NIGERIAN MILITARY OPERATIONS IN LIBERIA AND NORTH-EAST, NIGERIA: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT
Despite being a sub-regional hero in the West African military operations in the past, the Nigerian military, comparatively seems to be on a decline considering its poor performance in combating Boko Haram terrorism. The study ran a comparative investigation of the Nigerian military's applauded success in the 1990-1997 Liberian Crisis and its seeming inability to curb the Boko Haram menace in Nigeria's North East. The study is qualitative and descriptive. Data collection focused on published online and offline literature. The Hans Morgenthau Realist Theory of Power, based on national interest and struggle for power among nation-states served as a framework for explanation. Findings identified bad leadership, corruption, and politicization of the Nigerian military as broad factors that undermined the Nigerian military's capacity. The above factors resulted in the mismanagement of human and material resources, fraud, and neglect of professionalism, brain waste, and poor funding of the Nigerian military. Return to professional military practice, diplomacy and strict adherence to lawful procedures and processes in government-military relations would be workable options for redress and return to full capacity of the ever-combatant Nigerian military.

KEYWORDS: The Military, Nigerian Military Operations, Military Operations in Liberia, Boko Haram, North-East Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

No doubt, Nigeria's leadership role in West Africa cannot be overemphasized. Its active participation in ECOMOG is a demonstration of its strength and commitment in the peace and security of the sub-region – aware of the implications of any major crisis on its national security. The country's participation in conflict resolution in the sub-region served as a boast for integration. The sheer size of her population, large market, availability of natural resources and her significant military capabilities bestowed on Nigeria the role of a regional leader (Alli, 2012). Nigeria's response to sub-regional security has been strongly influenced by the national roles its leaders projected for the country to the international community. This responsibility adopted has been a defining paradigm for foreign policy engagement. In extension, Nigeria is Africa's natural leader with manifest destiny and has the responsibility to promote Africa's interests and the interests of black people around the world. It is believed that the country's security is linked to other African countries as a result of shared cultural and historical experiences, as well as trans-national security affiliations, characterized by the situation in bordering countries (Yoroms, 2010). Nigeria treats the West African sub-region as a suitable platform for promoting national interest and regional influence (Ate (2011). It has raised to the forefront of African affairs in general and West African security issues in particular. Over the last few decades, member states of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have faced a slew of security issues not anticipated by the organization's founding treaty signed in 1975.

The first phase of the Liberian crisis that lasted from 1989 to 1997 was a game-changer for the sub-regional organization as it was not expected (Gberie, 2007). The war was triggered by a former government minister, Charles Ghankay Taylor who led a small group of insurgents that crossed into Liberia from the neighbouring Ivory Coast on the Christmas Eve of December 1989, to overthrow President Samuel Kanyon Doe, the ruling President at the time. It resulted in the loss of lives of over 200,000 people of the estimated population of 2 million citizens (Gberie, 2007). Samuel Doe was a former Master Sergeant during the reign of President

William Tolbert under the long-reigning True Whig Party (TWP) and became President of Liberia after the death of his predecessor in a bloody coup-de-tat. The coup against the TWP in 1980 was led by Samuel Doe and resulted in the assassination of President Tolbert, 27 members of the presidential guard and many others. Liberians, traumatized by the violent upheavals and brutality of Doe's regime volunteered to be part of Taylor's guerrillas that overthrew Doe.

On the 7th to 8th August 1990, under Nigerian leadership, the First Session of the ECOWAS Standing Committee in Banjul waved the principle of non-intervention for the Liberia Crisis. ECOWAS was forced to intervene in Liberia because the international community displayed total apathy in the face of such a humanitarian catastrophe (Abubakar, 2001). General I. B. Babangida (Rtd), Nigeria's then military President, proposed intervention in the Liberian crisis and it was then decided that a Cease-Fire Monitoring Group should be established to halt the tide of violence and restore peace and stability in the country. As a result, the ECOWAS Cease-Fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) was formed to bring the conflict under control and prevent its spread in the region (Alli, 2012). Nigeria's Military had been applauded over the years for being able to bear the huge burden of providing leadership and logistics in carrying out the security and peace-keeping operations under the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG).

Despite this great tide, the Nigerian military's inability to suppress Boko Haram put the force under wide scrutiny. There are concerns about the military's unsuccessful responses to insecurity within and across Nigeria national borders. The Boko Haram Insurgents, since 2009, have wreaked havoc on Nigeria's North East, causing insecurity, poverty, displacement and various forms of hardship. Despite the government's efforts insecurity and violence persisted and increased. This led to the loss of lives of tens of thousands of civilians and displacement of millions across the Lake Chad region comprising Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria. Nigeria government's recent call to the United States for military assistance was a declaration of loss of control of the situation. As the military battled with Boko Haram,

herdsmen killers and the Islamic State of West African People (ISWAP) emerged. They are today competing with Boko Haram over superiority in terror and wanton destruction of lives and property in Nigeria and Nigerian military battle to save its face without success.

Based on the foregoing, this study compared the Nigerian military's operations in the Liberian Crisis and Boko Haram terrorism. This is to determine whether the force is advancing or declining in strength. To achieve the above, the study adopted a descriptive design and qualitative method of data collection. Internet and library materials on the leading role of Nigeria's military in the peacekeeping operations in the Liberian crisis and the role of the Nigerian military in curbing the Boko Haram insurgency were widely sourced. Content analysis was used to analyze data dwelling in a valid logical reasoning, theoretical framework, and relevant data to conclude.

The Military

A military, also known as the armed forces collectively, is a heavily armed and well-organized body that is specifically designed for territorial protection of the state and warfare were most needed to achieve this protective goal. It is usually authorized and maintained by a sovereign state, and its members are recognized by their distinctive military uniforms and identifications attached to them. The state military may consist of several divisions.

The military has the primary function of defending the state and its interests from external armed threats. Military history is often regarded as encompassing all conflicts, not just those involving state militaries. It focuses on the people and institutions of war, while war history focuses on the evolution of war itself as technology, governments, and geography change. There are many facets to military history and one of the most important facets is to learn from past successes and failures, as well as mistakes to wage war more effectively in the future. Another is to instil a sense of military tradition to unite military powers. Another important aspect is to learn how to deter wars effectively.

Nigerian Military Operations

Nigeria has made a significant contribution to the internal security of other countries. The Nigerian government has spearheaded, organized, and funded peacekeeping missions in Africa. Nigeria has also actively engaged in several UN peacekeeping missions around the world, providing men from its police force, army, navy and air force, even in times of extreme domestic insecurity (Ekoko, 1993). Admittedly, the scope of police roles in peacekeeping has risen significantly, as has Nigerian police involvement (Julie, 2010). Some peacekeeping missions involving the Nigerian military are:

- UN Operation in Congo (ONUC) - 1960-1964
- UN Security Force in West New Guinea (UNSF) - 1962-1983
- UN Indian-Pakistan Observer Mission (UNIPOM) - 1965-1966
- UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) - 1978-1983
- Chad Operation (Operation Harmony I) Bilateral - 1979
- OAU Mission Intervention Force in Chad - (Operation Harmony II) 1981-1982
- UN Iraq-Iran Military Observer Group - 1988-1991
- UN Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM I, II and III) - 1989-1991, 1991-1992, 1992-1995
- UN Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) in Namibia - 1989-1990
- UN Mission for Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) - 1991 onwards
- UN Iran-Kuwait Observer Mission (UNIKOM) - 1991
- UN Interim Mission Kosovo (UNMIK) - 1991
- UN Transnational Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) - 1992-1993
- UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) - 1992-1995
- UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in Yugoslavia - 1992-1993
- UN Operation in Mozambique (UNOSOZ) - 1992-1995
- UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) - 1992 onwards
- Organization of African Unity (OAU) Monitoring Group in Rwanda - 1992-1993
- UN Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) - 1993
- UN Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) - 1993-1995
- UN Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO) - 1993-1995
- Nigeria Peacekeeping Force in Tanzania (TAPKM) - 1994
- UN Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) - 1994-2000
- UN Group in the Aouzou Strip, Libya/Chad (UNASOG) - 1994

- UN Prevention Deployment in Macedonia (UNPREDEP) - 1995-2000
- UN Transitional Administration for Eastern Slovania, Baranja, Western Sirmium in Crotia (UNTAES) - 1996-1998
- UN Observer Mission in Previakia (UNMOP) - 1996-2000
- UN Observer Mission in Angola (MONUA) - July 1997
- ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) Operation Harmony in Liberia - 1990-1997
- ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) Operation Sandstorm in Sierra Leone - 1997-2000
- UN Civilian Police Support Group, Dambe Region, Croatia - 1998
- UN Mission in Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) - 2000 onwards
- UN Transition Authority in East Timor (UNTAET) - 2000
- ECOWAS Mission in Liberia (ECOMIL) - August – October 2003
- UN Mission in Sudan (AMIS) - 2004 onwards
- UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) – 2004
- UN-African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) – 2007 onwards
- UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo – 2010 onwards
- UN Organization Interim Security Force for Abyei – 2011 onwards
- UN Organization in the Republic of South Sudan – 2011 onwards
- UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali – 2013 onwards
- UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic – 2014 onwards

Source: (Chigozie and Ituma, 2015).

In addition to Nigeria's involvement in the peacekeeping operations around the world, the country had the highest troop contingent contribution to the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) (Human Rights Watch, 2006), and over 12,000 men of its armed forces were deployed to the ECOMOG Peace Support Operations (PSOs) in the Liberian and Sierra Leone crises (Abdurraman, 2005). In the year 2000, Nigeria dispatched 3,404 troops to the UN-sponsored peacekeeping missions across the world, making her the world's second-largest troop contributor after Bangladesh (Ebegbulem, 2012).

Nigeria's role as the driving force behind the ECOMOG initiative, the first of its kind in Africa, was a significant milestone in African politics. It was a bold endeavour to devise

solutions to the challenges in the content within the environment of global neglect and national failure. Considering the newness of the initiative for Africa, the dynamics of the crisis in Liberia, the intra-regional rivalries, sub-regional leaders' lack of expertise in multilateral diplomacy and the challenging financial and political circumstances in which ECOMOG operated, there was scepticism on the success of the initiative. Yet, the overall ECOMOG initiative demonstrated several lessons for African peacekeeping policy and theory (Dauda, et al. 2017).

Nigeria's Military Operation in Liberia

a) An Overview of the Liberian Crisis: From December 1989, Liberia had been in chaos eight months before its neighbour states intervened actively. The state had a turbulent history and was in a region rife with unrest. Its weakness originated from the 1847 creation of freed American slaves. The founders, known as Americo-Liberians, established a rigid, hierarchical social order in which they placed themselves at the top and the indigenous population at the bottom. Despite accounting for only around five per cent of the population, they dominated and had total political and economic control in the country for nearly a century and a half (Ero & Long, 1994). During the administration of William Tolbert, 1971 - 1980, the Americo-Liberians attained their pinnacle. The Vice President, Tolbert ascended to power following the death of President William Tubman in 1971. Their combined thirty-six years rule brought modest improvements in the lives of ordinary Liberians. Tolbert's reign was marked by corruption and harassment, which bred discontent. In 1979, riots over the price and availability of rice created the stage for political upheaval inflamed by a crackdown on anti-Tolbert, Americo-Liberian elites (Adibe, 1997). Major political personalities and government officials were executed. Essentially, this undermined the Americo-Liberian political reign. Samuel Doe from the Krahns, an ethnic minority group succeeded Tolbert and ruled with an iron fist, allowing Krahn to carry out violent activities against other ethnic groups and his critics. This resulted in ethnic tension, political corruption and stringent socio-economic conditions that triggered violent resistance.

The National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), commanded by Charles Taylor, crossed into Liberia from Cote d'Ivoire to overthrow President Samuel Doe. The conflict became intense but the international community was less concerned. ECOWAS, therefore, launched a regional response to the crisis with a Standing Mediation Committee (SMC) to facilitate a diplomatic solution. Due to a lack of diplomatic progress, the SMC deployed Economic Community Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) to Liberia on August 7, 1990. ECOMOG was sent to deter the warring factions and oversee the implementation of a cease-fire, disarmament, and the halting of weaponry imports, as well as the release of prisoners (Adeboye, 2020).

On December 24, 1989, the Americo-Liberian, Charles Taylor, a former official in Doe's government and a fugitive from justice in the United States revolted against Samul Doe (Adibe, 1995). From Cote d'Ivoire, Taylor led a group of rebels into Liberia to depose Doe and re-establish Americo-Liberian supremacy (Aning, 1997). Taylor took over Nimba County in North-Central Liberia, resulting in the death of thousands of civilians and many fled to Cote d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, and Guinea (Kodjoe, 1994). Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) arrived in Monrovia, Liberia's capital. The NPFL failed to remove Doe from office, and a standoff ensued between Taylor, a renegade section of the NPFL members. A full-fledged war broke out, involving multiple rebel factions (Alao, 1994).

(b) Nigeria's Involvement in the Peacekeeping Operation in Liberia

As a veteran of international peacekeeping missions, Nigeria positioned itself as the region's policeman and urged for regional effort to restore calm. This was an opportunity for Nigeria to show the world that charity begins at home. Nigeria was eager and ready to deploy its military while other West African nations debated the need for the intervention as the law of non-intervention was embedded in the OAU Charter. The ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) would not have been possible without Nigeria's support in the provision of finance, its soldiers, military and political leadership, and supplies. Being a self-appointed policeman of the region, Nigeria pledged to end the war and restore stability in Liberia.

Besides, Nigeria has the responsibility to protect over 70,000 Nigerians resident in Liberia during the takeoff of the crisis (Mays, 1998). It needed to prevent a possible spread of the crisis, and displacement of persons in the region which were highly detrimental to Nigeria's national interests. At a point, Nigerian troops made up two-third of the ECOMOG force in Liberia. In addition to picking the bills, Nigeria aided other West African countries in deploying their soldiers, even before the intervention by the UN and OAU.

Nigerian Military and Boko Haram Faceoff in North-East Nigeria

Boko Haram (Western Education is sinful) is a terrorist group in the North-East, Nigeria bordering Nigeria and the Niger Republic. At the time of its formation in 2009, the organization was mostly pacifist. Its initial ambition was to live a sedentary lifestyle away from what it sees as the corrupt nature of the northern states (Human Rights Watch, 2014). The initial head of the group, late Mohammed Yusuf, warned his followers to reject both Yan Izala's modern Islamic institutions and the Nigerian secular education system. He also criticized Nigeria's democracy and constitution, as well as her institutions' arbitrariness (Loimeier, 2012). Between 2002 and 2007, the group had several clashes with the residents and the Yobe State police. This led to its expulsion and subsequent migration to Borno state where it became prominent. In June 2009 the Military-Boko Haram faceoff sparked an uprising in five northern states. By July 2009 the Nigerian military had killed over 800 persons, largely the group members, in what it called 'Operation Flush.' The group's mosque in Maiduguri (Ibn Taymiyya Masjid), was demolished during the conflict and the Boko Haram leader, Mohammed Yusuf was reported dead while in police custody. The execution of Yusuf by the Nigerian police according to Hill (2012), prompted the group to considerably expand and strengthen its armed campaign. He further argues that the Nigerian security forces' actions against the organization enraged northerners to such an extent that the group was able to maintain a steady stream of volunteers and sympathizers. However, the current intensification of Boko Haram's violent actions and audacious attacks against civilians has resulted in a

significant decrease in the number of recruitments and sympathizers in northern Nigeria (Barna, 2014).

The terror attacks carried out in recent times by the Boko Haram group have also resulted in the massive internal displacement of citizens in Nigeria's northeast. The United Nations High Commissioner for refugees revealed there are roughly 650,000 internally displaced people in North-East Nigeria. The UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights estimated the number of internally displaced persons in Nigeria since 2010, due to the violence, at 3.3 million, which is one of the highest numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the world. As of 2014, Niger alone was hosting about 40,000 refugees resulting from Boko Haram attacks (UN Human Rights, 2014; Barna, 2014).

Given the Nigerian military's modest success during the civil war in Liberia, as well as its experience in other peacekeeping missions in Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau, Cote d'Ivoire, and Mali, many Nigerians and external observers are perplexed that the Nigerian Military is has put the Boko Haram insurgency on a halt. Except for the state of emergency imposed by the Goodluck Jonathan administration in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states in May 2013, pertinent information in the literature and from Nigerian military authorities is limited (BBC news, 2013). To keep up with the escalating intensity of Boko Haran's attacks, the emergency declaration was extended for another six months in November 2013. Initially, this was regarded as a bold strategy that might eventually put Boko Haram out of business (Amao & Maiangwa, 2015). Although in a commentary, Allen (2019) noted that the Nigerian military has not failed in containing Boko Haram, as the group has lesser territory in control, as it did in previous years, when it was declared the world's deadliest terrorist group, the Nigerian military has not to defeat the terrorist group.

Challenges of Nigerian Military Operations against Boko Haram Insurgency

The Nigerian military's efforts to quell the Boko Haram Insurgency have been undermined by several factors.

a) Poor Funding and Insufficient Military Weapons

The Nigerian military is underfunded. This affected mobilization, intelligence and time procurement of weapons. Boko Haram was using superior firearms against the Nigerian soldiers. Fund meant for security operations were said to be mismanaged. For instance, the former National Security Adviser, Sambo Dasuki was accused of diversion of funds earmarked for the procurement of arms meant for fighting Boko Haram (Premium Times January 23, 2020).

b) Internal Sabotage and Support to Boko Haram

The Nigerian military has been sabotaged in the last few decades. Many officers and men of the force were retired prematurely, some died in conspirator plane crashes, while others were betrayed to the enemy bullets. Many officers and men professionally trained for military services were wasted in the above manners. This reduced the strength of the force. Besides, Boko Haram is not entirely alien to North-East Nigeria. Some North-Easterners were sympathetic, supportive and members of Boko Haram. Their support to the terrorist group contributed to the failure of the Nigerian military to defeat the group.

c) Insufficient Early Collaboration and Cooperation among Nigeria and Neighbour States

Cooperation among Nigerian and neighbour states was belated and adequately not sustained. Such cooperation was neglected at the start of the terror. By the time the danger was high, cooperation started and gained some success. However, it failed to sustain on that tempo.

A Comparative Analysis of The Nigerian Military Performance in Liberia And Nigeria's North East: The Nigerian military's inability to control Boko Haram, especially in the Goodluck Jonathan administration, can partly be ascribed to the country's basic structural changes to the military and political structures (Pieri & Serrano, 2014). Following the return of democracy in 1999, the Olusegun Obasanjo administration resigned numerous high-level (so-called politicized military officers) on June 10, 1999 (Bryden, N'Diaye, & Olanisakin, 2014). Consequently, the retired and acting officers began infiltrating the country's political

and economic activities, creating the foundation for the politicization and weakening of the military (Francis, 2009). The military's influence has spread on the boards of public businesses, private sector enterprises, or they happen to have their institutions (Peters (1997). Such participation in politics and the economy by the military inexorably breeds corruption and undermines their commitment to safeguarding the country and its citizens (Quedraogo, 2014).

General Ibrahim Babangida, the then Nigerian Head of State, was heavily involved in the Liberian mission, despite his decision to intervene being influenced partly by his friendship with the former Liberian President Samuel Doe. Babangida used the Nigerian army to show the rest of the world that he was a strong leader willing to go to any length to stabilize and unite the West African region. He also sought to showcase the Nigerian army's capability as a force to be reckoned with, as well as to show the international community that Nigeria's peacekeeping record in the world was not a mistake.

Though Boko Haram fought on during the Goodluck Jonathan's administration, the Nigerian military was gallant under the leadership of Gen Alex Abeh and Gen Chijiuka Ihejirika as Chief of General Staff and Chief of Army Staff respectively. The Army Chief was able to contain the terror with a lot of casualties on the side of the enemy force. Collaboration with neighbour countries of Niger, Chad, Cameroon, and Benin Republic repelled the group from areas its registered presence. Though the group was not defeated, the then military force demonstrated commendable efforts.

The above situation changed during the Buhari administration. It continues to worsen with the expansion of Boko Haram and what seems to be government romance with the terrorist organization. Porous Nigerian security space made it possible for herdsmen to engage in killing spray without repressive military responses. The Islamic State of West Africa State (ISWAS) also emerged in Nigeria as a terrorist group within this present regime. Forceful responses to agitations for secession and intimidation of those calling for restructuring the Nigerian Federation created further tension. This situation created a lot of work for the

Nigerian military at a time Nigeria economic resource is dwindling consider the drastic fall of the oil price in the international market and its negative effect on military funding. The condition of the Nigerian military today is a sorry situation. Officers and men of the force are demoralized as a result of corruption, poor pay, welfare, and military equipment. There is also varying measures of tactical disengagement of the officer and men of the military. This created job insecurity, uncertainty and demoralized Nigerian soldiers.

Furthermore, the Nigerian government in Liberia benefited from a wide spectrum of support from ECOMOG, as well as the United States and the United Nations, allowing it to successfully coordinate its actions efficiently. It should be noted that the US provided training to Nigerian troops in Liberia preparatory to the operations (Olanisakin, 2008) as well as providing them with trucks, radios and helicopters through private contractors (Leatherwood, 2001). Lack of support from the United States and the United Kingdom against Boko Hara insurgency contributed to the difference in Nigeria's military performances. The United States, in particular, was concerned that Nigeria would not be able to operate cobra attack helicopters and military is involvement in human rights abuse (O'Grady & Groll, 2015).

In addition, we look at the nature of both crises. The Nigerian military is better trained for conventional warfare. It engaged Taylor's NPFL soldiers in direct combat in Liberia. The case of Boko Haram like those of other terrorist groups that have come to light in recent years is unpredictable. Terrorists use a variety of methods to cause as much havoc as possible. Such methods may include, conventional and guerilla warfare, suicide bombings, targeted killings, kidnappings, hijacking and even roadside shootings. Boko Haram has used the above strategies. As a result, confronting a very fluid and unstable Boko Haram was always going to be a challenging assignment for the Nigerian military, which is prepared for conventional military operations (Oumuyiwa and Maiangwa, 2015).

Finally, while the Nigerian military has been praised for its peacekeeping and enforcement efforts in Liberia and across Africa, it has also been criticized for suspected human rights violations. Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International have both harshly

criticized the Nigerian military's handling of the Boko Haram problem. As it seeks to contain the threat posed by Boko Haram, the Nigerian military has been accused of extrajudicial killings, torture, and wrongful arrest and imprisonment of detainees as it strives to contain the danger posed by Boko Haram. Senior officers of the Nigerian military have been at loss to justify these acts, despite being eloquent in their grasp of the possible magnifying consequences that heavy-handed domestic security measures might produce among local populations (Quedraogo, 2014).

CONCLUSION

This study illustrated that Nigeria's purportedly important position in Liberia is quite related to the political and leadership orientation of the Babangida regime, as well as his intention to exploit the Liberian situation for beneficial reasons and to showcase Nigeria's capabilities in the West-Africa sub-region and Africa in general, with ECOMOG as a platform. On the other hand, Nigeria's apparent inability to effectively put an end to the Boko Haram Insurgency has been identified as a result of the institutional decline in the military; lack of political cooperation and coordination as well the delay of the intervention of the international community. Nigerian governments' (Jonathan and Buhari Administrations) inability to keep the force strong particularly in this recent time is a measuring factor undermining the strength of the force. This is worsened by the contamination of the force with the arrested members of Boko Haram as repented. At least it is odd to think a soldier on Boko Haram side in no long a time has become a Nigerian soldier while the war between Nigeria and Boko Haram is still ongoing.

The comparison of Nigeria's involvement in Liberia and its fight against Boko Haram, as it reflects in the study, reveals several facts about the country's military, leadership and regional security in West Africa. This starts from a significant decline in the military structure in terms of discipline, morale, personnel and inadequate military equipment. This is in comparison with Nigeria's performance in the Liberian crisis.

Finally, the study can, therefore, conclude that the Nigerian military is on the decline considering its capacities during the Liberian Crisis and its engagement with Boko Haram.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following option can serve as panaceas for redress to assure professionalism, best practice, and stronger military engagements against Boko Haram.

a) Nigerian military needs to be restructured more professionally and technologically advanced. Investing in smart research and development to enable the utilization of the technological mix during strategic and compliance planning is need.

b) The force needs to be weed off terrorists recruited into the force to sabotage.

c) The military has to make its image among Nigerians clear itself from allegations of complicity with terrorism, killing and human rights abuse. It needs to secure the confidence and support of the Nigerian people to achieve victory.

d) Nigerian government requires more diplomatic responsibility to secure international support in the war against Boko Haram.

e) Early warning signs to conflicts should be taken more seriously to curtail some internal agitations.

f) Government should address citizens agitations diplomatically so as not to create further unavoidable challenges to the military.

g) Finally, terrorism and insurgency need to be well defined and must be strictly prosecuted.

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