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Erasmus

**WOMEN'S AGENCY IN THE BOKO HARAM
CONFLICT: EXAMINING GENDER ROLES AND
BARGAINING IN THE CIVILIAN JOINT TASK FORCE
(CJTF)**

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MOJISOLA ABOSEDE OGUNDIRAN

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Member of Examining Committee

Supervisor: Dennis Penu

Second Reader: Shyamika Jayasundara-Smits

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Disclaimer:

This document represents part of the author's study programme while at the Institute of Social Studies. The views stated therein are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Institute.

Inquiries:

Postal address:

Institute of Social Studies
P.O. Box 29776
2502 LT The Hague
The Netherlands

Location:

Kortenaerkade 12
2518 AX The Hague
The Netherlands

Telephone: +31 70 426 0460

Fax: +31 70 426 0799

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List of Acronyms

Borno Youths Empowerment Scheme	
BOYES	5
Civilian Joint Task Force	
(CJTF)	8
Joint Task Force	
(JTF)	4
non-governmental organization	
NGO	8
<i>public relations officer</i>	
PRO	36
security sector reform	
SSR	15
United Nations Women Peace and Security Resolution	
(WPS)	2

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Abstracts

This research looks beyond the calls for the ‘addition’ of women into the security sector to examine the different forms of masculinity and femininity that women in the security sector experienced because of their gender. Through empirical research conducted through field interviews, this paper discovered that gender relations within the Civilian Joint Task Force are patriarchal and hierarchical being that, masculine identity was used by the CJTF men to demand gender roles and legitimize authority over the CJTF women. The CJTF organization also undermined feminine qualities by limiting the meaningful participation of the CJTF women in security operations. This article further noticed that the female CJTF even though faced with masculine subjugation, the women were not powerless individuals but are agents of action who used different techniques such as personal, bonded and socially mediated agency to bargain patriarchal domination to achieve their personal aim thereby exercising agency. The research recommends restructuring the Civilian Joint Task Force particularly developing effective organizational policy to address the domination of female members by male members.

Relevance to Development study

The significance of this research to development study is that it provides a nuanced understanding of how gender is constructed in the security sector and the way gender is used to organize and shape security operations. The research contributes to the discourse on masculinities and femininities in the security sector by arguing that the use of biological differentiation and cultural norms to share roles in the security sector is sexism and discriminatory. Therefore, readers in the development study would find this research useful in understanding how gender is employed as a variable to structure power relations between male and female security agents. Similarly, the study is essential in illustrating female agency against patriarchy as it shows readers how female security officers achieved their aim personal goals despite male domination.

Keywords

Women, agency, femininity, masculinity, gender, CJTF

Chapter 1 Introduction

This research looks at the social and cultural construction of masculinity and femininity within the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) by examining the different ways gender is operationalized to produce certain cultural expectations in the male and female CJTF. In human society, gender is a structure utilized to create boundaries and share responsibilities between men and women (Antoni-jevic, 2011). How gender is used to organize social life is well reflected in the security sector through the sharing of responsibilities where males are accorded fighting roles while the females are given administrative duties to support the men in combat (Goldstein, 2003). Gender roles in the security sector create an unequal hierarchy as it limits women to lower ranks while men assume leadership positions (Brownfield-Stein, 2017). Interestingly, the argument on why security roles need to be gendered is based on the explanation that women have the low physical strength and that women's body is too weak to endure the rigor of combat training. For instance, in the United States, women were previously denied entry into combatant roles because of 'possible pregnancy' (Miller, 1998). Also, in Nigeria, female Police officers are prohibited from joining exercises that involved arms drilling on the ground that they do not have the masculine capability (Akinjobi-Babatunde, 2015). However, Goldstein (2003) contested this discriminatory argument by asserting that women's biological configuration is adequate to withstand war combat

It should be emphasized that the hegemonic gender construction of attributing masculinity to security is connected to the liberal form of modern state-building where rugged masculine male bodies were used for war and conquest (Väyrynen, 2013). Through this process, male violence was legitimized as a system of maintaining state security and by so doing, the feminine form of defense such as knowledge brokering was relegated (Brownfield-Stein, 2017). According to Füssel (2018), the privileging of masculine toughness in securitization gave a special mark of honor to men while erasing the history of women's contribution to state protection. For instance, Agbibo (2021) noticed that women are denied the badge of courage even though they act as intelligence or form social networks that men rely on for combat support and success. Also, Goldstein (2003) remarked that women's effort in supporting war work is not duly recognized because it did not necessitate the use of male violence. Perhaps this is why Ali Mazrui in Agbibo (2021) argued that

“Women became marginalized not because they lost control of the means of production but because they were excluded from the means of destruction” (pp.28)

The use of gender and the skewing of history to the honor of men in security discourse have further normalized the universal discrimination and reduction of women beyond formal security institutions to also non-formal security groups (El-Bushra, 2003). For instance, in vigilantism, women members are often considered as ‘ordinary members’ because they are assumed to be traditionally subordinate to men and also possess lower strength for hypermasculine operations (Nolte, 2008). This gendered hierarchy reduces women’s agency and limits their functions to complementary roles within the vigilante security groups (Sjoberg, 2013). According to Enloe (1983) in Brownfield-Stein (2017), the inferior status given to women in the security arena is to preserve the male’s ego because security provision has traditionally been a male’s identity. Ironically, the United Nations Women Peace and Security (WPS) Resolution calls for equal representation of men and women in the security sector and demands states to add women as part of their security forces (Adefisoye and Adefisoye, 2019). However, looking at the masculinities and femininities existing within security institutions, one can only ponder how are women who were integrated into the male-dominated security spaces are faring. It is on this basis that this research will assess the security gender relations between the male and female Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) to uncover the unequal gender hierarchy that overshadows the security operations of the CJTF. The Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) is a self-appointed vigilante group that can be neatly described as a form of community-policing in Borno state (Bamidele, 2016). Although formed by the people, the organization has overtime been formalized by the government to resemble local security agents (Ibid). This study will explore the social and cultural restrictions that female members encounter in participating in vigilante security operations. The research will further examine the different forms of agency or bargaining employed as tactics by the female CJTF as means to achieve their own goals within the male-dominated security environment.

1.1 Background

1.11 The Boko Haram Conflict

The Boko Haram war is a jihadist movement with the mission to forbid western education and civilization in northern Nigeria (Falode, 2016). The religious war began in 2009 and since then the religious extremists have killed thousands of civilians and security agents by targeting security and government buildings, churches, United Nations office, and public spaces (Campbell, 2014). Boko Haram members share the radical belief that a righteous Muslim must wage war against unbelievers by taking up arms in order not to be an infidel (Botha and Abdile, 2019). Through this belief, the sectarian group, therefore, justifies their killings as a “holy war” (Ibid, pp. 500).

The insurgent group has perpetuated different attacks on civilians including bombing and kidnapping (Falode, 2016). Since 2009, over 4,440 terrorist attacks have been launched by the extremist group with more than 16,326 deaths recorded from the incidents (ACLED, 2019). An estimated 2.9 million people have also been displaced in the northeast of Nigeria since the conflict (ICRC, 2021). The four strategic bombing patterns of the extremist group include suicide bombing, vehicle suicide bombing, vehicle bombing, and roadside bombing through the use of improvised explosive devices (Falode, 2016). A notable selective attack carried out by the terrorist group is on women and girls because the group champions the ideology of ultra-Salafi which endorses the subjection and subordination of women by men (Maiangwa and Agbiboa, 2014). As a result, over 2,000 women were kidnapped as of 2015 and many of them were used as sex slaves or trained as suicide bombers (Amnesty, 2015). The kidnap of school girls in Chibok and Dapchi and the converting of the girls to wives serving the sexual desires of the terrorists in faraway Sambisa forest caused a global outcry on the need to prioritize security in schools and ensure the protection of women and girls in conflict settings (Maiangwa and Agbiboa, 2014).

It is eminent to say that Boko haram inclines to use young women as suicide bombers because of their ability to conceal bombs inside hijab and pass checkpoints undetected (Agbiboa, 2021). As such, the jihadist group has been accused of luring women to become female insurgents by sometimes promising marriage to single women or providing cash benefits to widows and single parents (Botha and Abdile, 2019). Although, it was further discovered that some women were recruited through friends and family who were already sympathizers of the Islamist sect (Ibid). The figure reported by Council on Foreign Relations shows that between 2014 and 2018, about 240 women and girls have either successfully bombed or arrested for suicide bombing (Campbell, 2020). Nevertheless, the fight against the Boko Haram insurgency has been consistently fought by the military troops known as the Joint Task Force and also supported by the Civilian Joint Task Force which is a vigilante group that is led by young people (Agbiboa, 2015).

1.12 Development of the CJTF: The Spontaneous Catch

“We are not politicians. We are not military; we do not have arms. We are just tired”

(Agbiboa, 2015, pp.367)

The intervention of government to the Northeast terrorism crisis was to set up a Joint Task Force (JTF) which comprised different groups of security agents such as the Military, Air force, Navy Police, and the State Security Service SSS to counter the insurgency and neutralize the insurgent groups (Hassan and Pieri,

2018). As a strategy, the Joint Task Force (JTF) strived to curtail the insecurity using hard military combat such as guerrilla warfare to achieve the counterterrorism fight (Bamidele, 2016). Paradoxically, this approach created fear in the hearts of community members as the people complained of human rights abuse such as arbitrary mass arrest and extrajudicial killings (Sampson, 2015). Besides the repressive military action, the Joint Task Force suffered from military corruption, unsophisticated weaponry, poor training and resources thus leading to soldiers showing an overt act of mutiny or deserting warfront (Hassan and Pieri, 2018). The JTF's human rights repression coupled with ineffective performance and the inability to outmatch Boko Haram, frustrated the locals thus prompting them to take action and protect themselves (Saheed and Onuoha, 2019). Importantly, the spontaneous act of Baba Lawan Jafar a local trader in Borno who chased, caught, and handed over a Boko Haram member to soldiers with only a stick in his hand, strongly inspired hundreds of community members who were already tired of the violence to come together and use the basic tools of sticks, clubs, machetes, daggers, and bows and arrows to fight the insurgency (Hassan and Pieri, 2018).

The Civilian Joint Task Force attracted members from diverse backgrounds and geographical areas, including people with different professional titles such as traders, drivers, farmers, vigilantes, hunters, and students within the age bracket of 19 to over 50 years (Agbibo, 2020, pp.365). Nevertheless, the female composition of the CJTF is very minute compared to the male (Ibid). Many of the women worked informally as ordinary members though, in Borno state, there are about 122 registered CJTF women (Agbibo, 2021). The women's role is crucial as they are in charge of searching homes and discovering female Boko haram insurgents who are wearing explosives under their purdah dress because Islamic law does not permit men to search women (Hassan and Pieri, 2018). Importantly, the women who worked as ordinary members or volunteers for CJTF are mostly women from hunting families and they provided combat assistance to the CJTF male by following them to the forest to fight (Bamidele, 2016). These women hunters such as "Aisha the Queen Hunter" is known to have dedicated 'native charms' which they use as protection to make their bodies shielded from the bullet (Agbibo, 2021, pp.25). On the other hand, the women who are working within the formalized CJTF structure are mostly women who lost their loved ones in the hands of Boko harm and aimed to avenge their deaths (Ibid). They are usually in charge of searching fellow women, gathering information, and acting as undercover intelligence for the CJTF men (Maiangwa and Agbibo, 2014.). It is believed that the women hunters were able to join in the combat roles because they expressed militarized masculinity more than the registered females who are soft in their approach (Agbibo, 2021). Nevertheless, this did not diminish the performance of the registered CJTF women as they caught hundreds of female suicide bombers who hid explosives in their purdah (Agbibo, 2020). Though sadly, the women's contribution to the CJTF barely

received adequate acknowledgment as no CJTF woman holds any leadership position be it commander or equivalent within the formalized structure of the CJTF organization (Ibid).

Nevertheless, years after 2013, the Civilian Joint Task Force grew larger and stronger but so also were its challenges as the organization started to face lots of inner-group disputes (Bamidele, 2016). Currently, the estimated membership base of the CJTF is between 15,000- 30,000 spread across Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, and Yobe (Hassan and Pieri, 2018). While the CJTF's strength is in its numbers, the huge membership caused the organization to have a complex leadership hierarchy (Sampson, 2015). Baba Lawan Jafar remained the overall head, while in different states, each local government has its commander (Ibid). It is recorded that Borno state has the largest number of members with over 20,000 and the youth are divided into two parts that are: youth that receives monthly stipends of 15,000 Naira and those that do not (Saheed and Onuoha, 2019). However, the largeness and poor structuring of the group hampered the sufficient collection of members' data such that security analysts had expressed fear over unknown CJTFs gaining possession of arms particularly weapons of arrested Boko Haram (Gana et al, 2018). Although, the CJTF authority commented that those participating in the military operations are well captured in the biometrics but many security analysts argued against this claim (Ibid). Nevertheless, the missing link that is hampering the Civilian Joint Task Force as community security includes poor structuring of the group, limited training, and ambiguous division of responsibilities among group members (Saheed and Onuoha, 2019). Currently, only 2,000 CJTF have formal training in paramilitary tactics and approximately 750 members work with the military in their operations (Ibid). This situation created redundancy among the CJTF members as some even complained of marginalization by senior members (Bamidele, 2016). Even though the complaint instigated organizational restructuring, the members are still far from being united (Ibid). It is notable to say that the Governor of Borno state, Kashim Shettima took a significant step to support the CJTF youth by initiating the Borno Youths Empowerment Scheme (BOYES) which provides stipends of approximately 15,000 Naira (\$40) monthly to the youth in the Civilian Joint Task Force (Hassan and Pieri, 2018). Nevertheless, the process of selection of members for remuneration is not transparent and in fact, the members who do not receive stipends have accused those who do of using 'long legs' (Ibid). This financial issue further deepened the mistrust within the organization (Bamidele, 2016).

Surprisingly, the success of the Civilian Joint Task Force in fostering a cordial relationship between local communities and the military as well as in arresting suspected Boko Haram members from perpetuating killings, bombings, and kidnappings paradoxically triggered more attacks on civilian communities that were linked to the CJTF as well on the CJTF members themselves (Uzodike and Maiangwa, 2012). Boko Haram intentionally increased attacks on communities

that supported CJTF operations and also on youth that championed the movement to create fear and discourage the people from joining (Hassan and Pieri, 2018). In one of Boko haram's statements, they mentioned that: “...*youth connived with security operatives and are actively supporting the government of Nigeria in its war against us*” (Ibid, pp. 81). It is recorded that 680 members of the CJTF were killed between 2013 and 2017 (Hassan and Pieri, 2018, pp.80). Although, the use of traditional weapons in fighting terrorists with AK47 contributed to the increased death toll (Bamidele, 2016). However, the brutal attacks on communities did not dampen the community’s loyalty as it only reinforced more support for the government and military’s counterinsurgency fight (Ibid).

1.2 Problem Statement

Academic articles on vigilantism Agbibo (2021); Nolte (2008); Pratten (2008) have explicated the different ways women supported community security operations to provide protection, prevent attacks and defend communities. However, these articles have not adequately explored the different forms of masculinity and femininity discourse that are dominant within the vigilante organization and how these gender narratives are constructed to limit women’s participation in security activities. This research aims to fill this scholarly gap by investigating culturally sexist ideologies such as gender roles and stereotypes that are framed to privilege men and marginalize women in security operations. Using the case study of the Civilian Joint Task Force, a counterterrorism vigilante group in Borno state, this study will extend beyond looking at women’s contribution to vigilante surveillance, patrol, and intelligence to providing novel insight into the inner-group hierarchical gender relations between the male and female vigilante members. As well as, exploring how vigilante women are using different forms of agency to navigate their ways in the male-dominated vigilante group.

1.3 Justification and relevance of this research

The study on the Civilian Joint Task Force is a useful addition to the academic materials on the lived experiences of women vigilante members in African society. This research reveals the unequal gender relations within the vigilante organization and provides insights into the socio-cultural challenges female security forces face because of their gender. Many articles such as the work of Agbibo (2021) have discussed how women support anti-terrorism vigilante operations by using their bodies as “technologies of knowledge and power” for a successful fight against insurgency (pp.4). However, little is been discussed on the stereotypes and marginalization that women vigilante members experience

within the vigilante group or community that they serve because of their identity. This research will advance scholarly investigation into security vigilantism to provide a more nuanced understanding of how gender is used to produce and reproduce inequality structures between male and female vigilante members. By showing how women are being excluded from certain functions and operations, this project will strengthen the liberal feminist argument that the ‘addition’ of women into the security sector will not make much difference either to the protection of women or global peace if the security sector continues to be characterized by masculinized militarism (Brownfield-Stein, 2017).

Secondly, this study is relevant to the gender and security field because it underscores the agency of vigilante women in a patriarchal male-dominated vigilante organization. This research will show that women members of vigilante groups are not powerless or passive individuals under the control of male powers but that they exercise agency by carrying out conscious purposive actions that helped them to secure their own desired outcome.

1.4 Research objectives and questions

The focus of the study is to understand the agency of vigilante women in the Boko haram conflict by analyzing gender roles and bargaining within the Civilian Joint Task Force

1.5 Main question

What are the gender relations within the Civilian Joint Task Force and how do vigilante women exercise agency within the Civilian Joint Task Force?

1.6 Structure of the Paper

This paper is structured into five chapters and each of the sections provides a link to the broader discussion on gender relations in the Civilian Joint Task Force CJTF. In the first chapter, the study provides an introduction and background of the Civilian Joint Task Force CJTF by looking back at how it emerged and the current challenges the organization faced. The first chapter further discusses the relevance, objective, and methodology of the research to give readers an understanding of the research validity. The second chapter discusses current debates and theories on social structure, corporeality, agency, security masculinity, and femininity to echo the voices of prominent authors on gender and security issues as well as to provide an analytical framework. The third chapter gives an account and analysis of the cultural gender relations within the Civilian Joint Task Force using conceptual theories. The fourth chapter discusses the agency of the women vigilante in the Civilian Joint Task Force to show how the women maneuvered their ways to achieve their desire in a male-dominated vigilante

group. Chapter five concludes the research with a discussion, recommendation, and appendix

1.7 Methodology and Methods

1.71 Research Question and Data Collection

This research project is a case study research using the single case of the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF). The purpose of this research is to understand the gender relations and agency that are currently emerging within the Civilian Joint Task Force. As noted by Yin (2011), a case study offers a distinctive opportunity to focus in-depth and understand complex social phenomena such as group behavior. Therefore, conducting a case study research on the Civilian Joint Task Force provides the possibility to explore the gender dynamic between the male and female CJTF.

This research was carried out between July and October 2022 in Maiduguri Borno State, Nigeria. A total of 18 people (5 registered CJTF males, 11 registered CJTF females, 1 community member, and 1 non-governmental organization NGO) were interviewed at the CJTF headquarters in Maiduguri through qualitative interviews that comprise focused group discussion and key informant interviews. The importance of using this method of data source and collection is to collect information, examine social interactions, and understand the lived experiences of the people as well as, to gain knowledge of the social roles and diverse perspectives of the people on the issue of inquiry (Panke, 2018). The interview is designed in both unstructured and semi-structured formats such as using standardized questions and flexible questions to probe into the social behavior of the interviewees. The interview data serves as the primary source for this research.

Similarly, the research data was collected from secondary sources such as literature reviews which included reviews of literatures from different authors on gender, agency, and security. Some of the literatures addressed the gender dynamics within the Civilian Joint Task Force directly while others explored gender and security more broadly. The literature reviews which include books, articles, publications, and reports were sourced both online and offline. The literature review helped to serve as preliminary data before going to the field and also to complement other data methods by filling the gaps observed in the field interviews. Importantly, the use of focused group discussion, key informant interviews, and literature review allowed this research to triangulate the method of data collection and this process enabled this research to strengthen its construct validity and minimize subjective judgments. Similarly, the data collection sources also served as primary and secondary data for this research.

The selection of interviewees took the process of non-probability convenience sampling because it allows for an exploratory study of the case at hand and it also saved time and cost (Yin, 2011). For instance, using this sampling allowed for easy accessibility to the respondents. The age group of the respondents was between 20-50 years old and each interviewee responded to a total of 15 questions. However, it is noticeable that the findings of this research cannot be generalized because the sampling does not adequately represent all the Civilian Joint Task Force in northern Nigeria. Importantly, the interview was carried out in person and online (ZOOM). The junior researcher was physically present in the CJTF office in Borno State and he acted as the translator relating questions to the CJTF members in Hausa language. Through the use of online, the senior researcher was able to engage the CJTF members using video calls and asked questions in English. The reason for using online simultaneously with in-person was because the senior researcher is far from the research location and the expertise of the senior researcher was needed to effectively conduct the interview. Usually, the interview lasted approximately an hour but the interviewee had the chance of ending at convenience.

The research adopted the insider-outsider approach meaning that one of the researchers shared commonality with the participants being interviewed while the other researcher have no direct or intimate experience with the participants being studied (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009). For instance, using a junior field researcher who is an indigene of Borno state gave the researchers leverage to easily have access to the CJTF office. Also, having a senior researcher who is not from the region allowed the researchers to ask unbiased questions without being emotionally vested. By following the methodological process outlined above, this research was able to strengthen its construct validity and reduce the tendency of gathering subjective data. It also gave the interviewees the flexibility and freedom to contribute and shape the interview process which led to a lot of discoveries that strengthened the quality of the research data.

1.72 Data Analysis

In this research, ATLAS.ti was used to analyze data, interpret interview transcripts and develop codes. This helped to build relationships and networks among different interview data. The research also followed the pattern of qualitative interview analysis which include interpreting and creating meanings from findings (Panke, 2018). Approximately six weeks were used in constructing meanings of the interviews and relating the meanings to the theoretical framework of the research. The research also created and used themes to group findings to create a logical link with the research theories and allow for an easy understanding of the research paper. Similarly, the quotes used in this research paper represented the wider perspectives of those interviewed.

1.73 Ethical Consideration

The recording of the interview was done only after receiving permission from the respondent and all the respondents allowed for digital recording of the sessions. Before starting the interview session, a set of introductory guidelines was read out to the respondents to help them know their rights as interviewees. For instance, during the men's FGD interview, the respondents used the information to end the interview session when it was approaching their prayer time. Another ethical factor taken into consideration is the translation of interviews from Hausa to English. The junior researcher who is a native of Borno state carefully translated the interviews verbatim. The interview data was stored in a separate file on Google document and ZOOM folder that is only accessible to the senior and junior researchers. Similarly, the ambiance of the interview was taken into consideration. For instance, the senior researcher ensured that she was in a private room all the time she joined online. This prevented people from listening to the conversations. Also, the in-person interview was done at the premise of the CJTF office in Borno. This gave a sense of comfort to the CJTF members and inspired them to willingly participate in the interview. The ethical consideration shown in this research affirmed that the researchers respect the rights of the interviewees and are also committed to the principle of confidentiality.

1.74 Challenges

Firstly, there was a disappointment from the junior researcher previously hired. A young lady was initially contracted to work as the junior researcher because it is believed that this would help the CJTF women to be more comfortable speaking to a fellow woman. However, the lady terminated her contract abruptly and the only remedy was to employ the service of a man as the junior researcher. The impact of this on the research was that it somewhat limited how much the female CJTF were willing to share about their personal experiences. For instance, one woman was constantly looking down when asked to speak. This may be due to the fact that northern Muslim women are socialized not to look a man in the eyes.

Secondly, the space provided for the interview at the CJTF office was a staff room and so, during the interview many of the CJTF women were not comfortable speaking in front of their colleagues on certain matters. In fact, at times, some of the colleagues would respond to certain questions before the interviewee could respond thus influencing what the respondent would say. The effect of this challenge was that it affected the quality and sincerity of answers the women were given to questions.

Thirdly, the internet network in Borno state was weak and this affected the connection between the junior and senior researchers many times. The effect was that it slowed down the pace of the interview session as some went beyond the scheduled minutes.

Lastly, the junior researcher experienced some security challenges on his way to the CJTF office two times as mobs were raiding the street. Therefore, he was forced to hide for several hours before safely making his way back home. This consequently disrupted the schedule of the interview as we were forced to postpone.

The overall impact of challenges on this research was that it reduced the number of data gathered from the women's interviews. However, the problem was mitigated by using secondary sources to fill the data gap.

1.9 Positionality

What stands between my assumptions and objective analysis, is active reflexivity

(Mojisola Ogundiran, 2022)

Soedirgo and Glas (2020) describe positionality as the multiple identities that a researcher carries and how these identities are interrogated to avoid interference in the way the researcher makes meaning or interprets issues. In this research, I am conscious of the identities that I carry professionally and personally as such, I am careful to not let them affect the accuracy of my research. For instance, I consider myself a feminist because I believe in the values and principles of feminism. As a feminist, I have also taken classes and read different feminist literatures as such, I am more likely to analyze and interpret events from a feminist perspective. Knowing that this research borders around the rights of women and also about uncovering patriarchal domination, I acknowledge that I am emotionally vested in this analysis. Therefore, concerning my disposition as well as, the need to ensure the trustworthiness of my research, I took three different strategies of active reflexivity. First, I decided to create a list of my assumptions by writing it out on paper and through that, I was able to see what my preconceived expectations were regarding this research. The assumption assessment helped me to become more aware of my bias. Hence, I was able to immediately deconstruct some of my pre-conceived beliefs such as considering men exclusively as perpetrators of violence. With this open mind, I was able to choose my interviewees without prejudice. I continued to use the technique of assumption assessment from the designing stage to the analysis stage. For instance, in assessing my data I crosschecked the data with the document where I wrote the list of my assumptions to see if in any way my preconceived notions were reproduced in my data. Luckily, I could not trace any of my findings to some of my

assumptions thus showing that my data were devoid of my emotions and subjectivity

Another approach of active reflexivity that I undertook is to invite a few of my colleagues to assess the process of my research. I explained to them what the research is about as well as my positionality regarding the research. Through the conversation, I received advice on the best approach to take that would support my research validity and also suggestions on how I can best interact with the interviewees to build trust with them. By seeking advice from my colleagues I was able to strengthen my self-reflexivity as I developed a more robust understanding of how to manage my positionality. An important piece of advice I received from one of my colleagues is to not structure my interviews as 'leading questions' rather I should ask open questions that would allow the participants to speak from their own experiences.

Lastly, after I had engaged with my colleagues and also did some self-reflexivity, I organized a ZOOM call with my field researcher to discuss with him the issue of positionality and how important it is for him to be aware of his bias. My field researcher is a native of the community where the research took place and he had the responsibility of interfacing with the community members. As such, he needed to be conscious of his identity and experiences so that they do not interfere with the research. Through this interaction, I and my field researcher listed out possible presumptions that could affect our interactions with the interviewees as well as the interpretation of the interviews. We agreed to constantly do some check-ins and remind ourselves of it throughout the research period. Clearly, noticing our positionalities and deliberately becoming aware of them helped me and my field researcher to have open minds in our interviews and analysis. All these processes of active reflexivity improved my research outcome because I was able to make discoveries and gain new insights about the topic being researched. It further enhanced my ethical standards and allowed me to forge a meaningful relationship with my interviewees.

¹ One assumption that I had to unlearn is the victim/offender dichotomy where I labeled men as offenders and women as victims. However, by writing down my assumption, I realized that this is a subjective generalization.

² I also assumed that community members particularly women would be happy to see females join the security forces. I later realized that this assumption is misleading and that it depends on the cultural context as some women in the community do not support the idea of women crossing gender roles

Chapter 2 Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses literatures on the theoretical framework on masculinity and femininity, corporeality social structure, and agency to bring to the fore how gender is been operationalized in the security sector and the different ways the body of male and female security agents are being treated.

Theories	Meaning	Gender Roles	Effect
Masculinity and Femininity in Security	Using gender to share roles and responsibilities for security agents	Using men for combat and women for support security roles such as administrative duties	An unequal hierarchy between male and female security agents as men hold higher positions and women occupy lower ranks in security sectors
Social Structure	Norms and rules that shape human actions	Women show submission and perform nurturing or caring roles. Men act as providers, protectors, and decision-makers	Internalized norms, inequality among social groups and genders
Corporeality	The ways the body is used or affected in conflict and security	Male's body as sacrificial, protector and fighter. Women's body marked as sexual, weak, and civilian	Men become life-safer and life-taker. Women become unprotected and sexual object.
Agency	Ability to pursue individual goals or maintain connections with people and community	Subverting norms or accommodating norms	Individual freedom is guaranteed or communal relationship is maintained

2.2 Masculinity and Femininity in Security

In security institutions, feminine qualities of emotion and softness in women are relegated while masculine strength, aggression, and force in men are accorded higher status (Basham, 2016). This form of gendered security practice described as male militarism creates an oppressive security system where male hierarchy dominates the armed forces and becomes a hegemonic authority that harasses, excludes, and discriminates against women (Ibid). According to Brownfield-Stein (2017), masculinity and femininity are the socially cultural ways we make sense of human bodies and appropriate behavior to man and woman in an organization or society. In the security sector, masculinity and femininity are used to reinforce traditional sexist ideologies to marginalize women and privilege men (Goodell, 2010). For instance, Basham (2016) mentioned that in security institutions, there are already underlying assumptions about the female gender regarding her body and the position she can fill notwithstanding her skills and strength. This may explain why more women are recruited to serve as nurses in security institutions but not enrolled in combat duties as well as, why the body of female security agents is sexually stereotyped as a pleasurable object intended to provide sexual services to male security officers (Walker, 2012). The preconceived gender bias makes it difficult for women who have taken a career in the security sector to progress from lower ranks to leadership positions and even dissociate themselves from the slut-bitch shaming (Ibid). It is based on this gender discrimination that feminists argued that female security forces must have equal rights and fair treatment as men in the security sector (Füssel, 2018).

Interestingly, anti-militarist feminists have countered the idea of equality between male and female security forces as they argued that women and men can never be equally positioned because of the biological difference which gives higher physical strength to the male gender (Brownfield-Stein, 2017). Obviously, even though there is a proportional difference in the physical strength between men and women, categorizing all women as weak and all men as exclusively strong is an arbitrary gender coding that is socially and culturally constructed (Boyce and Herd, 2003). According to Goldstein (2003), gender binary differentiation is a simplistic analysis that not only obscures discussion on power relations but also permits female discrimination. On the whole, what is crucial to recognize is that integrating women fully into the security sector provides lots of operational advantages especially for security operations in conflict communities this is because female security agents can easily prevent local women from gender-based violence (Basham, 2016).

Importantly, to challenge masculinity and femininity in security institutions, there is a need to shift away from the conventional concept of security as the 'defenses of state' which liberal international relations have propagated to seeing security as the protection of human lives (Antonijevic, 2011). This would help to reduce the use of masculine violence and focus more on promoting feminine

qualities of caring that would enhance human well-being and protection (Ibid). Clarke (2014) emphasized that the historical use of security forces has been basically violent because they are utilized to advance the political power of the state rather than addressing human needs. Sadly, defending the state's interest does not guarantee the safety of the people and more often, state's interest only serves the desire of the government in power (Ibid). However, redefining security as human protection would provide the chance to transform security forces from being a force for violence to a force for good (Ibid). Although, Ake (1974) pointed out that security forces are not the problem of security but the corrupt politics and political system that elect war leaders and so therefore until the pattern of politics change to produce democratic peace-loving leaders the security forces will continue to be exploited. Regardless of the debate, what is fundamental is that shifting focus from state security to human security would allow us to challenge the belief system of security masculinity and simultaneously reconstruct the identity of security forces by incorporating both feminine and masculine characteristics back into the security system (Dahl et al, 2021). This would greatly create space for female security agents to retain their feminine values without being compelled to renounce it (Brownfield-Stein, 2017).

Lastly, to challenge gendered structures and male masculinities as well as promote gender best practices within security institutions, a security sector reform SSR would be required (Antonijevic, 2011). According to Ansorg and Gordon (2019), security sector reforms should not only address women's issues such as the recruitment of women into the security sector but also transform cultural norms that encourage gender roles and stereotypes within the security premises. It is worthy to note that different international instruments have been adopted to support the security sector reform SSR, prominent of which are: the Declaration of the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), and Women, Peace and Security, Resolution 1325 (2000). These resolutions directly or indirectly demand equal representation of women in security architecture (Adefisoye and Adefisoye, 2019). Despite this, the instruments center more on reproducing gender stereotypes and essentializing women (Basu, 2016). For instance, the idea of presenting all women as inherently peaceful is misleading. Also, the focus on 'adding' women to the security sector rather than on questioning the social norms within the security architecture itself makes the resolutions to be less effective in achieving structural changes (Clarke, 2014). Nevertheless, what is obvious is that the security sector reform provides the opportunity for women's groups and civil society organizations to contribute to the discourse on gender and security. And in the case where their interventions are taken seriously, this could lead to structural and operational changes in the security sector (Adefisoye and Adefisoye, 2019).

2.3 Social Structure: Social Norms and Human Actions

Social structures are rules and norms that shape an individual's choices, practices, and interactions in society (Wacquant, 1998). According to Bourdieu (1987), social structure made human actions to become predictable and at the same time constrained. This, therefore, limits individuals from pursuing their desired goals (Hodgson, 2006). It is based on this limitation that Lukes (1977) in Baber (1991) expressed frustratingly that social structure is a 'given' that cannot be influenced and its circumstances are not within our choosing. Despite the social constraints, Berner (1998) on the other hand emphasized that humans have the capacity to change structural rules through individual or collective resistance. Hence, the reason why Bourdieu (1987) described "social structure as a site of ongoing clash" (in Wacquant, 1998, pp.9). In Giddens (1979) structuration theory, it is noted that individuals through their conscious flow of actions which is referred to as 'agency' can alter social structure. A good example is the women's movement known as Women in Law and Development in Africa (WiLDAF) which reformed the aged-long discriminatory inheritance laws in Zimbabwe through their collective activism and continuous campaign for women's rights (Hodgson, 2002). Although, while the human agency has the potency to modify the routine of a phenomenon, social institutions which are established by states are responsible for maintaining social patterns and regulating human behavior against resistance (Hodgson, 2006)

According to Sewell Jr (1992), institutions are the bedrock of social structure being that it regulates human beings to be rule-following by using sanctions or incentives. Social institutions also sustain obedience to social rules by instilling norms into human consciousness as a habit (Ibid). For instance, Spiegel (2005) noted that culture and religion are important elements of constructing human habits as such, he maintained that by abiding to cultural values, idioms, metaphors, and myths individuals shape their collective consciousness. Similarly, through social beliefs and practices humans determine what action is approved or disapproved within social groups and with all these, individuals construct differences, interpret experiences, form identity and develop ways to negotiate relations with others (Ibid). Importantly, it is crucial to say that through rules and norms social institutions can create differences among groups such that certain people are discriminated against by others and this situation is referred to as social stratification (Fulcher and Scott, 2011).

Stratification is an unequal arrangement of groups of individuals into a hierarchy with one group placed above and opened to advantages while the other takes a lower position and is exposed to disadvantages. For instance, Lorber

(1994) shares how formal and informal institutions created stratification within the gender strata. According to her, the value and responsibilities attached to the social group that women occupied within the gender strata are subordinated which opens women to oppression, domination, and disadvantages (Lorber, 1994). However, the masculine sex group gives power and privileges to men which they use to subdue and control (Ibid). Although some have argued that not all women are disadvantaged as in the case of white women who still have advantages over black men (Johnson, 2018). Despite this, different authors have continued to affirm that the female gender experience more inequalities than the male gender (Glick and Fiske, 2001; Yodanis, 2004; Sullivan, 2019). It is worth noting that even as the gender strata limit women's liberty, women are still not passive victims as some women such as the first and second wave of feminists mobilized rebellious actions in form of social movements to change institutional laws (Chafetz, 2006).

Nevertheless, Lorber (1994) contends that modifying cultural norms is more difficult than making institutional changes. This owes to the fact that cultural norms are internalized and form part of human behavior (Ibid). For instance, there are specific interactional behavior men and women perform which were assimilated through their socialization. These include submission, nurturing, or caring in the case of women while men act as providers, protectors, or decision-makers (Tilly, 2001). Although Parson in Goldstein (2003) mentioned that these specialized family functions are 'complementarity roles' that are necessary for the proper socialization of children and the health of the family. Nevertheless, Lorber (1994) considered gender roles as a devaluation of women's status and an acceptance of patriarchy which means the superiority of men over women and the privileging of men in sharing opportunities. Be it as it may, Wasserfall (1993) has argued that the possibility to modify cultural norms is to practice reflexivity whereby individuals become aware of the interactional expectations and consciously reject the habitualized gender routine. While this sound logical, the practicality of it might be difficult because, in an environment marked by male hegemony, reflexivity may necessarily not translate into actions as the women might experience what Newsom and Lengel (2012) called "contained empowerment" (pp.3). This is because without a change in structure individuals cannot effectively resist domination (Risman, 2006).

2.4 Corporeality of Security

Corporeality relates to the different ways the body is being used or affected in the security arena (Väyrynen, 2018). In the practice of security, the body plays a central role because it is the body that fights battles and suffers injury on the battlefield (Väyrynen, 2018). According to Carreiras and Kümmel (2008), the body of women is idealized as 'beautiful souls' that needs to be protected, but

men's body is associated with strength which is dedicated to sacrificially protect. Based on this gendered militarism ideology, the body of women is limited to the private sphere (home) while the men's body assumes the public front (community/battleground) (Kronsell and Svedberg, 2001). The implication of separating the home from the community is that women are denied the right to defend themselves and their community (Brownfield-Stein, 2017). It also gives men the status of armed protectors and makes women become unarmed civilians who are vulnerable and require male protection to survive in conflict (Sjoberg, 2013). However, it is eminent to say that the demarcation of the home's front as the area of 'normalcy' and the public's sphere as the zone of 'battle' did not mean that women were shielded from the horrors of war (Goldstein, 2003). In reality, the body of women were molested, captured, and killed just as though they were fighters (Ibid). This, therefore, corroborate the views of Krishnan (2021) that protective paternalism which means the belief that men are protectors of women is a part of sexist attitudes that enables gender inequality and not women's real protection or safety. Likewise, Väyrynen (2018) has challenged the narrative of women as powerless or passive by revealing the various mundane ways that women availed to protect themselves in conflict.

Similarly, in security, the body is very crucial in maintaining protection against harm on the battlefield (Goldstein, 2003). For instance, Agbibo (2021) narrates how vigilante women initiate rituals and wear charms on their bodies to provide magical protection against gun bullets during the Boko Haram war. Likewise, Nolte (2008) highlighted how the body of post-menopause women turn to priestesses and serve as access to spiritual powers that provides guardians to male vigilante fighters. These variegated ways of using the body to provide security attest to the aesthetic ways the body can be transformed to become a site of protection against harm. Although, using the body for protection can also be greeted with shame as in the case of 'Iya Oduduwa' a spiritual woman who was regarded as a witch by the public for her divine prowess. This case confirms that women can be approached with public hostilities when they engaged their bodies in unconventional activities.

Importantly, the body not only serves as a site of protection against harm or a tool for fighting on the battlefield, but it is also an object that is disciplined in the security sector. According to Brownfield-Stein (2017), the sexuality of female security agents is unequally disciplined vis-à-vis men's sexual eroticism. This owes to the fact that it is more permissible to sleep around as a male security agent than for a female security officer (Ibid). In the security sector, women are slut shamed and eventually forced to "suppress their sexuality" to claim the status as an "honorary male" that is a woman that can be respected equally just as a man (Brownfield-Stein, 2017, pp. 313). Besides repression of women's sexuality, the gendered security system also forces women to transform their soft feminine body into a masculinized hard stature through training exercises before any female could be considered to have the capacity to serve in the security force

(Brownfield-Stein, 2017). These hegemonic ways of making women lose their feminine qualities to embody masculine manhood shows the dominance of masculinities and the corporeality of security.

2.5 Agency as Connection and Freedom

Agency is described as the capacity of an individual to act according to freewill to achieve a personal goal (Bandura, 2006; Ahearn, 2001). This form of individual agency is what feminists anchor on to proclaim freedom from male hegemony because it allows women to act in their own best interest (Mack, 2005, pp436). For instance, Butler (1993) in McNay (1999), sees social norms as a constraint to women's freewill, therefore, she defined agency as the capacity to subvert norms particularly patriarchal norms because she believes that by undermining patriarchal norms women would have the freewill to achieve their personal desires. Butler's idea of norms subversion can be linked to the action of women hunters in Borno state who decided to challenge gender order by becoming female combatants fighting alongside vigilante men in the Boko Haram war (Agbibo, 2021). As the women moved out of private spaces to engage in masculinized militarism they visibly disrupted the gender coding of women's body belonging to the home or men's body only for fighting. They were also able to realize their personal desire of protecting their community (Ibid). Indeed, Butler's viewpoint of marginalized groups showing deviance to system rules to exercise agency sounds very liberating however, it has been critiqued by McNay (1999) that it overemphasized the 'confidence' of the oppressed to challenge dominant discourse. According to McNay (1999), not everyone has the courage to demand change nor does every demand for change yield results. Perhaps this is why Bandura (2006) and Ahearn (2001) extended the definition of agency to include the use of proxy or socially-mediated ways to achieve a personal goal. Socially-mediated agency allows individuals who do not have the willpower to leverage others to act on their behalf by proxy (Bandura, 2006). Regardless of the argument, Butler's writings have greatly inspired the spirit of activism in many women (Nentwich et al, 2015).

Similarly, agency can also be considered as an ongoing human action that could either replicate or produce a new structure (Baber, 1991). Giddens (1979), believes that social structure has a duality effect that it "constrains and enables" and sometimes, the social structure could act as "rules or resources" which individuals can draw upon to reproduce or transform social practices (in Baber, 1991, pp. 222). An example of this form of agency is noticed by Hopkins et al (2006) when the author cited how Muslim women in Britain invoke the same Islamic laws that were used by men to subjugate them, to challenge the dominating power of the male leadership. This form of agency that produces and

reproduce have shown that human action can be deterministic as well as voluntary hence giving individuals the power to choose (Baber, 1991). Nonetheless, Karp (1986) observes that Giddens's viewpoint of agency is materialistic because some individuals can have limited 'resources' such as power to perform certain actions or solidify their agency. For instance, Klocker (2007) in Bay-Cheng (2019) referred to the thick and thin agency to explicate how certain social conditions could help 'thicken' agency if available or 'thin' agency when it is absent. It is based on this notion that post-structural feminists such as Mahmood (2006) argued that even though overt resistance seems to showcase women's activism, it cannot be the only form of agency because there could be certain external conditions that might limit some women from being openly aggressive or assertive hence, Mahmood linked *accommodating and acquiescing* to agency. Although, Bay-Cheng (2019) have commented that accommodating and acquiescing as forms of agency could be taken for granted or go unnoticed thereby causing agentic individuals to not get the recognition they deserve. This indeed is a valid point because unlike resistance that is openly visible, accommodating or acquiescing is subtle, passive, and silent. This might be why Frank (2006) called us to re-examine our inner bias regarding agency and what agentic action means. As Gonick et al (2009) pointed out, agency is not a specific behavior or capacity with a high and low variation but an action that is determined by the individual

On the whole, Mahmood (2006) maintained that agency and freedom should not always be viewed as an opposition to social norms but be considered as a concept that varies in meaning and understanding according to an individual's context and cultural orientation. For instance, African American, Islamic and Indigenous feminists, consider agency as the ability to care for another, to belong or practice connection and they consider these values to precede and supersede individual's autonomy (Weir, 2013). They believed that freedom is connection and also the fulfillment of one's obligation to God, land, and community. Weir (2013) clearly stated: "freedom is the capacity to participate fully in...relationships with one another, with whom and with what we love" (pp. 337). Based on this, Cense (2019) introduced 'bonded agency' to illuminate various ways people navigate social expectations or put others into consideration to maintain relationships. Clearly, bonded agency fosters a sense of loyalty and commitment in individuals but on the other hand, it is likely to increase the level of conformity to norms because the more an individual cares about societal expectations the more they are willing to adjust their behavior to suit it (Kelley, 1996). Nevertheless, the bonded agency has confirmed the spirit of interconnectedness in human nature (Cense, 2019).

2.6 Operationalizing Theoretical Concepts

This research has discussed broadly the concept of Corporeality, Agency, Social Structure, and Masculinity and Femininity in Security. However, these theories will be used for analysis in this study in the following ways:

Firstly, this research will use the social structure theory to look at how the culturally and religiously formed social norms in Borno state shape the attitude and behavior of the CJTF members and by extension, the operations of the Civilian Joint Task Force. The study will examine the different ways social norms are internalized by the female CJTF and male CJTF and how it caused the men and women to perform certain interactional behaviors such as submission and domination. Furthermore, the social structure concept will provide the lens through which this research will analyze the factors that constrain or enable the CJTF members to identify how the Civilian Joint Task Force used structural norms to create inequality between the CJTF men and women.

Secondly, using the concept of Securitized Masculinity and Femininity, this study will consider how the CJTF make sense of human bodies and appropriate responsibilities to man and woman in the organization. The theory will be the mirror through which we would understand the different ways women and men in the CJTF are being treated because of their gender.

Similarly, the corporeal theory would serve as a tool to analyze the myriad ways the body of men and women are being constructed in the Civilian Joint Task Force. Through the analytical perspective, this research will bring to the fore the discrimination, domination, violence, and discipline that the body of female CJTF endured because of the masculine military ideology of the Civilian Joint Task Force

Lastly, while focusing on the female CJTF, the Agency framework will be used to provide insight into the variegated ways the women in the Civilian Joint Task Force showed the capacity to take action to achieve personal goals despite the constraining social structure in their environment. Through the Agency theory, this research will show that the female CJTF members are not powerless but they are individuals with courage who find room to move using different agnetic strategies depending on the time and space to realize their purpose.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed four theoretical concepts that will be used as the framework to analyze the empirical data from this research. The chapter has further explained different ways the concepts will be operationalized to bring into view the analytical connection between the research and the literatures.

Chapter 3 Gender Relations in Civilian Joint Task Force

This chapter uses the data that was derived from the field research to provide an analysis of how the Civilian Joint Task Force is a gendered organization by assessing the ways different notions of hegemonic masculinities and femininities are used in the division of labor, social behavior, and power sharing. The chapter explores the process by which various cultural values associated with masculinity and femininity shape organizational dynamics and interactions to create gender hierarchy. To conclude, the chapter reveals how masculinity and femininity are linked to the social structure and power relations as well as, its corporeal effect on the body of the CJTF men and women.

3.1 Gendered Organizational Culture and Ideology

In the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF), men's work is masculinized and women's work is feminized this is because there is a clear distinction between the kinds of work a CJTF man can do as well as a CJTF woman. For instance, one of the respondents expressed that:

In our work, we have this RRS (Rapid Respond Service) that go into the bush for patrol. The women are not allowed to be part of the RRS and like he said night patrol is only done by the men so women stand at the entrance of the city and the men go into the bushes for the operations that is the differences (Men response from FGD)

This distinction between who can go to the bush and who cannot reaffirms the combat exclusion faced by women within the security sector. This form of exclusion as noted by Brownfield-Stein (2017) is based on the gendered military ideology that gives an advantage to male bodies since they possess masculine power, strength, and toughness while the feminine body is viewed as inherently weak, vulnerable, and sensitive hence less powerful to face the rigor of combat operation. This clearly shows the cultural and corporeal ideology of the body in security operations where the male body is a chosen body and is awarded a higher quality in the institution of war and combat while the female body carries the signs of inferiority and as such, it is conceived as antithetical to the ideal body of security forces (Väyrynen, 2013). This perception possibly propelled the CJTF men to believe that the 'hard work' of the security operations is a masculine role and therefore women have no business in it:

It is in the religious teaching to respect and protect the women, we will not ask women to do hard work because we believe all that hard work is for men. (Men response from FGD)

The above statement confirms that the CJTF men perceive taking up heavy duty as a sign of honor, bravery, and patriotism to their land, culture, and religion. This form of thinking reflects the social structure in Borno state and Nigeria at large where masculinity, religion, and culture are intertwined with the spirit of nationalism (Okafor, 2010). According to Berner (1998), social structures are norms and rules that shape an individual's identity, interactions, and expectations. Through social structure, men and women are socialized to act in certain ways to meet social expectations (Ibid). In the case of the CJTF men, the religious and cultural doctrines that portray men as leaders and guardians created in the men the feeling to exercise superiority and make decision for the CJTF women regarding what they can or cannot do. It also instilled in the men the attitude to meet the status of a protector by bearing all the hard labor. The effect of this idealization is that it validates male power over feminine virtues and it gives men the freedom to show authority as they please. It also creates the false consciousness that women have no prior knowledge of how to handle hard labor. Here hard labor is seen only from the purview of physically strenuous activities thus showing that the biological gender difference in physical strength is one of the sexist narratives used to disqualify women from security operations. It should be noted that women unlike men, work both within the home as domestic laborers and outside the home as employees which is equally a heavy and mentally demanding task that requires high cognitive abilities (Goldstein, 2003).

To add, the construction of femininity and masculinity within the CJTF organization further increased the unequal power relations between the male and female CJTF thus permitting some degree of domination and subjection. For instance, one male respondent mentioned:

“Very good, there is respect. The first thing is that the women respect us because we are men and second we are their leaders at work place. (Male respondent from KII)

The above statement can be interpreted through the lens of power where the ideology of patriarchy empowers men to demand obedience and submission from women and this is used to confirm women's identity as 'moral' (Chodorow, 1995). This clearly correlates with the politics of respectability posited by Lake (1986) where the masculine male is universalized and treated with pride as a marker of superiority while the female gender is compelled to adhere to certain norms and values in order to validate the superiority of the male gender. And in return, the female gender is socially accepted as part of the community. In the Civilian Joint Task Force, respectability of men is what confirms the behavior of the CJTF women as moral this is because of the patriarchal cultural understanding of men as the head and leader. According to a female respondent: *“we respect men because they are our father and ahead of us”*. This form of thinking is an internalized ideology socially constructed to preserve the hegemonic hierarchy of the male gender (Chodorow, 1995). That is why Foucault (1976) in Dore, (2009) described gender as a relation built on power with the men asserting themselves

as the authority in the web of social relations to normalize the control of women. This assertion neatly correlates with the attitude within the CJTF because through the demand for respect, the men controlled the women's behavior as the women begin to model female subservience. One of the comrades noted:

Any girl who is stubborn and she finds herself here will become good person. Because the discipline and work will make her humble (Men response from KII)

The implication of this patriarchal gendered attitude modeled within the CJTF is that the women internalized the culture of passivity and the women became relegated from decision-making and leadership activities:

We don't have any woman as our leader, but the leadership that is given to us the women is the woman leader who leads only the women. It's not possible that the woman leader is above the provost in rank because she is a woman. So she is below the provost (Women response from KII)

Firstly, the above statement shows that the rank of the CJTF 'woman leader' is a leadership tokenism. Here, tokenism means having a leadership position with no real power to make any decision or changes because your presence is only to make an appearance for the organization as being inclusive (Friedman et al, 2016). The CJTF as an organization attempted to present itself as though they are gender-sensitive, therefore, they set up the 'woman leader' position for the women as a show-off. The presence of a 'woman leader' did not alter the gender ideology within the CJTF as the women in these new positions still have limited authority to give commands outside their feminine group.

Secondly, with the CJTF limiting the authority of the 'woman leader' only to her gender it shows that femininity is constructed as a lower identity that cannot exercise power over all genders (Brownfield-Stein, 2017). According to Walker (2012), the security arena is a site where masculine dominance over feminine is acceptable. This is because there is an assumption that the feminine body does not represent the skills and qualities of the security force therefore femininity cannot express authority over masculinity (Ibid). Besides the masculinity ideology, the social context also played a role. In Borno State, it is almost taboo for females to give orders to males because men are culturally regarded as hierarchically superior to women (Muhammad et al, 2016). As such, the social structure of the Borno state possibly motivated the CJTF men to further limit the power of the woman leader in giving command to the opposite gender.

3.2 Protective Paternalism and Benevolent Sexism

This research reveals that the attitude and beliefs within the Civilian Joint Task Force are sexist and do not support meaningful engagement of women within the organization. However, the form of sexism noticeable within the CJTF is subtle and less hostile. For instance, a male respondent mentioned:

“Very good, anywhere you see two CJTF women working be rest assured that there are over 20 men protecting them and giving them back up...anywhere you see the women CJTF, they are usually surrounded by men CJTF protecting them because they cannot protect themselves.” (Men response from FGD)

This statement expresses benevolent sexism that is men as helpers and protectors of women. This belief prejudiced the female gender as passive and dependent human beings that are not capable of their own protection. According to Barreto and Ellemers, (2005) benevolent sexist statements are patronizing remarks that endorse sexist ideologies and gender inequality between women and men. Usually, unlike hostile sexist statements that are harsh and violent towards women, the benevolent sexist statement is conveyed with positive, laughable, or empathetic tones which makes people to more likely endorse it (Ibid). However, benevolent sexist statements just as hostile sexist statements are as harmful or if not more dangerous because they often go unchallenged (Barreto and Ellemers, 2005). The perception of CJTF men about how incapable the CJTF women are in protecting themselves is phrased sympathetically and transferred using a caring tone. Nevertheless, this does not mean that it is not gender prejudice. The reason the CJTF men perceived the CJTF women as vulnerable and defenseless is embedded in the patriarchal ideology that the feminine body is inherently weak and therefore needs to be protected (Brownfield-Stein, 2017). Besides the patriarchal social structure that reinforces the belief that women need to be cared for by men, the unequal power relations within the CJTF also contributed to benevolent sexism. For instance, the women mentioned that *“only the men are allowed to carry gun we the women don’t have weapon”*. The inability of the women to have equal advantage as the men in terms of access to weaponry deepened the assumption that men are women’s protectors.

It should be emphasized here that the CJTF men expressed a high level of protective paternalistic beliefs, a strong component of benevolent sexism. For example one of the male respondents says:

To protect women is compulsory because they are our parents and our wives. So we have to protect them (Male respondent from KII)

This remark shows that within the CJTF there is a pervasive belief that men have the ‘duty to protect’ because they possess courage and willpower. As such, many of the CJTF men subjected their bodies to sacrificial suffering in order to secure the lives of the CJTF women. One CJTF male member mentioned:

We prefer to have the women rest at home and we go out to suffer from all the suffering (Male respondent from KII)

The mentality of having male bodies suffer while the female rest is connected to the corporeal ideals of manhood where the male body obediently agrees to be sacrificed in the name of protecting the nation (Väyrynen, 2013). Nagel (1998) mentioned that the feminine body is regarded as nationalistic pride because of its purity, tenderness, and ability to give life. So therefore, the woman's body should be comforted, cherished, and loved (Ibid). The CJTF men took up the responsibility of a sacrificial helper who lay down his body and soul to protect the female CJTF. The implication of this is that it reaffirmed the traditional stereotype that women are weak and men are stronger (Goldstein, 2003). Expectedly, this assumption of a weak female and strong male is now internalized by the women CJTF and it begins to shape their behavior:

When we go for duty and someone decide to harass us. So the CJTF men would come over and stand for us and fight them back (Women response from FGD)

The above remark signifies the level of subjectification of the women seeing that the male CJTF have been able to gain social control of the women's psyche to the extent that they now normalize and romanticize their subordination. According to Foucault (1994) in Heller (1996), the disciplinary nature of power which is used as an instrument of domination shapes the way a subject thinks and affects how the subject can construct or deconstruct his or her identity. Clearly, the manner in which the CJTF men used patriarchal power to maintain male supremacy and gender roles within the organization caused the women to see themselves as subordinate and dependent women. The effect is that the CJTF women now see their feminine qualities as a limitation to their strength and capacity:

You know a man and a woman have different body structures and weights. So I cannot be able to do what a man can do (Female respondent from KII)

In security institutions, bodies are categorized as strong or weak (Goldstein, 2003). The feminine body is however perceived as the latter hence, ejected and excluded from fighting (Ibid). Within the CJTF the women have been subjected to see their bodies as frail and feeble which is not suitable for participating in combat or leading in operations as such, the women embrace subordinated complementary tasks within the organization:

As women we are pardon to be at home at night, in the day the we are only responsible to take care of people, search the women and inform the men if we see any suspect but the men do the rest" (Woman response from KII)

This statement confirms that work responsibilities within the CJTF are shared based on gender considerations due to the patriarchal ideologies of the organization and community. According to Brownfield-Stein (2017), the security arena is a site of deep misogynistic culture where equal treatment and division of labor between the male and female gender is very unlikely to happen. Even

though feminist have demanded a change in the social construction of tasks within the sector, not much improvement have been realized as many of the roles undertaken by men and women is shared along gender lines (Ibid). In the CJTF for instance, the women are prejudiced to be too vulnerable to partake in operations at night hence, they are pardoned to go home thereby subtly excluding the women from operations by using a protective paternalistic tone of safeguard from danger. The pardoning of women to go home also shows that women's primary duty is conceived first, to be to their family, husband, and children hence reaffirming the claim of Goldstein (2003) that women fighters find it challenging for people to see them outside of the home. Similarly, limiting women's tasks to the sphere of traditional gender roles of caring and gatekeeping while the men receive 'reports' shows the simplistic binary classification of masculinity and femininity as well as, the legitimization of masculine authority over women within the CJTF.

3.3 Slut Shaming

According to Walker (2012), the reward for choosing security profession is not the same for both men and women. While men are recognized as national heroes for serving the nation, women, on the other hand, are misrecognized as slut whose presence in the security sphere is to sexualize the male soldiers (Ibid). This situation is true for the CJTF women who are described as prostitutes for entering into the male-dominated security organization:

We are the ones who provide aids before any security agent but the people in the community especially the elderly women still call us names like prostitute they say we are putting on trousers and that we follow men some even say that we are too strong to be a house wife because they think the work is for men and we are doing it" (Women response from FGD)

What is noticed in this statement is that the sexual accusation and shaming faced by the CJTF women emerged from the cultural system within Borno State that limits women to non-masculine sexual boundaries as a way to preserve women's purity (Okafor, 2010). However, as the CJTF women entered into male-dominated security spaces their identity as virtuous women is put into question. For instance, it is not surprising that the elderly women within the community were the key actors behind the vilification. This probably owes to the fact that older women are mostly custodians of culture so they felt it was important for them to preserve the tradition which they have internalized (Al-Amin, 2018). According to Chafetz (2006), socialization is used to build norms and rules into human consciousness which is then used to determine what actions are approved or disapproved. Clearly, as the social norms within Borno State frown at women imitating men, the CJTF women who joined the male-dominated security profession were therefore greeted with hostile criticism. It is

no gainsaying that the moral policing of the CJTF women somewhat reflects the way femininity is perceived from the realm of sexuality and how female fighters are objectified as an erotic militarist capable of stimulating promiscuity.

According to Väyrynen (2013) and Brownfield-Stein (2017), the corporeal cost for women who entered into masculine security space is that the women begin to lose their femininity, chastity, and innocence as well as, cease to hold their feminine identity as they take up the image of an honorary male. This is the situation that the CJTF women experienced as they witnessed a sharp decline in their level of social respectability as females:

The women that you see now...face serious challenge, to get married for the single CJTF women is like a miracle because the men are just running away (Men response from FGD).

This statement shows that as the CJTF women embodied masculine stature their persona which is used to attract and earn the respect of suitors dropped such that many of the single, divorced, or widowed women within the CJTF find it difficult to marry. As one of the community members pointed out:

To have a woman mingling with men, who is dressing like men and also doing exactly like a man while her counterparts are at home or working at farms and She is in the middle of the street you know that paints her bad no suitors might want to consider to get married to her (Community member response from KII)

This assertion confirms that the masculinity identity of the CJTF women did not elevate the social status of the women rather they faced more challenges trying to negotiate their identity. This might be due to the social context of Borno State which is religiously and culturally conservative. It could also be that the men have hidden fears of marrying women that had not only lost their feminine virtues of weakness, meekness, and gentleness but also now embodied norms and practices that were unique to the masculine identity. This kind of female might have a balance of power relations with the male which certainly would challenge the pride of a heterosexual man. It should be noticed that military masculinity is perceived as attractive to women when possessed by men however, it is not the same for men when it is owned by women (Brownfield-Stein, 2017). This might be because the media visibilized the energy and power of male fighters while it visualized the seductive look of women combatants (Jayasundara-Smits, 2021). Perhaps this is why Goldstein (2003) asserted that maintaining a feminine body is a great struggle for women in the security sector.

3.4 Gendered Operation

The research found that women's integration on large scale into the Civilian Joint Task Force is driven purely by operational needs this is because the cultural context of Borno State did not permit the CJTF men to search females and since there is a high level of insecurity where Boko Haram sympathizers hide explosives under clothes, it became a thing of necessity to mount roadblocks and search both men and women:

Right now the reason why we are using women in doing this job is that there are some places the men are not be allowed to go in but only the female so you see it became necessary for us to make them do the work. If not we prefer them to rest at home and we go out to suffer from all the suffering (Men response from FGD)

'I don't see my work as dangerous'



(Punch, 2016)

Nevertheless, the gendered structure within the CJTF did not allow women to move beyond this role. As one of the respondents mentioned:

It is almost 13 years now since I started the work and have been doing same thing for long but No, there is no promotion.” “Zero, no promotion (Women response from FGD)

The limiting of CJTF women to community searching and caring can be traced to what Goldstein (2003) called preserving the 'nurturing nature' of women. It is often presumed that females are soft-hearted and possess less aggressiveness therefore they are unfit for combat. In the case of the CJTF, the men also shared the sentiment that women have the less physical strength to fight:

If not that we cannot do the searching ourselves, we would have prefer that the women rest at home and we go out to do the work the work is man's work (Men response from FGD)

This protective paternalistic statement shows why CJTF women are not mobilized for more complex roles. It is worth noting that the bureaucracy within the Civilian Joint Task Force hindered the organization from having an effective

structure that could ensure timely promotion or proper delegation of tasks between the CJTF men and women. The poor structuring of the organization further created a blur between the organizational code of conduct and social norms as many religious and cultural rules were mixing up with the CJTF operations even as the organization describe itself as neutral:

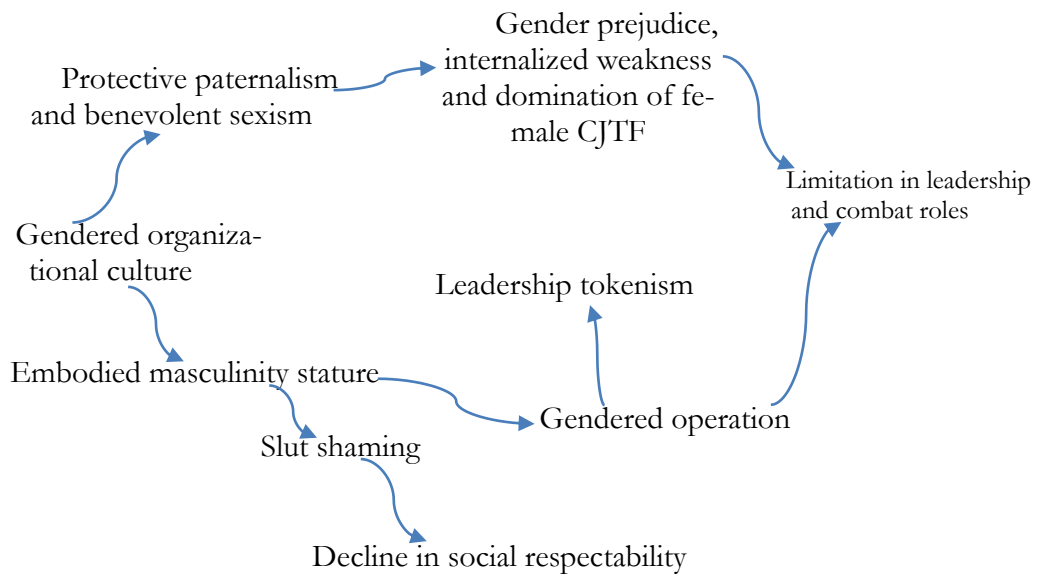
“The work itself is built on culture or religion because we don’t ask the women to do what is against the culture and religion. They will not be allowed to do it.” (Men response from FGD)

It is noticeable to say that while both CJTF men and women are mandated to observe cultural and religious standards by the community, the women had more rules to abide by than the men. For instance, it is more of a moral concern to see a woman stand among men than vice versa:

Like if you have noticed among the women, you’ll find out that the women have covered their heads completely because they are following the rules of the religion. So for that, you hardly find them violating rules and when they do that they will be called and stopped doing it (Men response from FGD)

The above statement shows how the CJTF men asserted themselves as the custodian of rules and norms within the organization monitoring the attitudes and behavior of the women. This patriarchal moral policing reconfirmed the gender hierarchy and hegemony that exist within the organization. Väyrynen (2013) mentioned that the body of women are often transformed by discriminatory disciplinary measures which lead to domination and subjectification of the female body as it is in the case of the CJTF women.

Visual representation of gender relations in CJTF



3.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter has underscored the different ways the Civilian Joint Task Force is a gendered organization by showing how the women are excluded from complex security operations through the use of benevolent sexism as well as how the women are being requested to show respect thereby making them subservient. The chapter further highlighted the sexual shaming CJTF women face because they decided to challenge the gender order. Overall, this chapter has made it clear that the gender relations between the male and female CJTF are patriarchal and hierarchical

¹The above diagram shows how unequal gender relations and patriarchal norms negatively affected the CJTF women. For instance, the slut shaming caused a decline in the level of respect accorded to the female CJTF also, the gendered security operations of the CJTF organization created a leadership tokenism and limitation of women in leadership positions.

Chapter 4 Female CJTF and Their Variegated Modes of Agency

4.0 Introduction

This chapter contains a report of the data collected from the field interviews to analyze the different forms of agency that the female CJTF exercised within the constrained social structure of the Civilian Joint Task Force and Borno State. It used the analytical tools of personal agency, proxy/socially-mediated agency, and bonded agency to underscore how the female CJTF achieve their personal goals and interests despite limitations.

4.1 Personal Agency

Personal agency is the ability to perform purposive action to secure the desired outcome for oneself in the face of constraining external factors through the show of resistance, and deliberate or carefully planned actions (Ruiz, 1998). In the Civilian Joint Task Force, the women CJTF exercised personal agency by first showing that their decision to enter into the CJTF was intentional and aimed towards achieving their personal goals and needs. For instance, one female CJTF expressed that:

The reason why I joined CJTF is to protect our women and our family, to be sincere this Boko Haram affected me, because I lost my first born, last born and my husband. Boko Haram killed them, together with two of my uncles. So, I joined the CJTF to defend our community and people. This job is a self-defense work I stand firm to protect others and the country. We thank God that we have seen changes and peace is returning.” (Female respondent from KII)

The above statement showed that the women’s decision to become a member of the CJTF is purposive and it was intended to achieve the desired outcome which is ‘defending lives and bringing back peace to Borno State’. According to Bandura (2006), agentic action requires having an aim in mind or an anticipated outcome. Clearly, this is true for CJTF women because before joining the organization they already had the desired change that they wanted to create and that was what motivated their decision to enter into the Civilian Joint Task Force. As such, the story of the CJTF females is different from the women who joined the Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone because the women were conscripted and did not have any self-interest before joining the group but, the CJTF women had a pre-determined purpose that guided their decision (Agbiboa, 2021). Besides the visualized future goal, the CJTF women also carried out activities that were strategic and logical in making their proposed change happen:

We started by going around to identify people that work for Boko Haram and we start to search and when am searching, I don't come closer to them. I will ask them to open their clothes and see what they hold in their hands and check their bags and everything before I allow them to go (Women response from FGD)

The above statement shows that the CJTF women carefully planned and executed activities that were targeted toward achieving their future-oriented goals of maintaining community security and ending attacks. This action correlates with the agentic feature of self-reactiveness mentioned by Bandura (2006) which has to do with an individual's ability to be able to "link thoughts to action". As the CJTF women carefully executed appropriate actions that would deliver an anticipated outcome, the women showed that they have the deliberative capacity that is, the skill to make choices, formulate an organized plan, and implement it (Ibid).

Similarly, agency can be attributed to the female CJTF for joining the organization because they exhibited individual self-awareness meaning that they understood the purpose of their action and pursuit:

We joined this work out of Patriotism and passion, we started it with good intentions and we will not stop doing everything it takes until our community is peaceful. (Women response from FGD)

This response shows that the women have good knowledge of why they joined the CJTF as well as what their action represents. It further reflects that the CJTF women have high personal efficacy about their work such that they believe they would overcome whatever challenge so long they constantly adjust their tactics to align with the emerging situation. This sense of awareness is termed self-reflectiveness. It is a very strong trait of agentic action because it confirms that people are not just action-takers but also self-examiners of their actions (Bandura, 2006). Clearly, the reply of the CJTF women signifies that the women have reflected on their efforts and they came to the conclusion that their act is a fulfillment of their 'inner-passion as well as, expression of self-patriotism'. According to Agbiboa (2021), patriotism is not a quality accorded to women in conflict discourse because females are perceived as emotional, fearful, and disloyal especially when they engage in a sexual relationship with the enemy. However, the CJTF women's affirmation of their faithfulness to their community represents a deconstruction of the feminine stereotype.

Another way the CJTF women exercised personal agency is by showing resistance to external powers that seek to control and limit their rights from joining the CJTF because of their gender:

"Our parents discriminate us, people call us soldier's prostitutes we are facing lots of challenges from the community because they think we are doing the work of men and it is against the culture" (Women response from FGD)

The above expression illustrates how the female CJTF faced barriers because they chose to join the Civilian Joint Task Force. The social obstacle emerged from the cultural norms that prevented women from having the appearance of men or publicly claiming roles that traditionally belong to the male (Agbiboa, 2021). Nevertheless, the CJTF women were able to show resistance by sustaining their career for many years in a profession that makes them to not only dress like men but also publicly play a male role such as acting as guardian or protector:

Everyone in the community look at us as if we are doing something strange but is because we wear trouser. I wear shirts and trousers this makes them threatened my life, my name was on the list among those that would be killed, but luckily for me I was not killed by my neighbor. There is nothing like leaving this work, I don't have time to leave this job. (Women response from KII)

Another CJTF woman expressed:

Our work is to help the community. I work as intelligence for 10 years to catch boko haram and when attack happen or anything we help the women, children and elderly and sometimes the men we take them to hospital or police station...The money I get 15,000 Naira is small but I do it for peace (Women response from KII)

The above statements unearth how CJTF women remained resolute to work in a non-traditional feminine profession even when their choice stands in opposition to cultural practices. This form of personal agency is known as 'freewill' that is, the capacity of individuals to choose independently their life-course goals without allowing external constraints to limit one's choice (Bandura, 2006). The attitude of the women to serve their community despite the threat and meager pay further transcends gender norms as it shows that women also have a strong sense of duty and commitment to their community just as men. Likewise, it is useful to mention that the counterinsurgency practice paved the way for women to cross gender roles because the counterinsurgency necessitated bringing restricted bodies from private spaces to public spaces (Agbiboa, 2021).

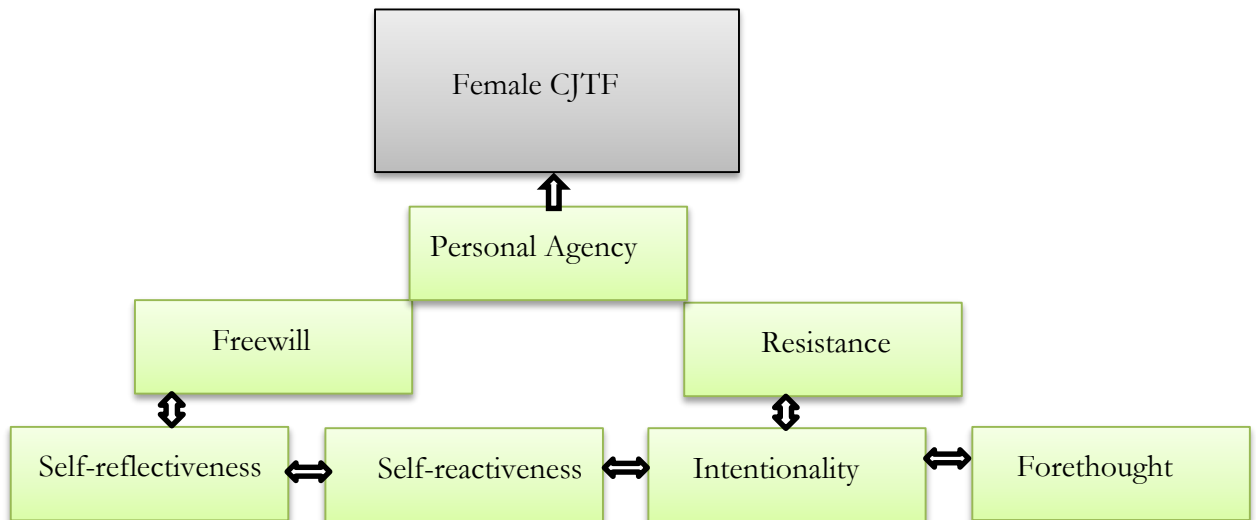
Lastly, a significant example of personal agency exhibited by the CJTF women is the strategic use of threats to achieve a personal goal:

"There is this female member who told me during our capacity building training that the military officers in conspiracy with the CJTF men were taking sexual advantage of young women in the internally displaced camp and when they discovered it the women were angry, what she and her colleague did was to face the men. They threatened them that... 'if we are here trying to support the counterinsurgency operation and we are seeing you men harassing our other women then we would stop coming to our duty post and if the military commanders ask us why we don't come to the check point again, we would open up to the commanders what you men are doing to the IDP women and we felt it was not right but you guys refused to hear and that's why we had to leave because we cannot be here and people are taking advantage of women like us'... the female CJTF said this deliberately to threaten

both the military officers and CJTF men to make them change their behaviour and according to the female CJTF, the threat worked” (I-NGO response from KII)

This report shows how the women CJTF carefully planned their response to counter the behavior of the men such that it forced the men to heed to the women’s warning and eventually changed their attitude. This agentic act reveals that the women have the ability to plan thoughtful action and execute it to their own desired outcome. It is noteworthy to say that the agency of the women to regulate the men’s action was ‘thickened’ by the presence of the military commander who had the official power to hold the military officers and CJTF men accountable because if the commander was not available, the CJTF women might not have anyone to report the situation to. This, therefore, confirms what Klocker (2007) in Bay-Cheng (2019) articulated that agency can either be thickened or thinned depending on the conditions available within the social context. Similarly, this situation also showed the duality effect of social structure that Giddens (1979) articulated. For instance, the same social structure that acted as rules that were used to condition the women to perform gender roles and also limited the active participation of the women in complex security operations is what the female CJTF invoked as resources to strengthen their agency to change the behavior of the men.

Personal Agency of the Female CJTF



¹ The above diagram shows that the personal agency of the female CJTF constitutes freewill and resistance which has different elements of agentic feature including intentionality, self-reflectiveness, self-reactiveness and forethought. The personal agency of the CJTF women suggests that the women joined the Civilian Joint Task Force out of their own will and not because of the male’s influence.

4.2 Proxy or Socially Mediated Agency:

Proxy or socially mediated agency involves engaging people who have more skills or resources to act on your behalf to achieve your desired goal (Bandura, 2006). In the Civilian Joint Task Force, the women showed proxy-agency by depending on other people's power and influence to help them achieve their desire. A salient example was when the CJTF women leveraged the advocacy power of a non-governmental organization to achieve organizational and behavioral change. The CJTF women recognized that they need more support to demand fair treatment or equal representation from the CJTF men as such, they enlisted the help of non-governmental organizations by using them to speak directly to the leadership of the CJTF on the importance of giving women strategic and permanent roles within the Civilian Joint Task Force as well as nominating female CJTF for professional training:

During our trainings some of the female members confirmed to us that they are limited that the men are not being fair with them in sharing opportunities and that the men dominate everything...the women are not able to open up about this but they talked to us to see how we can help them (I-NGO response from KII)

This statement shows how CJTF women look to others for help and also leverage the power of people to achieve their desired outcomes. Since the non-governmental organization works in the area of advocacy and is very influential in dialoguing with the CJTF leadership, the women willingly approached the non-governmental organization for assistance. According to Bandura (2006), proxy-agency is a thoughtful action because the behavior involves having an anticipated goal and conducting a strategic assessment of the strength and capacity of the proxy to achieve the outcome that the individual seeks. For the CJTF women to have approached the NGO, it shows that they had consciously evaluated the role of the non-governmental organization and its prospect in influencing the change they wanted:

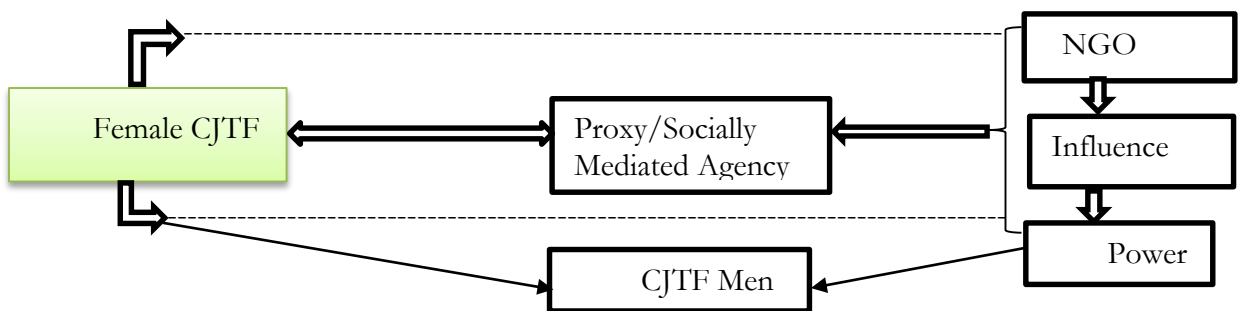
When the women told us about the discrimination, we were not comfortable with it. What we did was to use that information to take action. We advocated to the leadership of the organization telling them not to discriminate the women. We used the deliberate strategy of asking the CJTF leaders to always bring the women members for workshop and training. During the training, we make sure that the women speak and make presentation so that the men are not just dominating the conversation. Also, one of our advocacy techniques is to tell the CJTF leaders that if they give women positions in the sector and include them in opportunities, it would encourage other women to want to join and volunteer for the CJTF. We can only persuade because we don't have authority over the CJTF. But I tell you, our influence has led to some changes, there is one woman now serving as public relations officer (PRO) and another one as secretary. These are more functional roles unlike before when they only call some females 'women leader' but the women leaders

have no portfolio but these new roles are well recognized (I-NGO response from KII)

The remark of the non-governmental organization proved that the proxy-agency of the CJTF women achieved the expected goal at least to the extent of creating new administrative positions for the women hence giving them more visibility in the organization. What is interesting to note is that the proxy agency of the CJTF women did not create in the women an over-reliance or dependency on the proxy. As noted by Bandura (2006), the underside of using proxy-agency is that an individual may become too dependent on the proxy for assistance hence reducing the individual’s competency to carry out actions unaided. However, in the case of the CJTF women, the use of proxy agency did not stop the women from also demanding their rights by themselves when necessary:

“I know some women that now confront some of the CJTF men especially when the men refuse to share benefits received from government or donors with them they will face the men and say that... ‘we heard that you were given this and this but you did not give us or you gave us small portion we do not agree we need to share it equally’...this is one of the scenarios that shows that the CJTF women are now opening up and they are challenging some of the unfair treatments” (I-NGO response from KII)

Proxy or Socially Mediated Agency of the Female CJTF



¹ The diagram of socially-mediated agency depicts the connection between the female CJTF and the NGO and how the women used the NGO to shape the behaviour of the CJTF men

4.3 Bonded Agency

According to Cense (2019) bonded agency relates to the strategic actions or negotiations individuals take in order to express loyalty and maintain social relationships. In exercising bonded agency, individuals try to creatively make choices that fulfill not just their interests but also the expectation of others as a way of showing commitment to relationships. The prioritization that individuals show to others is not out of subjugation but rather as a fulfillment of ethical commitment (Ibid). For instance, in the Civilian Joint Task Force, the CJTF women used bonded agency to manage their relationships with the community members such that they consciously avoided acting aggressively or violently when some community members insulted them for choosing the profession:

“To be sincere, the work is very hard because people insult us like they call us soldier’s prostitutes, but I never judge anyone for what they did to me, I use to stay calm and cool down when I get annoyed and talk to the person that made me angry then we resolve the issues. Now the people know our importance in the community (Women response from FGD)

The above statement shows how CJTF women maintained connections with people who are discriminatory towards them even when it offends their personality. This agentic action reflects that the female CJTF value their relationship with their community and are interested in maintaining it as such, they used the creative strategy of humility, perseverance, and patience to avoid confrontations.

Similarly, because the CJTF women cared about how the community members especially the elderly perceived them, they further developed a strategic action plan to negotiate their identity to change people’s negative perception of them. One CJTF woman mentioned:

We are doing good and taking care of people in the community. We are helping members of the community like the sick and old people to go to hospital, help accident victims, call families of victims, attend to issues when there is no other security personnel, escort people to police station or hospital or anywhere they are going. People are now seeing that we are important to the community, they see that we are good and they like us (Woman response from KII)

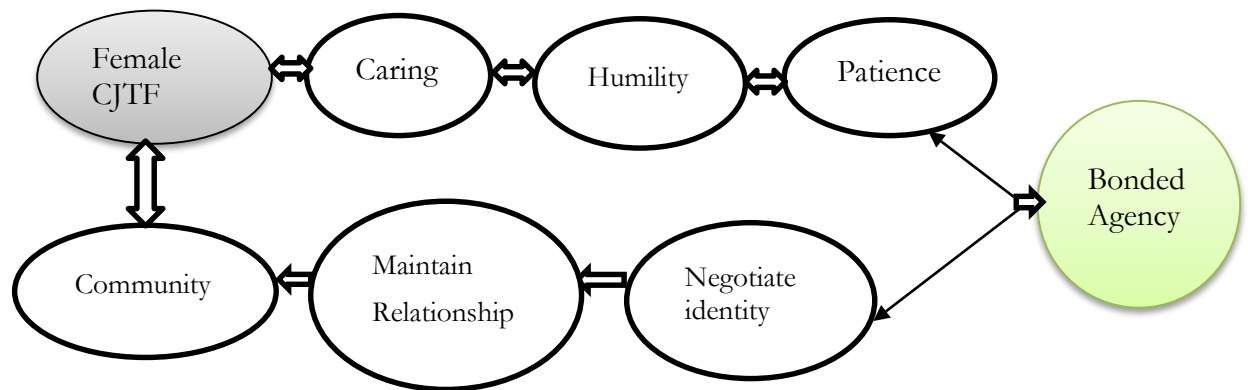
Another woman mentioned that:

We don’t like people see us as prostitute so we respect ourselves. When we are on operations or duty, we don’t sit with the men and even eat food together. We try our best to not do the bad things that they are suspecting us of doing because there are people watching us while we are doing the work (Women response from FGD)

All these strategies of caring and maintaining ethical moral standards helped the CJTF women to achieve their desired goal of re-negotiating their identity to be seen as decent, morally upright, and respectful women who are driven by the passion to serve their community. Although, in the process of the women taking responsibility for maintaining bonds with their community, they nevertheless

submit their bodies to patriarchal control as many of them were required to wear hijab and not mix with men: *If you have noticed among the women, you'll find out that the women have covered their heads completely because they are following the rules of the religion and they don't mix up with Men during operations (Men response from FGD)*. This remark shows how women sacrificed their bodies, freedom, and sexuality to preserve relationships. This situation correlates with what Kelley (1996) mentioned that social bonding increases conformity to norms as individuals focus on changing their behavior to meet other people's expectations. According to Mahmood (2006) accommodating and acquiescing to rules and norms is a form of agency because sometimes, the desire of individuals to belong to a relationship can be stronger than their yearning for independence and as such, they would rather accept to obey rules than oppose it. The CJTF women in this instance agreed to follow cultural and religious rules because they believed it would help to strengthen their communal relationship and indeed, as the women strategically navigated the rules, they were able to stay connected to their community as they desired. It should be noted that as the CJTF women conformed to the cultural norms and rules they reproduced social structure because they passed on the ideology that women are primarily responsible to please, submit and persevere. This situation confirms the words of Giddens (1979) that human agency can either replicate or create a new structure.

Bonded Agency of the Female CJTF



4.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter has analyzed the variegated forms of agency exercised by the women CJTF to reveal that the women are not passive or powerless despite being constrained and subjected to patriarchal norms. The chapter further showed that the women used different types of agency depending on the context and purpose hence affirming that the women's CJTF agency is fluid and changing.

¹ The above diagram shows the CJTF women connected with their community using the acts of caring, humility and patience and thereby, they were able to re-negotiate their identity and maintain relationship with the community people

² It is important to note that through bonded agency which the women used to re-negotiate identity and maintained relationship, the female CJTF were able to reduce the slut shaming and change the negative perception that the community members had against them. As a result, the women improve their relationship with the local people.

Chapter 5 Conclusion

This research has strengthened the discourse on women peace and security by affirming that masculinities and femininities exist in security institutions and this gendered ideology creates unequal relations between male and female security agents. Using the case of the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF), this study provided a detailed investigation into the uncomfortable gender realities of local vigilante women in Borno state. The paper used empirical evidence to show the layers of gender stereotypes within the CJTF security structure and how this considerably limited the meaningful participation of vigilante women vis-à-vis men in the defense of local communities. The research discovered that the masculinities and femininities behavior within Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) was brought into being by the social norms and values of the environment and this by implication caused the female CJTF to reproduce interactional subjectivities such as showing submission as a form of respect to the men and it also made the women lack decision making power or effective leadership authority. Goldstein (2003) and Brownfield-Stein (2017) have maintained that gendered culture in the security sector limits women's participation in combat roles, the findings of this research further corroborates with the argument of the authors. The benevolent sexism and protective paternalism of the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) engendered gender prejudice such that the CJTF women were perceived as too weak and vulnerable to engage in masculinized security activities as a result, the women were limited to low-ranking menial duties thereby excluding them from complex security operations such as combat. Similarly, Brownfield-Stein (2017) claimed that female security officers work in an unsupportive hostile environment where they are mostly misrecognized as sluts that are readily available to satisfy the sexual desire of male security officers. This assertion was together confirmed in this paper as the study showed how female CJTFs were accused of prostitution because they crossed the feminine boundary to take up a profession in a male-dominated security sector.

Nevertheless, this research distinctly argued that the female CJTF exercised different modes of agency that were used as leverage to bargain patriarchal social norms both within the organization and the community at large. Through empirical evidence, this study disclosed the compelling ways female CJTFs were able to perform specific actions that altered the course of events and which affirmed that the women were not onlookers but agents of action that pursued meaningful personal goals. Using the framework of agency developed by Bandura (2006) and Cense (2019), the essay discussed the personal, bonded, and proxy or socially mediated agency of the female CJTF to show numerous ways the women resisted or deliberately planned actions to achieve their interest as well as, how they strategically used other people's power and influence to realize

their desire and more so, the creative approaches used by the women to re-negotiate connections with their community. All these approaches confirmed that the agency of the CJTF women is fluid and constantly changing depending on the time and space. This study, therefore, contends that the female CJTF are individuals who find room to move despite social constraints and limitations.

Importantly, what these findings implied in relation to peace and security is that response to counterinsurgency is still an expression of manhood where masculine bravery, power, and toughness are used for protection. According to Brownfield-Stein (2017), security practice needs to be seen as a profession that requires the use of expertise, not gender power. By doing so, it would create a revision in how security operation is understood as the focus on gender will now be shifted towards competence and the ability to perform job roles. Certainly, making security operations to become task-based would allow those that demonstrate the capacity to be engaged in the roles as professionals regardless of their gender. In the case of the Civilian Joint Task Force, professionalizing security will provide the women more opportunities to work using their skillsets not their bodies and this may create the space for the women to be accepted as professionals so long they meet the standards.

Similarly, the findings indicated that gendering security might legitimize the use of a militaristic approach to peacebuilding. When security operations focus more on using masculine capabilities, the protection of local women and strengthening of community relations become challenging because masculine security agents usually have little knowledge of the gender dynamics in local communities and they might not be able to effectively respond to women's protection issues such as sexual violence (Brownfield-Stein, 2017). For instance, in one of the United Nations missions to South Africa, the peacekeepers were not able to assist the local women against sexual assault because the UN operations were masculinized militarism which was not centered on training peacekeepers on how to meet the specific needs of women in conflict (Ibid). This signifies that so long the Civilian Joint Task Force continues to be masculinized, then the protection of civilians which is part of the core mandate of the organization will merely not be fulfilled because the concept of security will only be state-centric and not responsive to societal concerns.

Another salient message of the research is that women in peace and security need a more supportive environment that will encourage their inclusion and functioning. For instance, it was based on the fact that the Civilian Joint Task Force had gendered culture and the community also approved patriarchal norms that made the CJTF women to be subjected to slut shaming and discriminatory security operation. According to Dahl et al (2021), one effective step towards transforming gender relations in the security sector is to have a supportive environment that does not foster negative views about women and this can be achieved through legal means as well as community sensitization. To mention,

in the course of this research, it was discovered that CJTF does not have a standard organizational policy that guides the staff code of conduct hence consequently permitting gender roles and female marginalization by the dominant male group. Likewise, it was found that some significant change in negative perception about the female CJTF was achieved partly due to the community sensitization organized jointly by non-governmental organizations and community heads. This situation, therefore, shows that more efforts need to be directed toward developing an effective legal system and community awareness to diminish the different forms of discrimination faced by women in the security sector.

Finally, these findings further made visible the need to change the narrative of men as more nationalistic and patriotic than women. Väyrynen (2018) mentioned that women are not awarded the badge of a nationalist because they do not answer the sacrificial call to die for the nation. However, these findings have shown that women as much as men can selflessly submit their lives to the protection of their community and people. An example is the female CJTF members who remained patriotic despite being discriminated against and mainly receiving little or no pay from the government. In fact, this research gathered that the CJTF male members arrogated financial gifts that were donated by the charity to themselves while they gave the women little or nothing. The women on the other hand, mostly depend on their personal businesses such as petty trade for survival. This situation shows that the women focused not on the financial gains of being a CJTF member but on their service to the nation.

Policy Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study recommends that the government restructure the Civilian Joint Task Force to have a well cut-out mandate and organizational policy that would guide the functioning and conduct of the CJTF members. This is necessary to address the redundancy as well as marginalization happening within the group.

More so, it is advised that government provides mental healthcare for the Civilian Joint Task Force members, particularly the women. Many of the female members opened up about how they have nightmares or remember the killing of their husbands and children. However, with the oppression and marginalization experienced by the women within the group, the emotional pain can only worsen. As such, it is a matter of urgency that the government support the women with mental healthcare.

Lastly, the research will recommend further research into the capacity of the female CJTF to understand if the women have the necessary skillset required to engage in combat or complex security operations. As well as, if the women desire to participate in frontline combat in the counterinsurgency mission.

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Appendix

I decided to fight Boko Haram after they killed my brother — Danladi



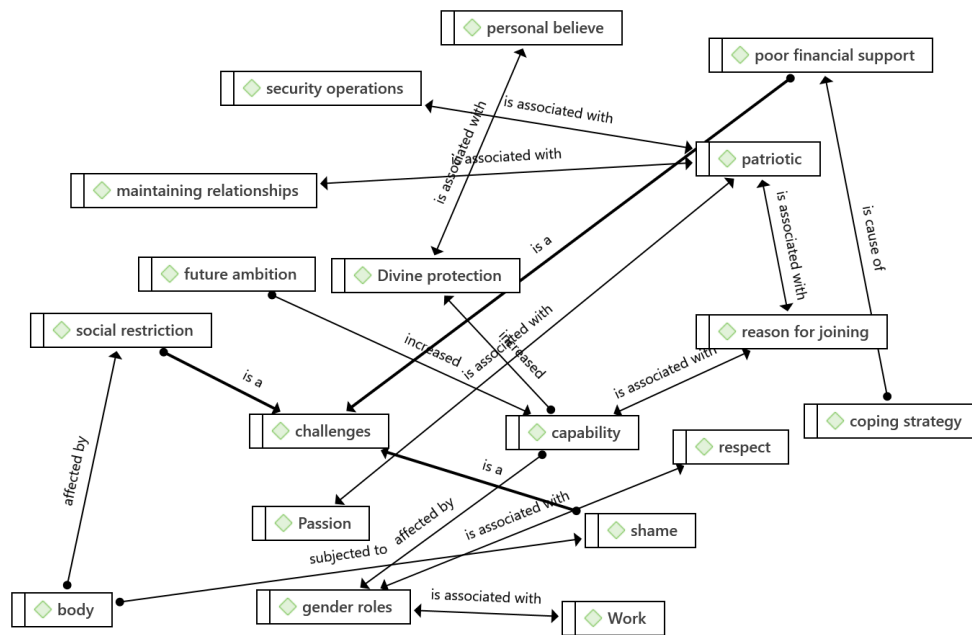
(Punch, 2016)

I once coordinated arrest of an insurgent — Mohammed



(Punch, 2016)

Visual relationship of the female CJTF experience using Atlas.ti



¹ The diagram reflects the connections in the interview data gathered from the CJTF women during the research. For instance, through the data, it was discovered that the reason why the women joined the CJTF was because of patriotism as well as, that their personal believe in divine being such as Allah is what gives them protection. It was also discovered that the body of the CJTF women is affected by social restriction such as cultural and religious norms

Interview Questions for the CJTF Women

1. Can you please tell me your name? Where do you stay and how old are you Do you have husband and children?
2. When did you start this vigilante work? What made you join vigilante? How many years you are working as a vigilante? How much are they paying you as salary? Who is paying your salary? What time do the CJTF women resume and close from work
3. Give me examples of what you do as a CJTF woman?
4. Give me examples of the problems you face as a vigilante woman?
5. Give me examples of the work CJTF man is doing?
6. Give me examples of how CJTF woman fight boko haram?
7. Give me examples of how are you protecting yourself as a woman?
8. Do you think CJTF woman can do what a CJTF man can do? Why
9. Give me examples of the cultural and religious rules that you must follow as a CJTF woman?
10. What will a woman do if she wants to become a CJTF leaders?

Interview Questions for the CJTF Men

1. What is your name? How old are you?
2. As a CJTF man how are you helping the CJTF women during operations?
3. Give me examples of the kind of advice you give a CJTF woman to encourage her
4. Give us examples of the work that the CJTF women are doing
5. Give us examples of how the CJTF women are helping the community
6. Give us examples of the difference between the work of vigilante men and vigilante women
7. Give me examples of the difference between the weapons women and men use
8. Give me examples of the cultural and religious rules that CJTF women must follow?
9. Give me examples of how people in your community see vigilante woman?
10. Is there any CJTF woman that is part of the official CJTF leaders? What is her work as a leader