1988. Others are the Kano riot of October 1991, the Zango-Kataf crisis of May 1992, Kano civil disturbance of December 1991 and the Jos ethno-religious crisis of April 1994, which was recurring from time to time. In addition, he stated that there were about twenty-eight other clashes reported between 1999 and 2008, the most outstanding was the Shagamu crisis of July 1999.

Apart from these, a number of protests and agitations have been witnessed including the opposition to the annulled June 12, 1993 presidential elections as well as emergence of regional militant groups. These include the Movement for Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND), Odua Peoples’ Congress (OPC) and the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB).

The people of Nigeria in general and those who live in the north-east in particular would ever remember the period between 2009 and 2015 as the terrifying era in the history of the region. It was the time, an indigenous Salafist da’awah group Jama'a'atu Ahlis Sunnah Lidda'awati Wal-Jihad popularly known as Boko Haram turned to became brutal and dreadful. The clampdown on sect members by Nigerian security operatives within the period under review as well as extra-judicial killing of Mohammed Yusuf, the sect leader triggered violent reaction of BH in the region and the country in general (Perouse de Montclos, 2014, Falode, 2016, Adeniyi, 2017).

Available extant literature reveals that negotiating with terrorists by democratically elected governments have generated debates among scholars and conflict resolution experts over the years. The first group of scholars argue that the trend disorganizes political systems and undermines the goals of the global war on terror as well as set a precarious pattern for legitimizing terrorism. However, Toros (2008) argued that negotiations may influence a militant group to alter its violent behaviour. In the first place, it may provide the militants with the channel to express their grievances. Second, negotiations may reinforce the nonviolent faction within the group that is disposed to peaceful resolution of the conflict. And third, the process may progressively transform the militants towards nonviolence. She argues further that the controversial issues of legitimacy and complexity of terrorist groups have been utilized to achieve peaceful resolution of the Northern Ireland conflict as well as the GRP-MILF peace accord in the Philippines. This, of course, negates the current position of the Nigerian government not to negotiate with BH simply because they are terrorists.

Yobe State
Many researchers have written on Boko Haram and its origin. A lot has been said on its “modus operando’s” as well its impact on the people and the society at large. Also, several studies dwelled on using military approach to silence the insurgency. I found a gap that much study has not been carried out on how to negotiate and dialogue peace with the insurgents. This study, therefore, tries to fill the existing gap. Also, previous studies have failed to address the issue of how resolving the conflict can lead to sustainable economic development in Nigeria’s north east region. This gap identified shall be bridged in the proposed study. The desire to fill the gaps discovered justify the basis for the proposed study.

Justification of the Study
Many researchers have written on Boko Haram and its origin. A lot has been said on its “modus operando’s” as well its impact on the people and the society at large. Also, several studies dwelled on using military approach to silence the insurgency. I found a gap that much study has not been carried out on how to negotiate and dialogue peace with the insurgents. This study, therefore, tries to fill the existing gap. Also, previous studies have failed to address the issue of how resolving the conflict can lead to sustainable economic development in Nigeria’s north east region. This gap identified has been bridged by the study. The desire to fill the gaps discovered justify the basis for the study.

Aims and Purpose of the Study
The purpose of the study includes to;
- Investigate the possibility of resolving Boko Haram conflict in Nigeria’s north east region.
- Identify means of promoting sustainable economic development in the region after resolving the conflict.
- Find out alternative ways for integrating peace with economic development in the region.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Neumann (2007) pointed out that there is an inconsistency between what governments publicly proclaim and do in reality. He, therefore, asserts that democratic governments do engage in dialogue with terrorists depending on their readiness. For example, the British and Spanish governments secretly negotiated with the IRA in 1991 and ETA in 1998 respectively despite their continued violence. This is why Cronin (2010) noted that engaging in negotiation with terrorists does not immediately end terror violence as studies reveal that about half of the negotiating groups in our study have continued their attacks, though typically at a lower level of intensity and frequency. Still, among those 18 percent of groups that negotiated, the proportion of talks that clearly failed was small: about one in ten. On the other hand, in the remaining nine cases of talks that trundled on, very few groups actually achieved their ends through negotiations. The classic pattern is for groups either to cease to exist for other reasons, or to remain in periodic talks that drag on and on with interruptions and periodic setbacks, lacking either dramatic successes or outright failure. This is an indication that the issue of negotiation with terrorists is to a large extent, at the choice of a government and its allies in a fight with an insurgent group. The success or otherwise depends on the commitment of the parties involved among other factors.

Analyzing peace resolutions between conflicting parties is a complex responsibility because of the distinctive nature of each conflict under investigation. Nonetheless, studies revealed that certain variables are causal to the success and failure of peace negotiations. Hampson (1996) examines causal connection between the following autonomous variables in the achievement and failure in conflict resolutions: First, ripeness or readiness of conflict for resolution; second, the function of a third-party facilitator; third, the nature of a peace agreement and finally, the role played by a great power. “Conflict ripeness” which is variously referred to as “hurting stalemate” ”ripening process” or “ripe moment” is a situation in which both sides realize that they cannot achieve their objectives through violence and are conscious of the cost of continuing the violence (Ramsbothan, Woodhouse and Miall, 2011: 171). It must be noted according to O’Kane (2006) that the two major elements of ripeness; “mutually hurting stalemate” and the possibility of negotiated solution are also necessary for a conflict to be ripe. Powell (2015) argues that there must be sweat before sweet as both parties are expected to take some shared risk in

The role of the third party in this circumstance is just as critical as it serves as a significant impetus in creating steady connections between enemies that may prompt de-escalation of conflict. It helps both parties to understand their responsibility for issues that should be settled collectively and not as a “challenge to be won” (Hampson, 1996:12). Third party can also encourage streamlining and sequencing issues, identifying alternatives, changing adversaries’ perceptions and building trust that could be leveraged on upon to initiate dialogue towards peaceful resolution of BH conflict in Nigeria. However, Yawanarajah (2016) argues that “un-ripeness” of the situation should not deter the third party from being active initiator of peace. He therefore, advocates for initiation of peace dialogue at any time provided suitable strategies and techniques are applied. The experiences and skills of the mediators as well as their knowledge and influence in some instances make the moment ripe for peace.

Boko Haram became dreaded after the clamp down on it by the Nigerian security operatives and extra
judicial killing of its pioneer leader, Mohammed Yusuf in 2009. It is on the basis of the foregoing, that Agbiboea (2014) argues that military approach provides terrorists with critical experience in tactics and forces them to create new networks of support as a form of survival strategy. The use of minors (especially young girls) as suicide bombers qualified Boko Haram as the most dangerous terrorist group in the world. However, combined effort of the security agencies greatly assists in destabilizing Boko Haram insurgents in their Sambisa forest hide out. Ahmed, Suleiman & Salau (2019) asserts that inability of the government of the day to satisfactorily meet up with the basic needs and aspirations of the citizens prompt violence. However, larger percentage of the respondents rejects the idea of initiating peace talks with BH now as symptoms of ripeness such as ‘mutually hurting stalemate’ is not yet visible in the conflict (Zaltman, 2001, O’Kane, 2006).

**METHODOLOGY**

The study was conducted using both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. Primary data were sourced through the administration of closed ended questionnaire which was administered on 150 respondents chosen from 2 selected districts within the local government. Balle and Geidam were the 2-districts chosen and studied in the research. Balle district was represented by 2 villages namely Balle and Kelluri while Geidam district was represented by 4 areas which are Ajairi, Hausari, Low Coast and Angwan Kwari. Six areas were surveyed in the study. And, each of the six areas was represented by 25 respondents randomly chosen using the probability sampling technique. The Frequency, Percentage, Mean and Standard Deviation statistical tools of analysis was adopted in analyzing primary data collected for the study where Q=Question, F=Frequency, P=Percentage, M=Mean, SD=Standard Deviation. Responses were also acquired using the Likert Scale of Strongly Disagreed (SD), Disagreed (D), Neutral (N), Agreed (A) and Strongly Agreed (SA).

**Data Presentation and Analysis**

The data collected for the study are hereby presented and analyzed;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>P/F</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q1. Multi-track diplomacy, dialogue and negotiation with a strong third-party mediator between the government and Boko Haram can resolve the conflict in Nigeria’s North-East region.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>770.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2. Deradicalization, rehabilitation, economic empowerment and reintegration of surrendered Boko Haram fighters will not resolve the conflict in North-East Nigeria.</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>650.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3. Equity in distribution of national revenue and developmental projects as well as effective human capital development in the North-East will resolve the long conflict the region is suffering from.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1,110.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4. Creation of employment opportunities, effective poverty reduction program, reduction in rate of illiteracy, provision of basic amenities and infrastructures are not possible ways of resolving the conflict in the North-East region.</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1,053.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5. Good governance as well as engaging the youth in purposeful ventures will resolve the conflict in the region.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1,097.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1, sows that 6.67% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the view that, multi-track diplomacy, dialogue and negotiation with a strong third-party mediator between the government and Boko Haram can resolve the conflict in Nigeria’s North-East region, 10% disagreed, 3.33% remained neutral, 26.67% agreed and 53.33% strongly agreed with the view. It is also presented in table 1 that, 46.67% of them strongly disagreed that, deradicalization, rehabilitation, economic empowerment and reintegration of surrendered Boko Haram fighters will not resolve the conflict in North-East Nigeria, 33.33% disagreed, 10%
were neutral and 6.67% agreed and 3.33% strongly agreed. On the position that, equity in distribution of national revenue and developmental projects as well as effective human capital development in the North-East will resolve the age long conflict the region is suffering from, 2.67% strongly disagreed, 5.33% disagreed, 3.33% wish to be neutral, 28.67% agreed and 60% of them strongly agreed with the position. Data presented in table 1 also shows that, 58.67% of them strongly disagreed that, creation of employment opportunities, effective poverty reduction program, reduction in rate of illiteracy, provision of basic amenities and infrastructures are not possible ways of resolving the conflict in the North-East region, 28% disagreed, 1.33% preferred to be neutral, 6.67% agreed and 4% strongly agreed. Table 1 clearly shows that, 3.33% of the respondents strongly disagreed that, good governance as well as engaging the youth in purposeful ventures will resolve the conflict in the region, 6% disagreed, 2.67% were neutral, 28% agreed and 60% of them strongly agreed. The average mean score for all the Qs in table 1 is 30 while Q3 recorded the highest SD score of 1,110.8 and Q2 recorded the lowest SD score of 650.0. Q1 has 770.0 as its SD score, Q4 recorded SD score of 1,053.6 and Q5 has SD score of 1,097.2. The average or mean SD score for all the Qs in table 1 is 936.32.

![Figure 1: Resolving Boko Haram conflict in Nigeria's North-East region](image)

Q=Question, SD=Strongly Disagreed, D=Disagreed, N=Neutral, A=Agreed, SA=Strongly Agreed

Source: Author’s Field Survey (2020)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2: Promoting sustainable economic development in the region after resolving the conflict.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q1. Sustainable economic development in the post conflict era in the region can be promoted through effective youth empowerment program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2. Proper rehabilitation and resettlement of Internally Displaced People (IDP) after resolving the conflict is not a step towards promoting sustainable economic development in the region.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3. Effective poverty alleviation program will contribute to the promotion of sustainable economic development in the region after resolving the conflict.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4. Provision of farm settlement scheme, subsidies, farm tools and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
implement, seedlings, as well as agricultural loan to resettled rural farmers after resolving the conflict will not promote sustainable economic development in the region.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.33%</td>
<td>6.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.33%</td>
<td>24.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>6.67%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>1,031.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q=Question, F=Frequency, P=Percentage, SD=Strongly Disagreed, D=Disagreed, N=Neutral, A=Agreed, SA=Strongly Agreed, M=Mean, SD=Standard Deviation

Source: Author’s Field Survey (2020)

It is indicated in table 2 that 2.67% of the respondents strongly disagreed that, sustainable economic development in the post conflict era in the region can be promoted through effective youth empowerment program, 5.34% disagreed, 3.33% were neutral, 26.67% agreed and 62% strongly agreed. Table 2 also presented that, 53.33% strongly disagreed that, proper rehabilitation and resettlement of Internally Displaced People (IDP) after resolving the conflict is not a step towards promoting sustainable economic development in the region, 26.67% disagreed, 6.67% wished to be neutral while 9.99% agreed and 3.33% strongly agreed. Data presented in table 2 further shows that, only 5.33% of the respondents strongly disagreed that, effective poverty alleviation program will contribute to the promotion of sustainable economic development in the region after resolving the conflict, 8% disagreed, 6.67% were neutral, 30% agreed while 50% strongly agreed. The view that, provision of farm settlement scheme, subsides, farm tools and implements, seedlings, as well as agricultural loan to resettled rural farmers after resolving the conflict will not promote sustainable economic development in the region as table 2 shows, was strongly disagreed with by 53.33% of the respondents, 26% disagreed with it, 4% were neutral, 10% agreed and 6.67% of them strongly agreed with it. Table 2 again shows that, 3.33% strongly disagreed that, funding and supporting resettled rural women to engage in food processing, craft making, weaving, soap making, embroidery, dying and marketing of agricultural products will promote sustainable economic development in the region after resolving the conflict, 5.33% disagreed, 6.67% preferred to be neutral, 24.67% agreed and 60% strongly agreed. It is also presented by table 2 that all the Qs in the table recorded the same average or mean score of 30, Q1 has the highest SD score of 1,170.8 while Q4 has the lowest SD score of 756.4. Q2 has SD score of 770.0, Q3 has SD score of 691.6 and Q5 has SD score of 1,031.6. Therefore, 4,420.4 is the overall average or mean SD score for all Qs in table 2.

Q=Question, SD=Strongly Disagreed, D=Disagreed, N=Neutral, A=Agreed, SA=Strongly Agreed

Source: Author’s Field Survey (2020)
Table 3: Integrating peace with economic development in the region.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q1. Encouraging forums for inter-religious interaction and harmony at various places of work will integrate peace with economic development in the region.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>763.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2. Bringing the various ethnic minorities in the region together through appointment to both public and private sectors will not integrate peace with economic development in the region.</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>623.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3. Encouraging inter-religion and tribal harmony through marriage, exchanging of views and peaceful coexistence at various points of interaction especially in business areas will help in integrating peace with economic development in the region.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1,097.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4. Creating small scale business opportunity for self-reliant under the slogan of peace through granting of soft loan to Internally Displaced People (IDP) resettled after the conflict will not contribute to integrating peace with economic development in the region.</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>994.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5. Community peace initiative aimed at reconciliation and reuniting returned family separated for long as a result of the conflict as well as educating them on how they can start new way of earning a living will integrate peace with economic development in the region.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>831.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q=Question, F=Frequency, P=Percentage, SD=Strongly Disagreed, D=Disagreed, N=Neutral, A=Agreed, SA=Strongly Agreed, M=Mean, SD=Standard

Source: Author’s Field Survey (2020)

In table 3, it is clearly presented that, 4.67% of the respondents strongly disagreed that, encouraging forums for inter-religious interaction and harmony at various places of work will integrate peace with economic development in the region. 8.67% disagreed, 6.67% were neutral while 26.67% agreed and 53.33% strongly agreed. Data presented in table 3 further shows that, 48.67% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the view that, bringing the various ethnic minorities in the region together through appointment to both public and private sectors will not integrate peace with economic development in the region, 28.67% disagreed, 4.67% wished to be neutral, 11.33% agreed and 6.67% strongly agreed. The position that, encouraging inter-religion and tribal harmony through marriage, exchanging of views and peaceful coexistence at various points of interaction especially in business areas will help in integrating peace with economic development in the region as table 3 shows was strongly disagreed with by 3.33% of the respondents, 6% of them disagreed with it, 2.67% of them were neutral, 28% agreed and 60% strongly agreed with the position. Table 3 again shows that, 57.33% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the assertion that, creating small scale business opportunity for self-reliant under the slogan of peace through granting of soft loan to Internally Displaced People (IDP) resettled after the conflict will not contribute to integrating peace with economic development in the region, 29.33% disagreed, 4% wished to be neutral, 6% agreed and 3.33% of them strongly agreed with it. Data presented in table 3 also shows that, 5.33% of them strongly disagreed that, community peace initiative aimed at reconciliation and reuniting returned family separated for long as a result of the conflict as well as educating them on how they can start new way of earning a living will integrate peace with economic development in the region, 8% disagreed, 3.33% were neutral 50% agreed and 53.33% strongly agreed. All the Qs in table 3 recorded equal average or mean score of 30 while Q3 has the highest SD score of 1,097.2 and Q2 has the lowest SD score of 623.2. The SD scores for Q1 is 763.6, Q4 is 994.8 and Q5 is 831.6. The average or mean SD score for all the Qs in table 3 stood at 862.08.
The age long conflict in Nigeria’s North-East region can be resolved. Multi-track diplomacy which creates avenue for dialogue and negotiation between conflicting parties and mediators is capable of bringing the end the conflict. The government as well as Boko Haram with the intervention of third or more parties can agree on peace deal with each willing to accept certain sacrifices for peace to reign in the region. Deradicalization, rehabilitation, economic empowerment and reintegration of surrendered Boko Haram fighters can possibly resolve the conflict. Attempt towards deradicalization and rehabilitation has not been feasible because the fighters have refused to surrender in larger number at a time. This has made the issue of reintegrating them back into the society or empowering them to start a new phase of life again an invisible project. The injustice in national politics which has made the distribution of national revenue and development projects bias has negatively affected the efforts toward resolving the conflict. National revenue allocation formula as well as distribution of national development projects on geo-political basis have not favored the North-East region which has been devastated by age long conflict. Equity in revenue allocation and distribution of development projects has been perceived as part of measures necessary for resolving the conflict. Resolving the conflict will be difficult or may likely take time if the unemployment and poverty level in the region continue to remain high instead of reducing. Rising rate of illiteracy and inadequate basic infrastructures communities in the region are suffering from amounted to provocation which itself fueled the conflict. Acute shortage of life improving infrastructures couple with growing rates of poverty and ignorance are bye products of bad governance. The march towards resolving the conflict will not see the light of the day without good governance entrenched in the region.

It is wished that the conflict in Nigeria’s North-East region comes to an end soon. The issue of promoting sustainable economic development soon after the conflict is resolved is a very essential matter of national discourse. Sustainable economic development in the post conflict era in the region can be promoted through effective youth empowerment program. Proper rehabilitation and resettlement of Internally Displaced People (IDP) after resolving the conflict is a step towards promoting sustainable economic development in the North-East region. Rehabilitation and resettlement scheme will have to be back up with effective poverty alleviation program before it can contribute to the promotion of sustainable economic development in the region after resolving the conflict. Provision of farm settlement scheme, subsidies, farm tools and implements, seedlings, as well as agricultural loan to resettled rural farmers after resolving the conflict is an important step towards promoting sustainable economic development in the region. Rural communities where agriculture is their main source of income are the worst affected areas by the conflict. And, women form the bulk of rural farmers in the region. Assisting women at the rural communities especially in agriculture is a step toward improving the devastated economy of the region. Funding and supporting resettled rural women to engage in food processing, craft making, weaving, soap making,
embroidery, dying and marketing of agricultural products will promote sustainable economic development in the region after resolving the conflict.

Post conflict peace building initiatives have often been accompanied with integrating peace with economic development. In Nigeria’s North-East region, the challenges of integrating peace with economic development is enormous. Peace is a sensitive and basic requirement for development to thrive. Peace and economic development in the North-East can be integrated through encouraging forums for inter-religious interaction and harmony at various places of work. The region is dominated with various ethnic minorities and thus, bringing them together through appointment to both public and private sectors will cream avenue for integrating peace with economic development in the region. Peace and economic development can be integrated through encouraging inter-religion and tribal harmony through marriage, exchanging of views and peaceful coexistence at various points of interaction especially in business areas. Creating small scale business opportunity for promoting self-reliant among people under the slogan of peace through granting of soft loan to Internally Displaced People (IDP) resettled after the conflict will contribute to integrating peace with economic development in the North-East. Community peace initiative aimed at reconciliation and reuniting returned family separated for long as a result of the conflict as well as educating them on how they can start new way of earning a living will integrate peace with economic development in the region.

Major Findings

The major findings of the study are:

1. The conflict in North-East Nigeria can be resolved through multi-track diplomacy, dialogue and negotiation with strong third party serving as a mediator between government and Boko Haram.
2. Deradicalization, rehabilitation, economic empowerment and reintegration of surrendered Boko Haram fighters can resolve the conflict in North-East Nigeria.
3. Equity in distribution of national revenue and developmental projects as well as effective human capital development in the North-East is also a solution to the age long conflict.
4. Creation of employment opportunities, effective poverty reduction program, reduction in rate of illiteracy, provision of basic amenities and infrastructures are also possible ways of resolving the conflict in the North-East region.
5. Good governance as well as engaging the youth in purposeful ventures will resolve the conflict in the region.
6. Through effective youth empowerment program, sustainable economic development in the North-East can be promoted in the post conflict era.
7. Proper rehabilitation and resettlement of Internally Displaced People (IDP) after resolving the conflict will is nice step towards promoting sustainable economic development in the region.
8. Effective poverty alleviation program will contribute to the promotion of sustainable economic development in the region after the conflict is resolved.
9. Providing agricultural loan and supports to resettled rural farmers after resolving the conflict will promote sustainable economic development in the region.
10. Funding and supporting resettled rural women to engage in local light industries and marketing of agricultural products will promote sustainable economic development in the region.
11. Peace and economic development in Nigeria’s North-East region can be integrated through encouraging forums for inter-religious interaction and harmony at various places of work.
12. Bringing the various ethnic minorities in the region together through appointment to both public and private sectors will integrate peace with economic development in the region.
13. Encouraging inter-religion and tribal marriage, exchanging views and peaceful coexistence at various points of interaction especially in business areas will help in integrating peace with economic development in the region.
14. Creating small scale business opportunity for self-reliant under the slogan of peace through granting of soft loan to Internally Displaced People (IDP) resettled after the conflict will also, contribute to integrating peace with economic development in the region.
15. Community peace initiative for reconciliation and reuniting returned family separated for long as a result of the conflict as well as educating them on how they can start new way of earning a living will integrate peace with economic development in the region.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of the major findings made, the study came to the conclusion that, Boko Haram conflict in the North-East region of Nigeria can be resolved through multi-track diplomacy, dialogue and negotiation with a strong third party serving as a mediator. The study also arrived at the conclusion that, sustainable economic development in Nigeria’s North-East region in the post conflict era can be promoted through effective youth empowerment program. The study further reached the conclusion that, peace and economic development in Nigeria’s North-East region can be integrated through encouraging forums for inter-religious interaction and harmony at various places of work.
Based on the conclusion drawn by the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Multi-track diplomacy, dialogue and negotiation between government and Boko Haram should be created. This should consist of a strong party mediator consisting of the citizens, state men and clergymen as well as international facilitators. This will create avenue for resolving the conflict than military option. It may be difficult, getting Boko Haram to negotiate with but still, government and other stake holders should continuously seek for avenues to dialogue with the insurgents with a view to resolving the conflict. The process of dialogue and negotiation can be easily facilitated will full participation from the citizens and third part mediators.

2. The grievances amounting from unjust allocation of national revenue and distribution of development projects across the geo-political regions of the country must be address if conflict in the North-East region is to end. Bias and unjust allocation of national revenue and distribution of development projects geo-politically is one of the grievances underlying the conflict in the North-East region there is need for even distribution of developmental projects across the country, States and Local Government Areas. Opening up of rural settlements with infrastructural facilities such as roads, electricity, water, health and educational institutions will engage the youth in purposeful ventures.

3. Good governance needed to be entrenched in the North-East region. This is because bad governance contributed to the rise of the conflict. Good governance in which employment opportunities for the jobless youth will be provided, illiteracy rate reduced, poverty alleviated and inadequate basic infrastructures problem solved will go a long way in resolving the conflict in the region and returned it to the proper track necessary for sustainable peace and economic development.

4. Unconditional amnesty program for the insurgents’ is a necessity if the conflict is to be resolved. Boko Haram fighters who willingly surrendered to the government forces should be deradicalized, rehabilitated and reintegrated in the society. Such reintegration must be accompanied with an empowerment strategy capable of making them self-reliant and engaged to an extent that thinking of returning back to combatant confrontation with government forces will never occur on their mind again.

5. The government should be committed to economic empowerment in Nigeria’s North-East region. Economic empowerment and human capital development of surrendered fighters through functional education and skills acquisition is necessary to provide gainful employment to ex-insurgents and make them fully reintegrated back into the society.

6. Internally Displaced People (IDP) by the conflict also need to be properly rehabilitated and resettled. Arrangement for comfortable resettlement must be made by the government. Person displaced by the conflict should be empowered so that they can have a new foundation to start a fresh life again.

7. Agricultural funding and support for rural farmers especially women obstructed and displaced by the conflict are necessary. Agriculture loan, supports in the form of subsidies, farm implements, seedlings among others should be provided to rural farmers by the government to enable them bounced back to their initial economic activity and way of life. Government should fund the development of light and cottage industries so that women who have returned to their villages from IDP camps can re-engaged back in local crafting and marketing of agricultural products. This will boast economic development in the region.

8. Forums for post conflict peace initiatives should be encouraged by the government, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other stake holders. This will translate in effective post conflict peace building through inter-tribal and religious interaction and harmony. Avenue for people to come together under one umbrella despite their differences should be created especially through appointment to places of work, admission to schools, business places among others. This will create opportunity for cross cultural interaction, sharing of ideas and opinions and learning how to tolerate and appreciate each other’s no matter the differences. Such forums will lead easily to integrating peace with economic development in the North East region of Nigeria.

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