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**THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS ORGANISATIONS IN
HUMANITARIAN AID IN THE BOKO HARAM
INSURGENCY: A CASE OF THE CHRISTIAN
ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA IN BORNO STATE**

A Research Paper presented

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to understand the role of Christian organisations in humanitarian aid in the Boko Haram insurgency. It focuses to understand the motivation of the CAN in providing humanitarian aid in the Boko Haram insurgency, find out way in which religious identity is being used by CAN to navigate aid delivery in humanitarian setting, as well as identify the specific challenges that CAN faces as a religious humanitarian aid organisation in providing humanitarian aid in the Boko Haram insurgency in Borno state. A pure qualitative method was used. Data was collected using interviews, transcribed and analysed thematically in line with study objectives. The research revealed that the motivations of CAN are deeply rooted in biblical teachings and a commitment to rectify religious-based disparities. The reliance on a strong religious identity and unity shapes the organisation's response to crisis. On the flip side, the security threats, discrimination from government officials, limited government support and the lack of cooperation among stakeholders collectively paint a complex picture for CAN. The paper establishes that CAN response should be encouraging the separation of politics from the religious works and promote love, forgiveness, and compassion.

Relevance to Development Studies

My study is significant to development studies because faith-based organisations possess unique characteristics such as extensive networks, grassroots presence, and resources and this gives them the ability to reach a large number of marginalised communities and be able to provide them assistance. The study is relevant to modernity as it explores how traditional and religious organisations, specifically faith-based organisations, operate in a modern conflict, the Boko Haram insurgency. Modernity involves a shift from traditional to contemporary norms, and the conflict in Borno State represents a significant departure from traditional forms of violence. The study examines how these faith-based organisations, with their unique grassroots presence engage with modern conflict, use modern tools to provide humanitarian aid, and adapt their approaches to help marginalised communities in a rapidly changing and urbanised environment. Also, this research demonstrates how access to basic needs during a conflict is important in reducing people's vulnerabilities and enhancing development. It contributes to the theorisation of humanitarian aid by investigating the applicability of these concepts in Borno state. In many cases, development and humanitarian efforts have been framed as secular projects, dwelling much on the separation of religious beliefs from the public sphere. However, this research focuses on the active participation of faith-based organisations in providing humanitarian aid during the Boko Haram insurgency. The study, therefore, challenges the assumption that faith-based organisations should be excluded from the broader development and humanitarian discourse. It shows that these organisations, despite their religious affiliation, play an important role in addressing the needs of marginalised and oppressed individuals in conflict-affected areas to promote more just livelihoods for these groups.

Keywords:

Religious Organisations, Humanitarian Aid, Boko Haram, Insurgency, Christian Association, Nigeria

Chapter 1

a. Religious organisations and humanitarian aid: Boko haram insurgency in Borno state

Humanitarian aid addresses the effect of conflict such as displacement, deprivation of means of livelihood, and hindrance of access to basic services.

(Ada & Mukhtar, 2021)

1.1 Research Problem

Globally, individuals and religious communities have a long history of being actively engaged in providing assistance even before the formalisation of international humanitarian law through treaties to people affected by persecution, natural disasters, conflicts, and displacement (Ferris, 2005; 311). In the 18th and 19th centuries, mission societies thrived in North America and Europe to provide evangelism to far continents also provide humanitarian assistance (Ilo, 2014;101). The early NGOs provided relief to those in need and were involved in advocacy and lobbying activities. Moreover, in the aftermath of the Second World War, a number of secular and Christian organisations increased to respond to humanitarian needs at the time including Christian Aid, Care International, Church World Service, Lutheran World Federation, and others. This shows that faith-based organisations were at the forefront of the establishment of the United Nations, and they took the lead in encouraging non-government organisations to work together to address the needs of those affected by war and other natural disasters (Olawale & Yemisi, 2012; 3). Over the years, humanitarian works has witnessed significant growth, reaching billions of dollars in funding, yet it operates within a fast-paced, top-down, and resource-intensive model. This approach, reminiscent of colonial-era governance, is driven by specialised UN agencies and NGOs, often delivering aid within a medicalised framework (Ferris, 2005; 313). The assumption of vulnerability among affected populations guides this approach, despite the fact that many communities in

conflict-affected regions have a long history of confronting danger. Moreover, the contemporary humanitarian system reflects the values and philosophies of Europe and North America, with a disproportionate amount of funding directed towards Muslim-majority countries (Jayawickrama, 2018; 1). Geopolitical interests sometimes overshadow the genuine needs of these affected populations. This aid allocation and delivery aligns with the colonial project, as humanitarian assistance is used to reshape the social, cultural, economic, and political fabric of countries without their consent, often destabilising regions (Jayawickrama, 2018; 1).

In many parts of Africa, religious organisations, including Christian groups, have a deep-rooted history intertwined with colonialism. This historical entanglement is a result of European colonial powers' expansion across the African continent during the 19th and early 20th centuries. As European powers established colonies in Africa, they often brought with them Christian missionaries who played a significant role in spreading the Christian faith. These missionaries saw their work as a part of the civilising mission, where they aimed to convert local populations to Christianity as they believed it was a means of bringing "enlightenment" and "salvation" to indigenous peoples. The historical legacy of this colonial-era missionary work continues to shape the religious landscape in many African countries today. It manifests in the presence of Christian denominations and institutions established during the colonial period, as well as ongoing religious practices and affiliations influenced by these earlier missionary efforts. Also, the perceptions of religious organisations, such as Christian ones align with the interests of former colonial powers, which influence the way they are viewed and received by local communities, especially in regions affected by conflicts and humanitarian crises like the Boko Haram insurgency [**Boko Haram means "Western education is bad or forbidden" in Hausa language**]¹. In Nigeria, where Islam and Christianity are the dominant religions, these historical ties

¹ Roland Marchal, "Boko Haram and the Resilience of Militant Islam in Northern Nigeria," *Noref Report* (June 2012): 3.

to colonialism have contributed to complex religious environments (Agbiji & Swart, 2015: 1-17).

Ethno-religious tensions are one of the threats to international security particularly in divided communities like Syria, Iraq, Myanmar, Sudan, Syria, Ukraine, and Nigeria among others (Abubakar, 2021; 6). Since the 1990s religion in Nigeria has been a central part of the country's politics and has been an explosive force in social upheavals (Cox et al., 2014; Eche & Okechukwu, 2020). Apart from the three leading religions in Nigeria, Islam, Christianity, and traditional religion, there are many others scrambling for recognition and relevance with 53.5 Islam and 45.9 percent identifying as Christians, and only 0.6 percent belonging to other faiths (Ikenna, 2020; 6). In particular, Nigerians have witnessed a series of violent conflicts in the past decades including the Boko Haram, the Niger delta war, the indigenous people of Biafra, and conflicts involving Fulani herdsmen, and others (Adelakun & Adelakun, 2022; 65). According to Mogbadelo (2003), the inclinations of successive Nigerian governments particularly at the central governance level continue to portray Nigeria as a religious state despite its constitution being secular. He further explodes that, it is the involvement of the Government of Nigeria in religious matters that has fueled religious crises across the country's borders because each of the major religious in the country are fighting for political relevance. The first religious crisis in Nigeria was the Jihad of Uthman Dan Fido occurred in 1804 launched to fight against syncretism in 1998, there was a protest over the imposition of the Christian religion, and in 2001 over 2,000 individuals were murdered in a religious crisis that spread in Nasarawa, Plateau, Benue, and Taraba (Jah, 2022; 8). Boko Haram is termed an Islamist movement is driven by religion and seeks to abolish the secular system of governance (Fisseha, 2016; 6). Boko Haram's activities have since escalated to include large-scale attacks on Christian communities, churches, and other symbols of Western influence – aimed at provoking interreligious tensions and deepening divides within Nigerian society. Boko Haram framed their actions as part of a broader struggle against perceived Western and Christian domination. As the conflict intensified, it

led to retaliatory violence between Christian and Islam communities, portraying religious divisions and tensions. Their attacks on Christians and subsequent retaliation by Christian groups fueled a cycle of sectarian violence. The group also targets moderate Muslim leaders, clerics, and adherents who did not align with their extremist ideology because they seek to eliminate opposition and consolidate their control over local Muslim communities. Moreover, Boko Haram established connections with other jihadist organisations such as the Islamic State (IS) and Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) which further fueled its extremist ideology by providing access to resources, training, and international networks (Aly-Sergie & Johnson, 2014; 114).

The continued attacks by Boko Haram in Northeast Nigeria have led to the largest population of the state being unproductive and relying on humanitarian aid for survival. The conflict has disrupted market and trade routes, impacting trade flows and commercial activities in many parts of Borno state (Ada & Mukhtar, 2022; 43). The response to the insurgency caused by the Boko Haram insurgency in Borno state involves a number of actors, including the Nigerian government, non-governmental organisations, community-based organisations, and religious organisations. A study by Tilleke et al. (2020; 12) found the most important actors in humanitarian aid delivery in Borno state were national NGOs (most important), followed by local NGOs, national government, and religious organisations [faith-based organisations] (fig.1).

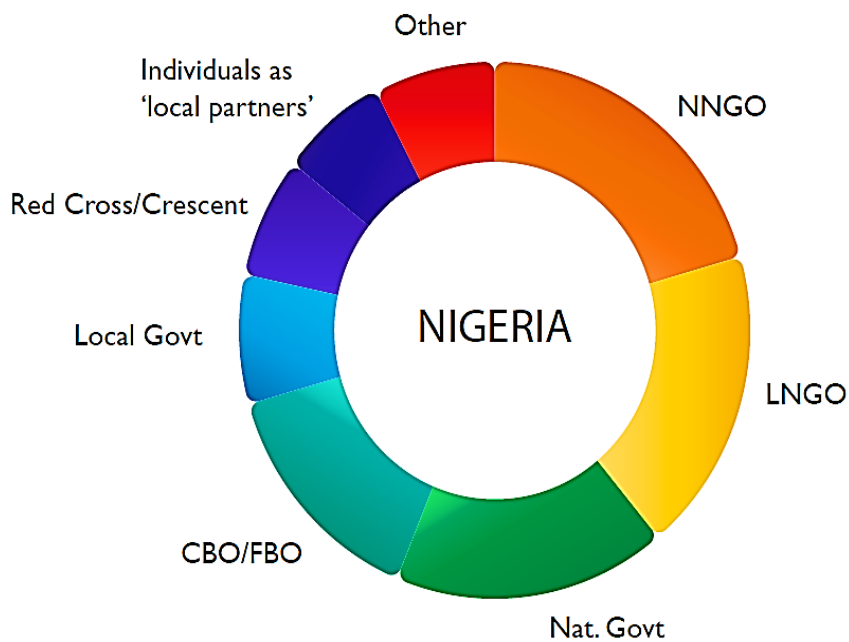


Fig. 1. Actors in humanitarian aid in Nigeria

Source: Tilleke et al. (2020; 12)

Despite the violent actions of Boko Haram, there have been instances of interfaith collaboration and cooperation in response to the conflict. Muslim and Christian religious leaders and religious organisations have come together to promote peace, reconciliation, and mutual understanding. Interfaith dialogue and initiatives have been instrumental in creating solidarity among religious communities and countering the divisive narratives propagated by Boko Haram. Religious organisations have the potential to create peace, promote dialogue, and address the root causes of the conflict. They have engaged in interfaith initiatives and contributed to reconciliation and healing. Interfaith collaborations in response to the Boko Haram conflict have actively worked to establish Christian-Muslim dialogue forums with peacebuilding and bridge-building activities between various social groups, promoting dialogue and understanding (Iweze, 2021; 41). Through awareness campaigns on peaceful coexistence, they have effectively spread messages of tolerance and unity, counteracting the divisive narratives of extremist groups. These collaborations have advocated for reconciliation and restorative justice through initiatives like the Restorative Justice Initiative. Also, they have provided training in crucial areas such as

forgiveness, interfaith and intercultural dialogue, nonviolent conflict resolution, social cohesion, early signals of conflict, and conflict tracking and reporting. Interfaith professional trainings and the formation of interfaith and interethnic support groups have further strengthened their efforts, facilitating productive dialogues and cooperation. One particularly significant success has been the psychosocial accompaniment of victims of the conflicts by trained volunteers, offering support, healing, and reintegration (Je'Adayibe, 2018; 42).

Although, humanitarian aid has been studied extensively, the role of religious organisations in responding to the crisis remains understudied. Ozden and Kwabe (2019; 22) concluded that the outcome has been, in some cases positive and in others, negative. They proposed that Non-State Actors were created based on the inability of the legitimate authority to provide adequate security for the life and property of its citizens. Tilleke et al. (2020; 12) concluded that local or national NGOs have formed networks aimed at improving humanitarian assistance in conflicted areas. Yoon et al. (2018; 6) established that the development of infrastructures and the provision of supplies were significantly effective in terms of decreasing the severity of the consequences of the crisis. Less attention has been given to the role of religion in Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria because it is a religious conflict and religious organisations have a unique ability to reach and serve vulnerable populations, including many who are hesitant to access services from secular organisations. Also, studying religious organisations' humanitarian work will add to a better understanding of the relationship between conflict, religion, and humanitarianism. This thesis paper strives to provide a window into this narrative.

1.2 Research Objectives and Questions

The objective of this research paper is to understand the role of Christian organisations in humanitarian aid in the Boko haram insurgency. It focuses to understand the motivation of the CAN in providing humanitarian aid in the Boko Haram insurgency, find out ways in which religious identity is being

used by CAN to navigate aid delivery in humanitarian setting, as well as identify the specific challenges that CAN faces as a religious humanitarian aid organisation in providing humanitarian aid in the Boko Haram insurgency in Borno state.

To this end, the following main question has been developed:

How do faith-based organisations working in areas affected by the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria navigate their humanitarian roles to serve affected communities?

To achieve this, the study sought to provide answers to the following sub questions:

- 1. Why does CAN provide humanitarian aid during the Boko Haram insurgency in Borno state?**
- 2. How CAN uses its religious identity to navigate aid delivery in humanitarian setting?**
- 3. What are the specific challenges CAN faces as a religious organisation when working in Borno state controlled by Boko Haram in Borno state?**

1.3 Contextual Background to the Study

The concern of the study is to explore the role of religious organisations in responding to the humanitarian crisis caused by the Boko Haram insurgency in Northeast Nigeria. Nigeria has the largest population on the African continent, and it is among the top countries in the globe with the largest population of approximately 223 million people it is projected by 2050, the country will have a population of 440 million because of the population momentum (World Bank, 2021).² Among these populations, the majority are Islam and Christians. The northern parts of Nigeria are predominantly

² <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?locations=NG>

Muslim as a result of the centuries of contact with Muslim North Africa through the trans-Saharan trade, while the southern part is occupied by Christians as the majority though, a few Muslim populations. The spread of Islam and Christianity dates to the pre-colonial days, in the 18th century where Islam had already made major trends into the Northern part of the territory which is known today as Nigeria. In the later centuries, the trend continued as the northern area [traditional home to the Hausa ethnic group] came under the control of the Fulani who imposed a pure Islamic social order. By 1830s, the Fulani continued to spread an Islam social, religious, and political order across the northern parts (Uche, 2020; 5).

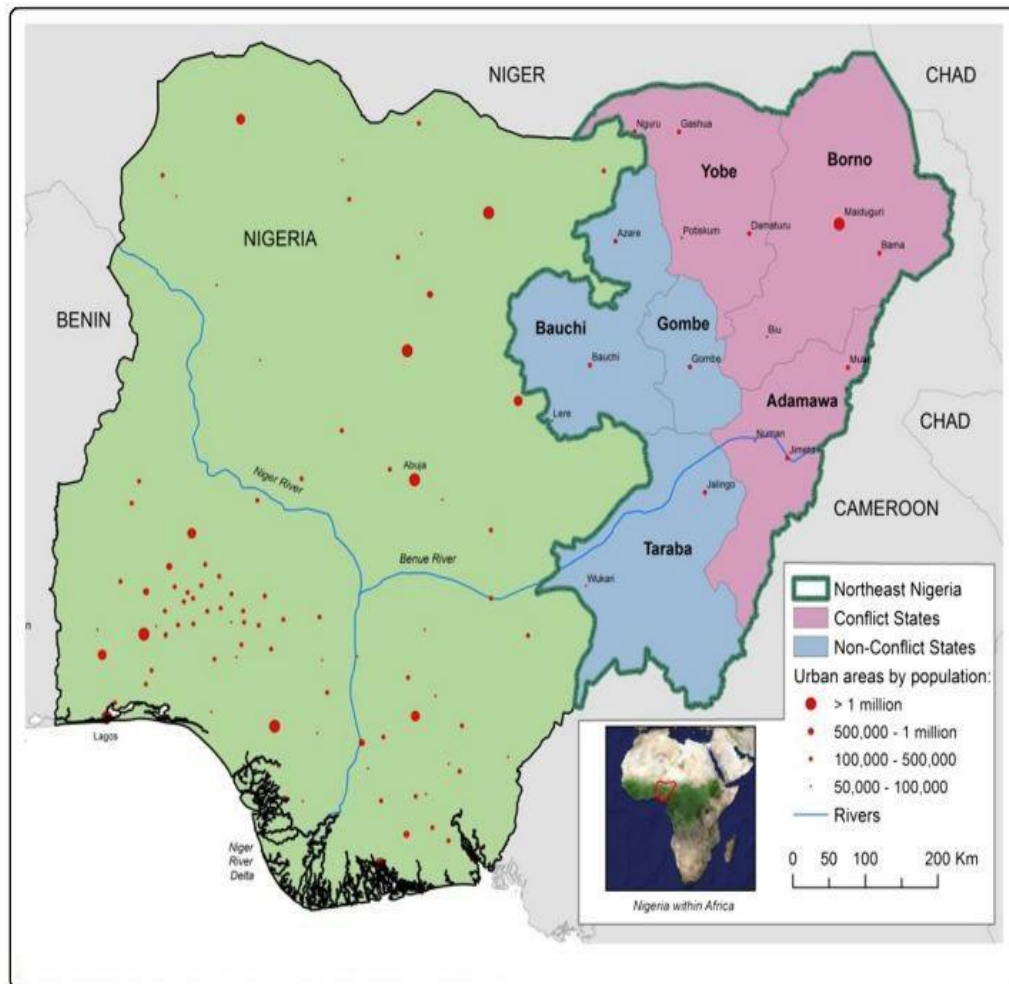


Fig. 2: Map of Nigeria with the conflict (Boko Haram is active) and non-conflict states of the Northeast

In most religiously plural communities, violence often possesses a religious dimension where they occur between the followers of different faith

rivals (Shedrack & Rakodi, 2011; 4). There are three major pre-independence religious violence including the fight between the Igbo non-Muslims and Hausa Muslims in 1945, the Makurdi crisis in 1947, and the crisis between the Tiv non-Muslims and Hausa Muslims (Akpo, 2021; 2). After independence, the country continued to face a series of violence including the Maitatsine in the 1980s and this gave birth to the Nigerian State-Jama'atu Ahlisunnah Lidda'awati wail-Jihad, popularly known as Boko Haram (Pérouse de Montclos, 2014). In 2009, an uprising began in Bauchi and extended to other states in northern Nigeria causing the death of many followers, civilians, and law enforcement officers. In 2010, there was a rise in mass shootings, bombings, and executions by Boko Haram in the Northeast and other parts of Nigeria (MacEachern, 2020; 5). Initially, Boko Haram launched regularly small attacks against religious leaders, the police, and the military in its earlier stages. In 2013, the Nigerian government declared a state of emergency in the northeast states of Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa. According to Boko Haram's rhetoric, its aim is to establish a kingdom of God on earth by ensuring fairness for the poor through strict adherence to Islamic law, known as 'sharia'. They believe that anything that hinders this goal should be eliminated and violence is not seen as a distortion of Islam, instead, it is a justified method to achieve their objective. Boko haram rejects the legitimacy of the Nigerian government and aims to establish its version of an Islamic state governed by Sharia law. Their vision includes the implementation of strict social norms based on their interpretation of religious teachings. Moreover, they view violence as a necessary tool to combat what they perceive as corrupt systems, Western influence, and other obstacles to their vision of an ideal society (Aly-Sergie & Johnson, 2014; 11).

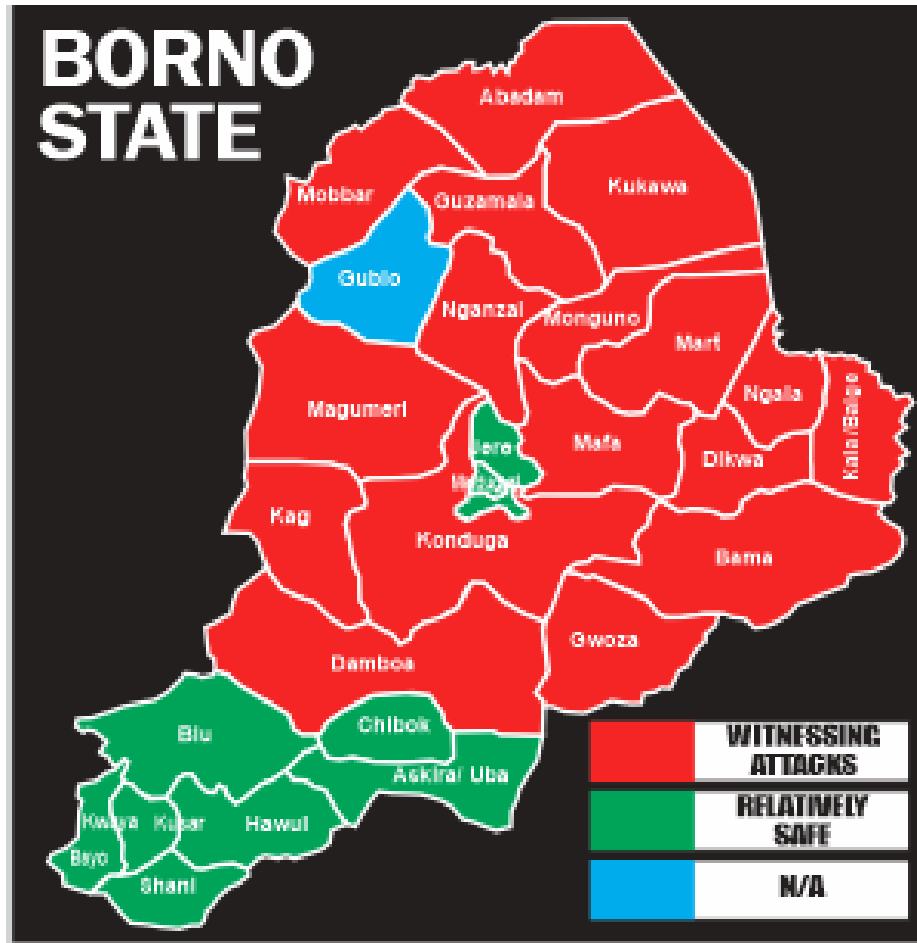


Fig. 3 Boko Haram attacks in Borno State in 2020

One of the most pressing effects of the conflict is the death of over 350,000 people and over 2 million fled their homes (Voice of Africa, 2023; Kunle, 2021; Aljazeera, 2021).³ It has also led to the disruption of economic activities as a result of damage to health and education systems, destruction of assets, resource diversion, and injury to the population. *But what exactly does Boko Haram aim to achieve?* The leadership of Boko Haram has consistently maintained that their objective is to establish a state governed by Sharia law and eradicate Nigeria’s democratic, secular, and perceived un-Islamic political and educational systems. This involves targeting Western

³ Voice of Africa, (2013). ‘Nigerian Police Say 10 Die in Attack by Militants.’ <https://www.voanews.com/a/nigerian-police-say-10-die-in-attack-by-militants-/7052423.html#:~:text=The%20Boko%20Haram%20insurgency%2C%20which,homes%2C%20international%20aid%20groups%20say.>

education due to the mixing of genders and English language emphasis. It seeks to establish an independent Islamic state in Nigeria and align with other Islamic institutions and states, including the Taliban and the Islamic State.

The conflict activities have expanded beyond Nigeria to neighbouring West African countries, including Cameroon, Niger Republic, and Chad – resulting in the increase in non-combatant Nigerian citizens fleeing to seek refuge in other nations increasing the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and as a consequence, many people have been left without shelter, food, and water (Mehari, 2016; 44). This has prompted an influx of activities by both the government and non-government institutions including community-based organisations and religious bodies to take action to bring relief materials to those affected. In the early years of the conflict, non-state actors were slow to acknowledge the crisis severity but today many stakeholders are working through the Nigerian government structures to respond to the insurgency.

However, the involvement of these non-state actors in humanitarian response raises several challenges, for example, while non-state actors have a deeper understanding of local contexts and are able to mobilise resources more quickly, some lack the expertise and resources needed to provide comprehensive assistance over the long term (Jad, 2022; Fisseha, 2016; 5). While religious institutions, such as CAN are recognised for their important work in providing humanitarian aid, the Boko Haram insurgency, driven by a specific interpretation of religious values introduces a complex interplay of differing worldviews. This adds layers of challenge to the humanitarian efforts of faith-based organisations as they navigate not only the practical aspects of aid delivery but also the intricate web of religious tensions and conflicting ideologies (Ilo, 2015; 8; Cox et al., 2014; 23).

1.4 Justification and Relevance

Given that Boko Haram wages a religious conflict, this study shows how religion can be a source of support and conflict simultaneously. Also, the values religious organisations based on influence how they approach development by emphasising a sense of responsibility towards vulnerable populations such as those in conflicted areas. Faith-based organisations are huge actors in humanitarian settings because they give important support during crises such as the Boko Haram insurgency and more so, their ability to mobilise resources and volunteers makes them valuable to emergency relief efforts. Religious organisations such as the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) represent millions of Christians in Nigeria and its humanitarian involvement is looked at as having social, religious, and political implications. The organisation has been actively involved in providing humanitarian support and aid to affected communities in Borno state and their extensive reach and involvement in various aspects of humanitarian assistance make it an even more situation case study for my study. Moreover, CAN's engagement in interfaith initiatives and cooperation with Muslim organisations exemplifies efforts to bridge religious division and promote peaceful coexistence. This aspect is important to the larger discourse on interfaith collaboration in conflict settings. My study is significant to development studies because faith-based organisations possess unique characteristics such as having extensive networks, grassroots presence, and resources and this gives them the ability to reach a large number of marginalised communities and be able to provide them assistance.

1.5 Chapter Outline

This research paper has seven chapters. The first chapter 1 introduces religious organisations in humanitarian aid in Borno State. Chapter 2 highlights the theoretical framework of the study which work to support the analysis in the later chapters. Chapter 3 explains the methodology and methods that the study has adopted. The next chapters (Chapter 4, 5, and 6)

answers the research questions and are used to form the study conclusion in the last Chapter 7.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Framework

2.1 The Basic Human Needs Approach

The basic human needs approach by Johan Galtung states that the fundamental requirements for human well-being extend beyond mere economic indicators like income or GDP. Galtung introduced this concept to indicate the importance of addressing people's essential needs to achieve genuine human development. According to this approach, individuals have a set of basic needs which must be met to lead a fulfilling life, including access to food, clean water, shelter, education, healthcare, and a safe environment. Galtung's approach shows the significance of policies and interventions that prioritise the holistic well-being of individuals and communities. The basic needs approach has been relevant in shifting development from purely economic growth to a more social and human development. The approach indicates that economic indicators alone do not reflect the overall quality of life, policymakers thus design programs which target the root causes of inequalities in society (Galtung, 2004; 1-9).

Basic Assumptions of the Basic Human Needs Theory

The basic human needs approach operates on several key assumptions. It assumes that there is a universal set of fundamental human needs that are essential for a dignified and fulfilling life. He puts these different needs into 4 categories - survival, wellbeing, identity, and freedom. The theory also assumes that these basic needs are related and that neglecting one need affect negatively individual's well-being. In addition, the theory assumes that addressing these basic needs should take outweigh over purely economic measures when assessing human development and progress. It also assumes that policymakers and society have a moral and ethical responsibility to ensure that these basic needs are met for all individuals regardless of their socioeconomic status or location. It states that improving the fulfillment of basic needs contribute to reducing poverty, inequality, and social unrest, ultimately creating more equitable and peaceful societies (Galtung, 2004; 15).

Advocates of the theory agree that whether these needs are described as physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualisation following Maslow's framework, or as the Fundamental Human Needs (FHN) such as subsistence, protection, affection, understanding, creation, identity, leisure, idleness, freedom, and participation (Max-Neef, 1991; 12), the underlying needs of human beings remain consistent. Ramsbotham (2005), nonetheless, acknowledges that cultural and individual variations may exist across different societies and cultures.

Variants of Basic Human Needs Theory (BHNT)

BHNT presents a range of diverse perspectives, each representing viewpoints advocated by various proponents of the theory. One of these perspectives is the hierarchical five-tier pyramid model, originally introduced by Abraham Maslow (1943, 1954). This model organises human needs in a hierarchical structure, with the most fundamental needs situated at the pyramid's base. As previously mentioned, these needs are categorised from the bottom of the pyramid as physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem, and culminating in self-actualisation. McLeod (2018) asserts that this model can be simplified into just two categories, namely deficiency needs and growth needs, thereby offering a more streamlined view of the theory's principles. According to McLeod (2018), the hierarchical pyramid model, as proposed by Maslow, is structured so that the first four needs, starting from the base of the pyramid, are categorised as deficiency needs. These needs stem from deprivation and typically serve as strong motivators when they are unfulfilled. For instance, hunger is a prime example, as the longer one goes without food, the more intense the hunger becomes. These four deficiency needs include physiological, safety, love and belonging, and esteem. In contrast, the topmost need on the pyramid is self-actualisation, regarded as a growth need. Unlike deficiency needs, growth needs do not result from a lack of resources but rather emerge from an intrinsic desire for personal growth and development. It is only when these needs are satisfactorily met that individuals can reach the highest level of self-actualisation. In summary, Maslow's model primarily emphasises subsistence needs, although McLeod

notes that later in Maslow's life, the model evolved to encompass cognitive, aesthetic, and ultimately transcendence needs.

Burton shares a perspective close to that of Maslow. Nevertheless, he stands as a prominent advocate of the human need theory, with a distinct emphasis on social and political aspects. In Burton's view (1997), the failure to address universal human needs, when they remain unmet and overlooked, can lead to the outbreak of violence among various groups, as they seek to assert their fundamental rights and address these unfulfilled needs.

Limitations of Human Needs Theory (BHNT)

Despite the widespread recognition and applicability of BHNT, it is not without its limitations. The primary concern revolves around the challenge of empirically verifying the hierarchy of needs. Max-Neef et al. (1991) assert that because human needs are believed to be inherently limitless, subject to change, varying across cultures and societies, and evolving over time, the fundamental assumptions of BHNT are deemed "inaccurate, since they come from from a conceptual deficiency" (p.16). Kunchala (2017; 6) also points out that the theory's complexity lies in the challenge of determining how fulfilled one level of need must be, particularly in tumultuous circumstances, before progressing to the next level. There exists a general divergence of opinions among theorists regarding the hierarchy of needs. While Maslow maintains that human needs follow a hierarchical structure, Danielsen (2005) highlights that, other theorists like Burton, Rosenberg, and Max-Neef, Elizalde, and Hopenhayn do not subscribe to this view. These five theorists, although in agreement on the universality of human needs, differ in that they show the non-hierarchical and complementary nature of human needs. Danielsen asserts that, "if a human need is merely a matter of individual perception, addressing human needs in conflict situations becomes a complex endeavor" (p.7).

Another limitation of BHNT concerns its insistence on the 'priority' of needs. It raises the question of whether Maslow's assertion that subsistence needs such as food and shelter take precedence over self-esteem, self-

fulfillment, or security is universally applicable. This hierarchical prioritisation of needs may not hold true in conflict situations, as BHNT's insistence that basic needs must be satisfied before addressing other needs lacks empirical basis. This is because individuals' life experiences vary significantly, and factors such as displacement, unemployment, divorce, war, and ill-health can disrupt or alter an individual's progression within the hierarchy. Thus, the notion that lower-level needs must be fully met before higher-level needs can be pursued may not align with the complex realities of human experiences and conflicts.

Kunchala (2017) asserts that the theory's cultural constraints can render it less applicable and valid across a wide range of cultural backgrounds, potentially restricting the pyramid's outcomes to only a few specific cultures or societies and this viewpoint is also supported by Ojo (2018; 34). This is particularly evident in Nigeria where different ethnic groups and fundamental ideologies may drive certain individuals toward engaging in acts of terrorism. It indicates the fact that people's needs can indeed vary significantly across different cultures, individuals, and societies.

Strengths of Human Needs Theory (BHNT)

While BHNT faces criticisms, it remains widely employed theory in various field, particularly in the conflict studies. The decision to adopt this theory for this research is motivated by its significance, as addressing people's needs is an important factor in the promotion of peace and conflict prevention. This approach emphasises the idea that individuals have distinct requisites for their physical, social, psychological, and spiritual well-being. Kunchala (2017) affirms that, "it provides an advantageous summary of human needs, which can also be used in product planning, product positioning, product pricing and also sales channels" (p.14). Applying this model in issues of humanitarianism could also be relevant, especially when looking at the humanitarian crises in Borno State.

In line with the study, Galtung's ideas helped analyse how the Christian Association of Nigeria addresses the needs of the conflict-affected population

and contributes to their well-being. The concept of human security in the study explores how faith-based organisations work to ensure the safety and protection of the affected population. This agrees with Galtung's work that emphasised that meeting human needs for physical, social, psychological, and spiritual well-being is good for improved welfare (Galtung, 2004; 9).

This research used his works to explore how CAN recognise to the humanitarian needs of the conflict-affected population in Borno state and how they respond to meet these needs. In his assumptions, Galtung argued that stakeholders must design policies aimed at improving human life (Galtung, 2004; 17) and this study used this assumption to explore how the Christian Association of Nigeria collaborates with other humanitarian agencies, government and security forces to establish safe spaces, and address the physical, emotional, and social challenges and provide aid during the insurgency effectively. It helped identify how Christian Association of Nigeria as a religious organisation apply the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, and empowerment in its works. This guides on how the faith-based organisation does its work in complex areas affected by conflict. Understanding the perceived needs of Boko Haram – including their identity and religious identity needs is important to examine the potential clashes with the human needs of other groups like civilians in Borno state or other faith-based organisations.

2.2 Related studies on humanitarian situation in Nigeria and other areas affected by conflicts

In this section, I reviewed studies related to conflict-affected areas and how they have impacted on religion and humanitarian crises and in particular, to assess how these studies address the humanitarian situation and whether they engage with the aspect of human needs within an insurgency.

According to a study by Lang (2017) on how the Boko Haram insurgency has affected Christian churches in Cameroon along with their responses to intolerance. He found that Christian churches have suffered a lot due Boko Haram insurgents making them undertaken adaptive measures. Churches

engaged in dialogues with the Muslim community, provided humanitarian aid to refugees, and worked to reduce the potential for interreligious conflicts. While the study mentions that Christian engaged in dialogues with the Muslim community, it does not examine into the impacts of these efforts in Nigeria – creating a gap in context. Also, it does not elaborate clearly how motivations of Christianity in providing humanitarian work.

Imasuen (2015) explored the association between the Boko Haram insurgency and humanitarian crises in North East Nigeria from 2009-2014. Results showed that there was a significant relationship between Boko Haram insurgency and humanitarian crises when variables such as food insecurity, impact on human casualties, and internally displaced persons are held constant. The findings also showed that no significant association when the variables such as loss of livelihood and government response were held constant. The research concluded that the increase in the activities of Boko Haram continued to generate serious humanitarian consequences to the North East region, Nigerian community and neighboring states at large. However, the study adopted a quantitative design which does not bring out the lived experiences of people in affected areas that this study wanted to explore.

Okoli and Iortyer (2014) studied the relationship between terrorism and humanitarian crisis in Nigeria. Specifically, it sought to situate the humanitarian consequences of the terrorism in Nigeria. Findings indicated that terrorism has resulted in grave humanitarian consequences in Nigeria such as population displacement, human casualties/fatalities, livelihood crisis, refugee disaster, public insecurity as well as human rights abuses. This study submitted that terrorism constitutes a huge threat to Nigeria's national security and it called for increased need for a pragmatic solution to it. The study further brings out the consequences of terrorism but does not clearly introduce the humanitarian aid element especially by faith-based institutions. In line with what my study wanted to achieve, Okoli and Iortyer (2014) there is a conceptual and contextual gap.

Studying the history of Boko Haram insurgency is important to my study as it reflects how the conflict has escalated over time, showing its

consequences, and what the impact of humanitarian work. Thus, I thought to review Omobuwanjo (2015) on the origins and nature of Boko haram in his paper titled, "Terrorism and insurgency in Northern Nigeria". His research employed qualitative methods and relied extensively on secondary sources to show the group's impact in Nigeria (which has surpassed previous extremist movements like Maitatsine and the Shiite group). His study found that in 2009, the activities of this group gained prominence due to the need to expand and the presence of foreign support from other Islamic fundamentalist organisations. Their motivations were religious extremism, resentment over member killings, and poverty. Throughout the years, Boko haram has had many attacks and they include bombings at the Nigeria Police Force Headquarters and the UN House in Abuja in 2011, as well as the Christmas day bombing at St Theresa Catholic Church in Madalla near Abuja on December 25, 2011. The federal government, the international community, and other stakeholders tried to stop these attacks through dialogue offers, coercion, negotiation, sanctions, and amnesty, these hostilities persist. Though, Omobuwanjo (2015) did not conceptualise religion and humanitarian aid in his research and this is the aim of this study.

Similarly, another study about the activities of Boko haram in Nigeria was done by Je'Adayibe (2018), who explored the historical responses of the Christian church to Boko Haram attacks and took a case study and lessons for Nigerian church. Je'Adayibe (2018) found that reconciliation and forgiveness were two important factors that could be considered in the process of restoring peace and healing affected communities affected by the conflict. Also, it showed that there have been political and legal strategies and active advocacy in addressing the challenges posed by the insurgency. However, this paper did not study the humanitarian element in their study, which my study was interested in. Je'Adayibe (2018) did not also show how the Nigerian church was acting to help those affected by the conflict in terms of meeting their human needs.

A study on the quest for a permanent resolution of the Boko Haram crisis established that the Boko Haram insurgency resulted in the deaths of many innocent people and widespread destruction of property worth billions of naira through bombings (Olukayode-Akinibi, 2015). The efforts of the Nigerian government counter the activities of the group did not yield positive results leaving the government seemingly unable to control their actions. The operations of Boko Haram were sophisticated and complex in a sense that they raised questions about Nigeria's national security, governance, and overall stability in the country. Olukayode-Akinibi argued that many factors causing this insurgency were due to unemployment, high poverty rates, weak governance, and religious fanaticism. Among the effects of the conflict were the increasing threats to national interests, peace and security, internal displacement of the population, violations of fundamental human rights, and the negative impacts on the consolidation of democratic principles in Nigeria. Olukayode-Akinibi called for the need of poverty reduction, religious tolerance, and political reorientation. He also forwarded collaboration and partnerships between the government, non-governmental organisations, civil society organisations, and individuals as a good remedy for the insurgency. Also, to reduce on the activities of Boko Haram, Nigeria's domestic and foreign policies need to be reevaluated to eliminate domestic terrorism.

Religion is a main focus of this study, thus exploring the study by Hayes (2009) is good to show how religion has contributed to conflict resolution in other countries and whether the principles followed apply to this study. Haynes (2009) studied "conflict resolution and peace-building" and put emphasis on the role of religion in Mozambique, Nigeria and Cambodia. The paper asserted that religion played a dual role in fueling conflict and creating peace show that religious influences are a constructive factor in conflicts. Religious individuals and faith-based organisations as carriers of religious principles assume important roles – not just as sources of conflict but also as agents for resolving conflicts and promoting peace. They offer early warnings of approaching conflicts, engage in diplomatic efforts once conflicts have erupted, and contribute to mediation, advocacy, and reconciliation.

Shimawua et al. (2016) used structural functionalism theory to assess the impact of Boko Haram attacks on Christians in Nigeria and the paper found that in the northern regions of Nigeria, activities of Boko Haram have had a harmful impact on Christian ceremonial worship. There were unwarranted loss of lives and destruction of property belonging to Christian members, as well as damage to their places of worship [churches]. The insurgency resulted in a reduction in the Christian membership, displacement of Christian community members, and a pervasive sense of fear among Christians regarding potential attacks by the group. The consequences also extend to economic challenges like poverty and hunger (p. 238-239). The paper suggested clear separation of the state from religion, the establishment of a commission for religious affairs, job creation for unemployed youth, addressing the specific challenges faced in the North, dialogue, intelligence networks, the application of the law, religious group member education and enlightenment, and prohibiting the use of inflammatory statements. It also recommended fairness by leaders in handling religious conflicts, adherence to the ethics of their religions, the need to combat corruption, and strong political leadership (pg. 240-241).

Using root-cause theoretical approaches, Amadu (2018), conducted a field research on the Boko Haram crisis in Nigeria. He specifically sought to provide an understanding of the political, socioeconomic and social determinants of the conflict. Amadu established that Nigeria's longstanding socioeconomic division, resource mismanagement, political schism, and corruption fueled the crisis. The lack of skilled training or education coupled with its high population has tripled youth unemployment and increased demand for the limited resources of the country. The people in Northern north became resentful against western influence and the government who they blamed for the economic plight leading to the formation of the Boko Haram sect (pg. 2-8). However, this study did not study the element of religion and humanitarianism which is the focus of my study. Mohammed and Hamid (2019) used the Ted theory of relative deprivation using a qualitative research approach and relied more on secondary form of data collection. The finding

revealed that scarcity of essential necessities, high unemployment rate, poverty levels, and inadequate infrastructure were the main challenges that caused the conflict. The increasing frequency of attacks including suicide bombings, abductions, armed robberies, and the use of improvised explosive devices, Nigeria is approaching a state of instability. In such an insecure environment, development is unattainable – this paper advocated for the establishment of good governance, strengthen the military, and eliminate poverty.

Lynch (2010) studied boundaries between the secular and the religious in international affairs using in-depth interviews of activists from nongovernmental organisations working on humanitarianism broadly-conceived in the Middle East, Central and East Africa, and New York. Lynch showed that the "global war on terror" affects how religion and secularism are understood. The rise of radical Islam prompted the global war on terror (GWOT) and the war on terror worsened the emergence of radical Islam. GWOT practices influence the language used by Muslim humanitarian NGO activists seeking support from Western donors. Liberal market economics shape how religious groups define their mission and choose their priorities. Both religious and non-religious NGOs use globalised "NGO-speak" when stating their goals. The focus on economic efficiency pushed by donors in health-related humanitarian work affects which issues religious NGOs address. This study shows the connection of religious humanitarianism and the global politics of secularism, does it so generously and does not bring out the motivations of faith-based institutions in humanitarian works.

Chininis (2009) examined faith-based nongovernmental organisations and their work in peacemaking and development. The research asserts that religions, particularly those of the Abrahamic faiths have a long history of contributing to peacemaking and they provide a strong foundation for the growth of NGOs. Christianity, Judaism, and Islam are home to some of the most influential and successful NGOs actively engaged in humanitarian aid and peacemaking. This paper argues that faith-based NGOs are contributing

to humanitarian works through grassroots initiatives – creating sustainable peace and development efforts. However, she did not study the association of faith-based organisations and humanitarian aid.

Abashe (2017) studied the effects of religious conflicts in Jos Plateau State and their implications for the Socio-Economic and Political development of Nigeria. Data was gathered from primary sources, including oral interviews and self-administered questionnaires, focusing on the research topic. Interviewees in Plateau State were randomly selected to participate in the study and for the case of secondary sources, library materials and archives were consulted to supplement the data. The findings indicated that the root causes of the ethno-religious conflicts are the implementation of Sharia law, intolerance, indigene/settler tensions, high unemployment rates, poverty, inadequate education, and governance issues. The conflicts led to many losses in terms of human lives and material resources contributing to the nation's social and economic development. The conflicts affected the country's political system and eroded democratic values and norms.

Damaris (2011), did an ethnographic research in four faith-based organisations in Nakuru and Nairobi, as well as among internally displaced persons residing in the Mai Mahiu IDP camp. They focused on the roles that faith, religious convictions, and practices have in displacement. It was established that IDPs do not solely depend on externally provided support [such as that offered by the churches in Nakuru and Nairobi] but they draw upon their own individual and collective faith and religious beliefs to confront the accumulated challenges brought about by displacement. Nkwachukwu (2011) analysed the role of Christian and Muslim organisations to people affected by conflicts in Nigeria. He established that while majority of faith-based organisations in Jos employ a faith-centered approach to providing aid, concentrating their relief initiatives on assisting their respective faith communities.

Chapter 3

Methodology and Methods

The methodology of this study covers the research design, sources of data and methods of data collection. Others include sampling, method of data analysis and method of data presentation.

3.1 Research paradigm

This study was guided by interpretivism research philosophy. Interpretivism refers to the approaches which emphasise the meaningful nature of people's character and participation in both social and cultural life (Saunders et al., 2019; 3). It has its roots in the philosophical traditions of German sociologist Max Weber. Interpretivist approach was adopted for this study because it is based on naturalistic approach of data collection such as interviews. In this type of studies, meanings emerge usually towards the end of the research process. Interpretivist scholars state that, the positivist criteria of objectivity, replicability and falsification are inapplicable to social analysis, because its subject of social reality, differs fundamentally from the natural world. Interpretivist scholars believe that the most crucial feature of social facts and interpretation is that they can never be said to be completely stable. Of course, there is a fair degree of similarity in how humans interpret their external environment however this similarity never becomes absolute sameness. This philosophy was used in the study as it was deemed suitable for interpreting how faith-based organisations contribute to humanitarian aid in conflict-areas in Borno state.

3.2 Study Design

The study adopted a single case study design because it allows for an in-depth exploration of a singular, complex case offering a wide understanding of the subject matter. According to Yin (2018, 3), a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates an existing phenomenon within its real-life situation, particularly when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are

not clearly evident and in which multiple sources of evidence are used. It enables the examination of relationships that align with the research objectives to discover complex phenomena. However, case studies are critiqued for their limited generalisability. The research employed an open discussion with the participants to strive for transparency in reporting findings to promote the potential transferability of results to similar contexts.

The research adopted the qualitative design suitable for the collection of qualitative data from a wide range of sources (primary and secondary) to complement one another. The qualitative method is well suited for describing, contextualising, interpreting, and achieving a deep understanding of the subject of study (Hammarberg et al., 2016; 5). However, this method was susceptible to the dangers of personal bias from the experiences and opinions of researcher and the results might not be quite generalisable due to its limitations. Nonetheless, the research maximised the credibility of data collected and produced maximal information covering different areas of the research problem. Therefore, the research design was economical, effective, efficient, flexible and appropriate for the study.

The diagrammatic illustration of the research design is in Figure 4 below.

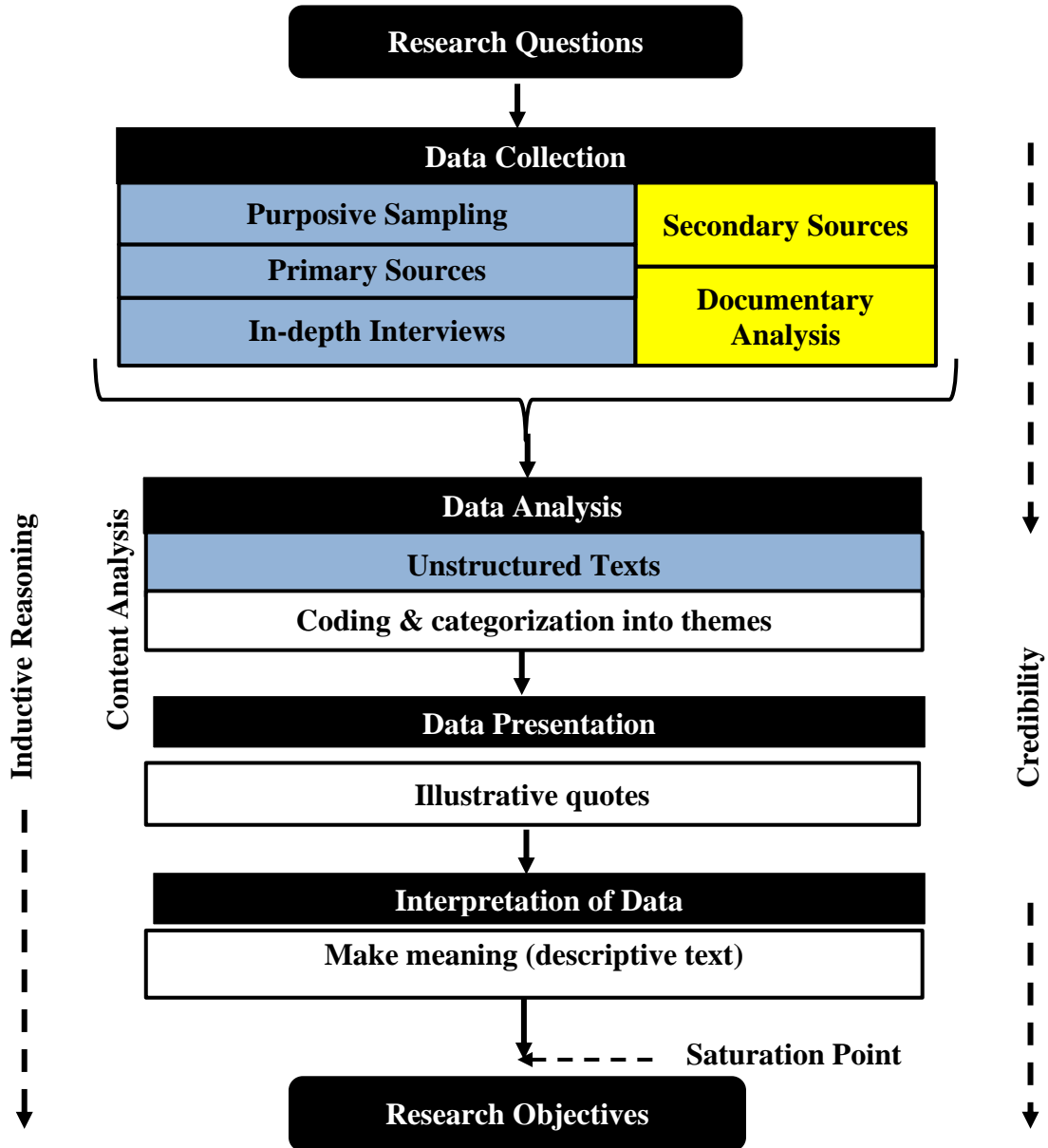


Figure 4: Illustrative Diagram of the Research Methodology

Source: Researcher’s Construction

3.3 Participants’ selection

Participants were selected from the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) staff involved in humanitarian action, local community leaders, and religious leaders. They were purposively chosen from the CAN office, local community leader’s offices, churches, and mosques in Borno State. The

primary sampling method used was purposive sampling. Staff members of the Christian Association of Nigeria were selected because of the interest of the study in capturing their roles, responsibilities, and decision-making processes related to humanitarian aid. Local community leaders understood the impact of the organisation's aid on conflict-affected populations while religious leaders played an important role in shaping and guiding the activities of religious organisation thus providing insights into the motivations, strategies, and impact of CAN's aid. Potential informants were identified through desk research and consultations with key stakeholders in the field. Once identified, they were contacted to obtain their willingness to participate in the study. Before their participation, they were informed of the purpose of the study, research questions, and the voluntary nature of their involvement. Telephone interviews were done and lasted about 25-40 minutes.

3.4 Method of data collection

The data collected for the study were primarily non-numerical consisting of texts and written or spoken words. The study employed in-depth interviews to gather data from six key informants from the Christian Association of Nigeria in Borno state. The aim was to gain a deeper understanding of the organisation's motivations for providing humanitarian aid, how their religious identity is used to navigate aid delivery and the specific challenges they faced. The interview guide consisted of questions that inquired about the factors that drove CAN to become involved in humanitarian aid, the values informing the organisation's aid provision, and the role of religious values in their decision-making process. The study sought to understand whether there were specific security risks related to providing aid in conflict-affected areas and whether there were government regulations posing a threat to CAN.

Table 1: Study Participants

<i>No.</i>	<i>Codes</i>	<i>Category of</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Date on interview</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>CO1</i>	<i>CAN Officer</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>26th August, 2023</i>
<i>2</i>	<i>CO2</i>	<i>CAN Officer</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>2nd September, 2023</i>
<i>3</i>	<i>CO3</i>	<i>CAN Officer</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>2nd September, 2023</i>
<i>4</i>	<i>CO4</i>	<i>CAN Officer</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>3rd September, 2023</i>
<i>5</i>	<i>CO5</i>	<i>CAN Officer</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>4th September, 2023</i>
<i>6</i>	<i>CO6</i>	<i>CAN Officer</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>4th September, 2023</i>

3.4 Data Analysis

The analysis of qualitative data involved several steps including transcription, coding, and theme development (Braun & Clarke, 2019; 8). Initially, the interviews were transcribed verbatim, and the transcripts were meticulously checked for accuracy and completeness. Subsequently, the data was organised and coded into meaningful units which entailed identifying patterns, concepts, and themes within the data. The major themes regarding the motivations of faith-based organisations included brotherhood and need to address discrimination based on religious identity. For the second research question, the primary themes include religious sentiment and unity, leadership structure, strategic partnerships, and inclusive approach with religious identity. Concerning specific challenges – the third research question, the major themes revolved around security challenges, discrimination, limited government support, and Christians are few. These themes were integrated into the report in a more descriptive manner accompanied with verbatim responses quoted to provide additional context and depth.

3.5 Scope and Limitation of Research, and possible practical problems

My study was conducted in Borno state in Northeast Nigeria, where the dominant languages spoken were Hausa, with a few individuals speaking Kanuri and Fulfulde. I faced the challenge of a language barrier as the area

featured several languages I did not understand. To address this, I enlisted two research assistants fluent in the local languages to facilitate data collection as translators. I also anticipated the possibility that many people had experienced significant trauma due to the conflict and could be reluctant to participate given the potential for it to trigger distressing memories. In another way, my study employed a qualitative approach with non-random sampling of participants making it challenging to generalise findings to all conflict-affected settings. Therefore, I devised caution when applying the results to other areas affected by conflict. I also encountered rejections from some potential participants but mitigated this by seeking assistance from local authorities to help explain the relevance of my research – thereby minimising rejection rates and facilitating my study.

3.6 Ethical Choice, Political, and personal involvement

I chose to investigate the role of religious organisations in humanitarian aid within Boko Haram insurgency due to my upbringing in a conflict-affected country where I had personally witnessed the devastating consequences of violence and displacement. In those challenging times, religious organisations had emerged as important pillars of support, offering solace and assistance to the communities afflicted by the conflict. Their unwavering dedication and selfless acts of compassion left an indelible mark on me serving as an enduring source of inspiration for this study. My motivation was to gain knowledge into how these faith-based organisations (given their religious identity) fostered hope amidst the turmoil and to contribute to the existing body of research on a similar topic.

Throughout my study, I adhered to the ethical principles of autonomy and beneficence, justice, respect for persons, and non-maleficence. To ensure the protection of participants' rights and privacy, I had sought permission from Borno state and obtained informed consent from individuals at both the local community and organisational levels. The informed consent process offered flexibility allowing participants to choose between oral or written consent based on their preferences. Also, for those who provided oral consent

[telephone], I recorded the conversations, securing the audio tapes of interviews, with access restricted solely to me to uphold confidentiality. The anonymisation of participants by not revealing their details and not informing them that their words are incorporated in this research paper or whether they agree to this representation or not. I recognised the difficult nature of representing other people's perspectives and thus decided to incorporate many direct quotes which I hope that their actual views are clearly understood.

3.6 Potential Bias

Potential biases in participant responses were proactively addressed during the research process. Using in-depth interview as the data collection method was carefully structured to encourage participants to provide open and honest responses. The approach created a safe and non-judgmental environment for sharing perspectives and experiences. As a researcher, I adopted a triangulation strategy, collecting information from multiple sources (primary and secondary) which allowed for cross-verification of findings and helped identify any inconsistencies that could have arisen due to bias. Acknowledging the possibility of biases and implementing these strategies guided the study to understand the reasons behind them and make sense of the data in a balanced manner, thus the credibility and objectivity of the research results was ensured. Being aware of my own assumptions, I actively practiced reflexivity to minimise personal biases that could influence participant selection, questioning, or the interpretation of responses. The absence of visual cues in interviews could affect participant selection, I ensured to select different participants to ensure a wider understanding of the research topic. The lack of my physical presence during interviews was addressed by creating an open environment to encourage participants share perspectives openly. I had the impression that the interview conversations were well-appreciated by the participants who seemed to discuss with me candidly about their perceptions. The kind attitude as some of the participants

expressed, “You are welcome,” “Same to you”, made it easier for me to connect with the people and built some sort of relationship with them.

Chapter 4

Motivations of CAN in providing humanitarian aid in Borno state

Faith-based organisations are key actors in development and humanitarian aid – (Marie, 2019: 19).

This chapter relies on primary data generated from the fieldwork and analyses the motivation of faith-based organisations in providing humanitarian aid in the Boko Haram insurgency. The researcher asked participants to indicate the motivations of the Christian Association of Nigeria in providing humanitarian aid in the Boko Haram insurgency. The theme motivation of CAN in providing humanitarian aid included two sub-themes: Brotherhood and addressing discrimination.

Brotherhood

Biblical teachings that call for solidarity with those who are suffering. This guiding principle compels CAN to respond to the cries of those in distress, regardless of their religious affiliation. It shows their belief that when one member of the community suffers, they should all come together to provide support and relief. This was explained by three CAN officers, where one participant expressed that, “Yes, brotherhood – the bible says that when your brother is suffering/crying, you mourn together with him.”⁴ Another participant involved in humanitarian work at CAN said:

“Yes, Isiah 25:4, For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall. [...] he also highlighted that the bible says that we should be a strength to those that are weak/needy.” [CAN Officer (CO4), male, interview held on 4th September, 2023]

⁴ CAN Officer (CO2), male, interview held on 2nd September, 2023

The biblical teachings that say solidarity with those who are suffering. This motivation reflects the organisation's commitment to alleviating the suffering of their fellow community members, regardless of religious affiliation. This is consistent with Ferris (2005: 317-322) who established that faith-based organisations are pushed to help those in need. Ferris (pg. 321) noted that they provide immediate relief, including food, clean water, shelter, and medical care, to individuals and communities in acute distress. This practical expression of compassion aligns with their belief that when one member of the community suffers, they should all come together to provide support and relief. The participants view religious identity as a comprehensive meaning-making system and the scriptures, such as Mathew 25:31-35 and Isaiah 25:4 shape their perception of self and others. These narratives not only guide their actions but also concur with the Basic Human Needs theory where identity is recognised as a core human need. The religious identity within CAN enables it express its highest potential through meaningful actions guided by their faith.

Participant, *CO1* cites Mathew 25: 31-35 to show the divine mandate of helping those in need.⁵ Mathew chapter 25 gives a scenario where compassion and assistance by CAN to those who are hungry, thirst and strangers as fulfilment of what CAN perceives as a divine obligation embedded in their faith. This is also confirmed in the scriptures to which they believe. Isaiah 25:4 emphasises the duty to be a strength to the poor, needy, and those in distress. Thus, they serve as a profound source of motivation for CAN's humanitarian efforts. Faith-based organisations interpret these passages as a divine mandate to provide support to the weak and needy, aligning their actions with their Christian faith. The motivation reinforces their commitment

⁵ "...The work of CAN is motivated by the scriptures for example, Mathew 25:31- 35. 31 "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the [a]holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. 32 All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. 33 And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in..." [CAN Officer (CO1), female, interview held on 26th August, 2023]

to alleviating suffering and offering refuge to those affected by the Boko Haram insurgency. The humanitarian efforts of the CAN are deeply rooted in these religious teachings, guiding their actions and principles. Matthew 25 cited by participant *CO1* is a guiding principle that forces CAN to fulfill its religious duty by responding to the needs of those who are hungry, thirsty, and strangers. Thus, divine mandate operates as a powerful motivator influencing actions of faith-based organisations and indicates the interplay of their faith-driven identity with their humanitarian endeavors.

Also, Abubakar (2021, pg. 5) confirms that religious establishments and people draw their motivation from religious norms and values. All religions have values, standards, culture, and attributes that ensure the prosperity of the individual and humankind by and large. The motivation of CAN is not limited to immediate relief but extends to addressing the needs of affected communities (Clarke and Ware, 2015; 14). Within CAN, the recognition of religious norms and values shows that the actions of the organisation is deeply rooted in a belief system that promotes compassion, solidarity, and a sense of responsibility toward those in need. This integration of religious norms and values by CAN shows its commitment to humanitarian efforts – connecting faith-based identity and alleviating the suffering of others.

Clarke and Ware further noted that FBOs are motivated by their religious beliefs and faith (pg.16). The Christian Association of Association provides a wide range of services and support beyond immediate relief. They aim to provide food, clean water, shelter, and medical care, as well as psychosocial support and counseling for those traumatised by the conflict. This response corresponds with the teachings of the Bible which indicate the duty to care for all aspects of human well-being. The organisation is motivated to address the varying needs of affected communities from their commitment to religious teachings and the desire to fulfill the religious teachings through their humanitarian work. Internally, CAN's actions indicates that a double fulfillment of needs is observed. Their commitment to these biblical teachings not only establishes a strong sense of belonging but also aligns with the Basic Human Needs theory – that emphasises identity as a core human need. On the

other hand, externally, CAN extends its commitment by responding to the distress of those affected by the Boko Haram insurgency. This external fulfillment reflects the organisation's dedication to addressing the needs of vulnerable populations. The double fulfillment within CAN, both internal and external thus, indicates that their religious identity not only satisfies their own needs but also extends to the fulfillment of others' needs in the broader community.

The religious teachings share concepts that remind adherents of the importance of sharing and treating others with kindness. For example, the Hebrew Scriptures show the central theme of justice for the poor, marginalised, and alien (Ferris, 2005: 313). Christianity advocates for loving one's neighbors, as seen in Matthew 25: 35-40, while Islam promotes the idea of maintaining positive relationships with all of humankind, referred to as *hablumminannas*. In addition, Islam introduces the concept of *Zakat*, aimed at providing assistance to others. These teachings offer various perspectives on humanity, influencing adherents to consider how they should interact with others and the importance of sharing (Latief & Mutaqin, 2015: 24–25).

Need to address discrimination

Three (3) participants [CO3, CO2, and CO5) pointed out the need of addressing discrimination is an important motivation for the Christian Association of Nigeria's humanitarian work. The organisation ensures that all communities especially Christians receive equitable access to government resources and support. It reflects their dedication to rectifying disparities in assistance that have arisen due to religious discrimination. This was supported by one of the participants from CAN officers who emphasised that:

“...The government in this place are full of discrimination in terms of religion and they only take care of their own people [Muslim] abandoning the Christians. So, CAN comes to ensure that Christians in the affected are also cared for...” [CAN Officer (CO3), male, interview held on 2nd September, 2023]

Galtung's theory suggests that individuals and communities have a fundamental need for recognition of their identity, and any form of discrimination undermines this need. Thus, by actively working against discrimination, CAN is addressing a core aspect of the basic human need for identity and recognition. Also, CAN is committed to rectify disparities in government assistance caused by religious discrimination. Galtung's theory suggests that justice is a basic human need, and efforts to promote fairness and equal treatment are integral to fulfilling this need. CAN's advocacy for fairness and equal representation aligns with the pursuit of justice, aiming to ensure that all affected communities, irrespective of religious affiliation, receive equitable access to resources and services.

Another officer from CAN expressed:

"...We are there as an expression of love to the affected community. The Bible says, [...] When I was hungry, you gave me food; [...] when I was shelter-less, you gave me shelter." **[CAN Officer (CO3), male, interview held on 2nd September, 2023]**

CAN uses its network to stop the local government from discriminating nationals because of their ethnicity. CAN is motivated to rectify these disparities in government assistance and advocate for equal treatment of all affected communities. Also, CAN actively advocates for fairness and equal representation in Borno state. The organisation works tirelessly to ensure that government resources are extended to all irrespective of religious affiliation. The CAN efforts include engaging with government agencies, writing memos, and working directly with officials to bring about equitable access to resources and services. Galtung suggests that security is not only physical but also encompasses psychological and social dimensions.

One participant indicated that:

"CAN is not just an organisation that is formed by a few, it is an organisation that comprises of so many organs of Nigeria and the Christians are also in the government ministries." **[CAN Officer (CO5), female, interview held on 4th September, 2023]**

Participants indicated CAN advocates a shared needs motive which allows them create an understanding among stakeholders with different

religious or political opinions. The organisation is able to collaborate with government agencies and officials where both parties identify shared goals related to promoting fairness. In one sense, CAN positions its self as an inclusive advocate for the entire affected community regardless of the religious affiliations. This agrees with Ferris (2005; pg. 15) that FBOs actively challenge discriminatory practices and policies, seeking justice for all despite most political positions consisting of Muslims. CAN's extensive network enables them to advocate well for the needs of affected communities in Borno state. The organisation uses its influence within government ministries to champion the cause of those affected by the Boko Haram insurgency (Galtung, 2004). According to Galtung, advocating for fairness and equal representation, CAN contributes to building a more harmonious and inclusive society in Borno state. The survival and wellbeing of individuals and communities especially in conflict-affected areas is important as stated in the BHN theory and CAN's commitment to rectifying disparities in government assistance due to religious belonging aligns with the survival element identified in the theory. Another issue that emerged is the identity needs where discrimination is seen as undermining the fundamental need for recognition of identity (Galtung, 2004). CAN as a faith-based organisation works actively against discrimination through advocacy efforts. The organisation addresses identity needs not only by opposing discriminatory practices but also through working towards establishing an inclusive societal framework.

Chapter 5

How religious identity is being used by CAN to navigate aid delivery in humanitarian setting

The chapter is presented based on data obtained from participants in the field. It analyses how CAN uses its religious identity to navigate aid delivery in humanitarian setting. Four themes were obtained from the field: religious sentiment and unity, leadership structure, strategic partnerships, and inclusive approach with religious identity.

Religious sentiment and unity

CAN has been able to perform its humanitarian work due to the strong religious unity and sentiment within the organisation. UN (2018) established that majority of FBOs have strongly beliefs and these enable them to provide good work in humanitarian action (pg. 6). One participant indicated that,

"The religious sentiment and the desire to stand in the gap for the affected brethren in the community have united us. We recognise the need to come together as Christians to address the challenges posed by the conflict."⁶

CAN is driven by a theory of fighting for their own kingdom, emphasising the importance of unity among Christians in addressing the needs of the conflict-affected population. This shared religious sentiment provides the sense of purpose that propels CAN's actions. The presence of religious unity and sentiment provides CAN with a strong motivational force. Members are driven by their shared faith and a deep sense of responsibility to support fellow Christians and the larger community. This unity strengthens CAN's commitment to addressing the needs of the conflict-affected population. This agrees with UN (2018, pg. 6) that reliance on religious resentments and unity enables organisations especially FBOs to be able to reach out to those suffering without discrimination. CAN creates unity

⁶ CAN Officer (CO6), male, interview held on 4th September, 2023

through effective internal communication and engages in religious ceremonies such as collective prayers that strengthen the sense of community belongingness. CAN navigates interactions with opposing groups by creating an inclusive environment and it actively engages in promoting diversity of thought. As one participant put it, “during internal meetings, we have open discussions on religious teachings that inform humanitarian actions.”⁷ On the other hand, when conflicting perspectives arise, the organisation employs several applies strategies such as dialogues or mediation. A participant expressed this views that, “Shared religious identity should not be a source of division, but a unifying force.”⁸ This is so because CAN values its religious identity and avoids unnecessary confrontations. Through diversity of thought, CAN uses inclusive language that respects different opinions with the shared religious identity.

FBOs affiliated with specific religious groups share a common purpose in engaging in humanitarian activities. Their involvement spans across various sectors of human life, serving as a response to societal humanitarian challenges. The primary goal of humanitarian workers within FBOs is to save lives and alleviate suffering with a commitment to upholding humanitarian values (Keishin, 2003). FBOs strategically integrate their religious principles into humanitarian action showing their unique strength in translating religious values into tangible assistance. This transformative ability is a distinct advantage for FBOs in practical situations lobbying support from individuals who empathise with their mission, especially those sharing the same religious identity. Commonly observed is the tendency of society to donate to organisations with similar identities. Consequently, FBOs enjoy an advantage over secular humanitarian groups (Minear & Smith, 2007: 36; Latief & Mutaqin, 2015). The alignment of FBOs with humanitarian values in their religious teachings positions them to effectively use available opportunities.

⁷ Telephone interview, CAN Officer (CO5), male, interview held on 2nd September, 2023

⁸ Telephone interview, CAN Officer (CO3), male, interview held on 2nd September, 2023

Leadership structure of CAN

A well-structured leadership ensures equal benefits for all blocs within the organisation. The leadership structure of the Christian Association of Nigeria is emerged as a vital condition contributing to its effectiveness. This was explained by two CAN officers [CO1 and CO5] as below. Participant CO1 expressed her views that, "The structure of CAN is great and wonderful. Every block participates in the leadership, making it very difficult for discrimination to come in [...]. This structure has played a significant role in our effectiveness."

Another participant [CO5] stated:

"We ensure that every block and domination benefits from the CAN's activities – thereby creating unity and collective strength." [CAN Officer (CO5), female, interview held on 4th September, 2023]

The structure of CAN is characterised by its inclusivity, ensuring that every block actively participates in leadership roles. The five blocs include; the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria, the Christian Council of Nigeria, Organisation of African Instituted Churches, Fellowship of Churches of Christ in Nigeria/ the Evangelical Church Winning All, and the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (See Appendix D). The participatory approach, as expressed by participant CO1 makes it challenging for discrimination to take root within the organisation. The leadership structure is lauded as "great and wonderful," underlining its positive impact on the effectiveness of CAN's humanitarian activities. Participant CO5 further expresses that the commitment to ensuring that every block benefits from CAN's activities creates unity and collective strength. The effectiveness of CAN lies in its hierarchical organisation that ensures that benefits from CAN's activities are distributed equally among the blocks leaving little room for discrimination or internal divisions. This approach aligns with the principles of impartiality, a crucial aspect of addressing the needs of a conflict-affected population (Fisseha, 2016).

The decentralised nature of the leadership of CAN with blocs shows its commitment to grassroots engagement. This mirrors religious principles that emphasise community-based decision making and understanding unique needs of people. Can has been able to tailor responses to specific challenges faced by communities ensuring more targeted assistance. Also, the leadership structure creates inclusivity extending it to humanitarian aid initiatives where CAN ensures that the voices of various people are heard and considered in the planning and execution of the relief efforts. As such, the organisation is able to prevent discrimination and also strengthen its sense of collective responsibility among Christians especially those affected by Boko Haram. Furthermore, one participant was of the view that, “the leadership of CAN enables each level of hierarchy take ownership of specific aspects of aid delivery.”⁹ In this sense, the structural clarity enables CAN respond to quickly to emerging needs, improve coordination and maximise the impact of their humanitarian interventions. Having different blocs ensures that leaders work collaboratively to ensure that aid efforts are guided by Christian values and principles – this shows a sense of unity among CAN members adding to a collective commitment to addressing the needs of people affected by conflicts in a way that is consistent with their religious identity.

Strategic partnerships

CAN partners with non-governmental organisations and larger religious denominations both within Nigeria and abroad. These partnerships enable CAN to access resources such as relief materials and financial support which strengthen its capacity to address the needs of the conflict-affected population. In addition, collaborative efforts with external organisations amplify the CAN’s impact on the ground.

In an interview, the Can officer highlighted that:

"CAN partners with NGOs and bigger denominations in Nigeria and abroad. These partnerships provide us with resources and support that make us stronger in our humanitarian work." [CAN Officer (CO4), female, interview held on 3rd September, 2023]

⁹ CAN Officer (CO5), female, interview held on 4th September, 2023

Strategic partnerships extend the Christian Association of Nigeria's reach and resources. Thus, collaborating with external organisations amplifies their impact on the ground and this approach allows the CAN to access relief materials, financial support, and other resources crucial for addressing the needs of the conflict-affected population effectively. From Galtung's needs of need for policymakers and society to ensure that the needs are met by all, needs theory needs to be equally applied to humanitarian organisation in conflict setting, not only for people- they are part of the conflict eco system- they also have needs- based on their own convictions, world views and so on.

Inclusive approach with religious identity

Participants [CO2, CO1, and CO5] said that the organisation uses an inclusive approach with the use of religious identity. The Christian Association of Nigeria's approach of inclusivity where they do not discriminate based on religious identity, emerged as a key condition for their effectiveness in addressing the needs of the affected communities in Borno state. This approach is particularly important given the history of the Boko Haram insurgency, which initially targeted Christians. In addition, the Christian Association of Nigeria actively carries everyone in the community along irrespective of their religious background.

This was supported by views from three CAN officers.

"...extending love and support to non-Christians, CAN creates a sense of belonging and unity among all community members." [CAN Officer (CO1), female, interview held on 26th August, 2023]

In another CAN official said:

"We do not discriminate based on religion when we go to the community [...]. When Boko Haram started, they were killing Christians, but when Christians showed love to non-Christians, it created a sense of belonging among all victims." [CAN Officer (CO5), female, interview held on 4th September, 2023]

Another one said:

"...When we go the community, we do not discriminate that you are a Muslim or a Christian or any other religion, so carry everybody along – you know when the Boko Haram started, they were killing the Christians a lot – in fact they were pointing at Christian houses to kill

them but when God answered the Christian's prayers – they generalised to everybody now (all are victims) [...]. So when Christians were going out and showing the love to non-Christians created a sense of belonging.” [CAN Officer (CO5), male, interview held on 4th September, 2023]

The humanitarian efforts of CAN, demonstrates the commitment to address pressing issues in Africa, potentially reshaping the narratives about the role of Christianity in the development of the continent. This response reflects the awareness of the historical baggage associated with missionary activities and colonial legacies. Boko Haram opposes modern traditions and development, thus the commitment of CAN on non-discrimination is seen as a strategic counter-narrative. When CAN promotes inclusivity and extension of support regardless of the religious background, CAN positions itself as an advocate for values that transcend religious boundaries. As such CAN is able to not only address the immediate humanitarian needs of the conflict-affected populations in Borno but also counter the narratives associated with the negative historical objectives to missionary work linked to colonialism. As participant, CO2 put it, “We present a positive and inclusive image that stands in contrasts to divisive ideologies propagated by groups like Boko Haram.”¹⁰ In these activities CAN uses key expressions such as “inclusive approach,” “non-discrimination,” “unity among all community members,” and “extending love and support to non-Christians.” These reflect that CAN’s work goes beyond religious affiliations and seeks to create a unified front aimed at addressing the needs of the conflict-affected populations.

¹⁰ Interview, CAN Officer (CO2), male, interview held on 2nd September, 2023

Chapter 6

Specific challenges that CAN faces in providing humanitarian aid

In the face of Boko Haram insurgency in North east Nigeria, faith-based organisations such as the Christian Association of Nigeria has faced a number of specific challenges as a religious humanitarian organisation in providing aid to the conflicted in Borno state. Based on primary data, these specific challenges are analysed in this chapter.

The theme ‘specific challenges that CAN faces in providing humanitarian aid’ included four sub themes such as security challenges, discrimination from the government, limited government support, and Christians are few in Borno state.

Security Challenges

One of the themes that emerged is security-related issues. Security threats make it challenging to operate freely in conflict-affected areas. This was confirmed by two CAN officers (CO1 and CO6) as below. During an interview, one participant expressed that, "Before you get in there, you are also a target, there are some places you cannot just go easily unless if you are a Muslim [...]. Though the fight escalated whether Christian or non-Christian, Christians are more targeted, and that is why when we are going out, we go with military personnel."¹¹ Security challenges hinder the work of CAN in providing humanitarian assistance to the people in Borno state. Participants indicated that the risk of being targeted in conflict zones hinder the organisation’s ability to provide humanitarian aid effectively. In addition, the presence of military personnel is essential to ensure the safety of CAN workers and the communities they serve. These challenges are all primarily related to the ongoing threat of violence by extremist groups of Boko Haram. Participants indicated that before entering these areas, humanitarian workers are at risk, particularly if they are not Muslims – as the area is occupied by

¹¹ CAN Officer (CO1), female, interview held on 26th August, 2023

Muslims. This indicates the severity of the security situation and the specific targeting of Christians. As one participant stated,

“We are forced to operate [cooperate] with military personnels to accompany our humanitarian teams in most ‘no go’ places where fighting is tense.” [CAN Officer (CO6), male, interview held on 4th September, 2023]

This not only adds logistical complexities but also increases the cost of humanitarian operations (Browne, 2014). The need for military protection shows the gravity of the security risks faced by workers of CAN and the vulnerability of the communities they serve in Borno state. Galtung (2004) argues that survival needs include not just physical security but also psychological and social dimensions. The statement, "Before you get in there, you are also a target,"¹² shows the tangible physical threat that humanitarian workers, especially non-Muslims, face in Borno state and this sides with the survival element identified by Galtung calling for the need for protection and safety as a fundamental human requirement. Also, the presence of military personnel as an essential accompaniment to humanitarian teams reflects the psychological and social aspects of survival needs. It suggests that beyond physical security, the workers and communities they serve require a sense of psychological safety, knowing that measures are in place to address the specific targeting of Christians. The collaboration with military personnel not only adds logistical complexities but also shows that there are security measures to fulfil the survival needs of both the workers and the communities.

Discrimination from the government

The limited support from government agencies or authorities hampered CAN’s ability to scale up its humanitarian operations. This was explained by In one of the interviews [CAN official], she was quoted saying:

"It i's a reality we have had to face—most of the government officials are Muslims, and as being a Christian organisation, it sometimes feels like we are operating in an environment where our faith-based identity puts us at a disadvantage [...]. This discrimination affects our access to resources and even the level of

¹² Refer to a quote by CAN Officer (CO1), female, interview held on 26th August, 2023

support we receive." [CAN Officer (CO1), female, interview held on 26th August, 2023]

The perception that the religious identity of CAN is a barrier to being fully recognised and legitimised by government authorities. This goes beyond material resources and touches upon the fundamental acknowledgment of CAN's role in the humanitarian landscape. Also, government officials driven by electoral considerations overlook CAN due to its religious identity. This shows the contrast between the political need for votes and the moral and ethical standpoint of religious organisations. Some government agencies prioritise actions that align with maintaining political power resulting in favored initiatives which cater to the majority religious group for electoral gains. One participant supported this when he said,

"Sometimes we create a landscape where government authorities do not view CAN as the organisation due to its religious identity." [CAN Officer (CO3), male, interview held on 3rd September, 2023]

CAN encounters discrimination due to the religious composition of power dynamics and government officials. In regions where government positions are predominantly occupied by members of a specific religious group, power distribution within the civil service can become imbalanced. In contrast, CAN operates with a different moral and ethical motivation as their humanitarian mission is rooted in faith, transcends political considerations. The organisation is driven by principles that prioritise the welfare of all communities, irrespective of religious identity. Discrimination based on religious identity impact resource allocation. Government resources disproportionately favor communities aligned with the religious majority, leaving minority groups, such as Christians at a disadvantage. Religious actors, including the CAN (just like Galtung's basic needs theory states) have an important role in closing these disparities and challenging the state's legitimacy, particularly when it fails to provide equitable support to all communities. These agrees with Galtung that "policymakers and society have a moral and ethical responsibility to ensure that these basic needs are met for all individuals regardless of their socioeconomic status or location." As improving the fulfillment of basic needs contribute to reducing poverty,

inequality, and social unrest, ultimately creating more equitable and peaceful societies.

Limited government support

Another challenge identified is the limited support received from the government that has affected the capacity of CAN to provide humanitarian aid. Government support is important for the success of humanitarian operations including access to infrastructure, funding, and coordination mechanisms, such support is limited for CAN in some areas as it faces difficulties in scaling up its activities and reaching a larger population in need.

One participant in an interview highlighted that:

“...When we are working tirelessly to address the pressing needs of conflict-affected populations in Borno, the absence of government backing slows down our efforts. Most times we have to rely more on external resources and partnerships which though essential, should not be the primary lifeline for addressing humanitarian crises in this area or any other area.” [CAN Officer (CO4), male, interview held on 4th September, 2023]

The frustration that humanitarian workers within the organisation experience when they encounter obstacles in securing government assistance for their critical initiatives. In situations where immediate action is needed, the absence of substantial government support limit ability to reach the deadly areas (Ferris, 2005; 11).

Christians are few in Borno state

Borno state is dominated by Muslims and Christians being the minority within the affected areas creating challenges for organisations CAN in accessing help during emergencies. This minority status translates into unequal access to resources and assistance when humanitarian crises occur. This can lead to disparities in access to aid and support, which should ideally be distributed impartially based on need.

This was confirmed by one participant [CAN officer] as below.

“Christians happen to be among the minority within the affected areas, and when anything happens, it’s hard to get help because the

political positions are filled with Muslims." [CAN Officer (CO6), male, interview held on 4th September, 2023]

Being in the minority within conflict-affected areas make it more challenging for CAN to advocate for and receive assistance, especially when political positions are predominantly held by Muslims. In Brono state, Christians are few, yet some political leaders prioritise religious groups with majority for election gain. Also, there are some Muslim civil servants that collaborate with the book Haram rooted in the shared interests in maintaining the existing power balance and advancing political agendas. The limited support from the state agencies is not a consequence of religious bias, but a calculated effort to control aid distribution for political gains. Thus, when distributing aid to people in their community, CAN becomes a threat to their influence and control over the Muslim community. Participants indicated that when political positions are predominantly occupied by members of the majority religious group, political factors influence the distribution of aid and support, straying from the ideal principle of impartial assistance based solely on need. Humanitarian efforts are often influenced by these divisive political dynamics where considerations related to ethnicity and religion hinder equitable access to aid. In such situations, organisations like CAN face additional challenges in advocating for and receiving the assistance needed to address the urgent humanitarian needs of all affected communities (Tilleke et al., 2014; 16). Therefore, aid distribution becomes a strategic tool for political entities to exert influence, shape voting patterns, and maintain allegiance. CAN faces a big challenge because the state agencies prioritise aid basing on political considerations.

Johan Galtung's framework emphasises the importance of fulfilling essential, universal human needs for a dignified life, regardless of ethnicity or religious affiliation. When analysing the situation in Borno state, it becomes evident that the unequal access to resources and assistance based on religious demographics contradicts the principles of Galtung's approach. In Galtung's view, addressing the basic needs of individuals should transcend political, ethnic, or religious considerations. However, the findings suggest

that in practice, the distribution of aid and support in conflict-affected regions can be influenced by these very factors. This divergence between the ideal of humanitarian aid, as outlined in the Basic Needs Approach, and the reality on the ground reflects the broader challenge of ensuring impartiality and equity in humanitarian efforts. Furthermore, the research highlights the need for humanitarian organisations like CAN to advocate vigorously for equitable access to resources and assistance, in line with Galtung's emphasis on addressing the basic needs of all individuals. This advocacy becomes crucial when minority communities face challenges in accessing aid due to political and religious issues.

Chapter 7

Conclusions

In this study, I presented evidence to conclude that the motivation of CAN is rooted in principles of brotherhood, the need to address discrimination, specific religious teachings, and their extensive influence and network. These motivations drive their commitment to alleviating suffering, advocating for justice and equality, and creating unity among diverse communities affected by the Boko Haram insurgency. The finding agrees with Adams (2020) who established that CAN has responded to the challenges caused by the Boko haram insurgency. The findings established that CAN plays an important role in creating unity and equal representation for affected communities ensuring that Christian populations receive equitable support despite religious discrimination. CAN actively engages in community involvement, interfaith solidarity, donor engagement, coordination, and information sharing to extend relief and support to those in need. In addition, CAN participates in peacebuilding, mediation, and reconciliation efforts addressing the causes of conflict and promoting sustainable peace in Borno state.

The research establishes that faith-based identity, organisational structure, and strategic partnerships have shaped the humanitarian actions of CAN in conflict-affected Borno state. The strong sense of cohesion and shared values within CAN shows the concept of collective efficacy, where a group's belief in its collective ability to achieve common goals enhances its effectiveness, especially in the face of security challenges and discrimination. The leadership of CAN characterised by a hierarchical framework, ensured equitable benefits, promotes inclusivity and also acts as a mechanism for distributing resources and responsibilities efficiently in conflict zones in Borno state. The strategic partnerships with NGOs and religious denominations indicates that organisations form external alliances to secure essential resources and support. In the case of CAN, these partnerships serve as vital channels for accessing resources, knowledge, and assistance,

enhancing the organisation's capacity to navigate the challenges of providing humanitarian aid.

The challenges faced by CAN indicate the issues of religious organisations, humanitarian settings, and violence perpetrated by religious groups [Boko haram in this case]. Religious organisations when caught up in conflicts driven by religious extremism face unique obstacles and from this study these obstacles include discrimination from the government, limited support, and lack of cooperation between different entities. Just like any other organisation faced with challenges, religious organisations become trapped in broader geopolitical and religious conflicts that affect them in their humanitarian efforts responding to crises shaped by violent extremism. These circumstances experienced by FBOs are captured by scholars such as Adu (2016) and Famuyiwa (2016), Albert (2016), Ademokoya (2016), and described as challenging situations.

Given these unique obstacles, much is desired to be done to improve the humanitarian works of faith-based organisations in Borno state. Faith-based organisations face security challenges in their humanitarian work, thus the national government of Nigeria should integrate strategic security planning and risk assessment into operational strategies of FBOs to mitigate potential dangers. As the government is improving the security environment so that these organisation's works are done smoothly, the administration of CAN need to engage more in establishing dialogue channels with the government to advocate for inclusive support for all humanitarian organisations – regardless of religious affiliation. This could involve working towards policy changes which ensure equal access to resources for organisations addressing the different needs of the population. Dialogues with representatives from different religious groups would serve as a platform for mutual understanding to take apart stereotypes, build bridges of empathy and get rid of misconceptions. In another form, the administration of CAN should actively seek to strengthen collaboration and coordination with government agencies, NGOs, and other faith-based organisations to facilitate resource sharing, joint

planning, and streamlined coordination in a bid to address the evolving needs in Borno state. Efforts need to be intensified by the organisation in reaching out to communities while fronting the values of forgiveness, inclusivity and compassion. Because demonstrating love for your neighbors irrespective of their religious background helps transcend the divisive narratives propagated by violence-prone groups. Finally, and more importantly, advocacy efforts are needed to call for separation of religion from political agendas and this would enable CAN to show preservation of the integrity of faith-based humanitarian work guided by principles of charity, love and responsibility rather than political expediency.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Consent Form

Researcher:

Working title: The Role of religious organisations in humanitarian aid in the Boko haram insurgency: A Case of the Christian Association of Nigeria in Borno State

The purpose of this study is to understand how faith-based organisations working in areas affected by the Boko Haram insurgency navigate their humanitarian roles to serve affected communities. I am inviting you to consider participating in this study to help provide people important information to help inform on the different areas including their motivations and how CAN uses its religious identity to navigate aid delivery in humanitarian setting. The study also seeks to inform people on the difficulties CAN faces as a religious organisation when working in Borno state controlled by Boko Haram in Borno state.

What is involved?

You will be interviewed by me in a really relaxed and informed way which would be just like having a conversation. All this would be recorded in audio and then I would use this information in this study. The information will be completely private and anonymous (your name will not be used in the study) and all information securely stored. The recording and all the information will be destroyed when my degree is complete.

This process will take you 20 – 30 minutes to complete.

You will be able to withdraw from taking part in this study at any time before the research is complete, without giving a reason, and you can ask me any question you have about the study.

Please take your time to think carefully about whether you would like to be involved. It is your choice and there is no problem if you decide it is not for you.

Consent:

I have clearly explained the purpose and objectives of the study to the participant and he/she has understood and consented to participate.

Signature: Date:

.....

(Researcher)

I have clearly understood the purpose and objectives of the study and voluntarily accepted to participate in the study.

Signature: Date:

.....

(Participant)

Appendix B: Interview Guide

Motivation

1. Please tell me about yourself. (Probe for age, education level, sex, time spent working or associating with Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN).....).
2. I want to understand the roles of the CAN in helping the people affected by the Boko Haram insurgency.
3. What drives the organisation's commitment to provide aid in this community?
4. How does the organisation's mission align with its decision to actively support the affected communities in Borno?
5. Are you in position to share any specific religious teachings that guide the humanitarian work of this organisation in Borno state?

Use of religious identity to navigate aid delivery in humanitarian setting

1. Please share with me the factors that made CAN be effective in addressing the needs of the conflicted communities?
2. How does the leadership structure of CAN enable it to effectively respond to the challenges posed by Boko haram?
3. In your case, can you share with me the partners of CAN that strengthened its operations in humanitarian aid?
4. How does the organisation use its religious identity to build trust and acceptance among the community it is serving?
5. What lessons has CAN learned from past experiences that have improved its ability to meet the needs of the affected population?

Specific challenges

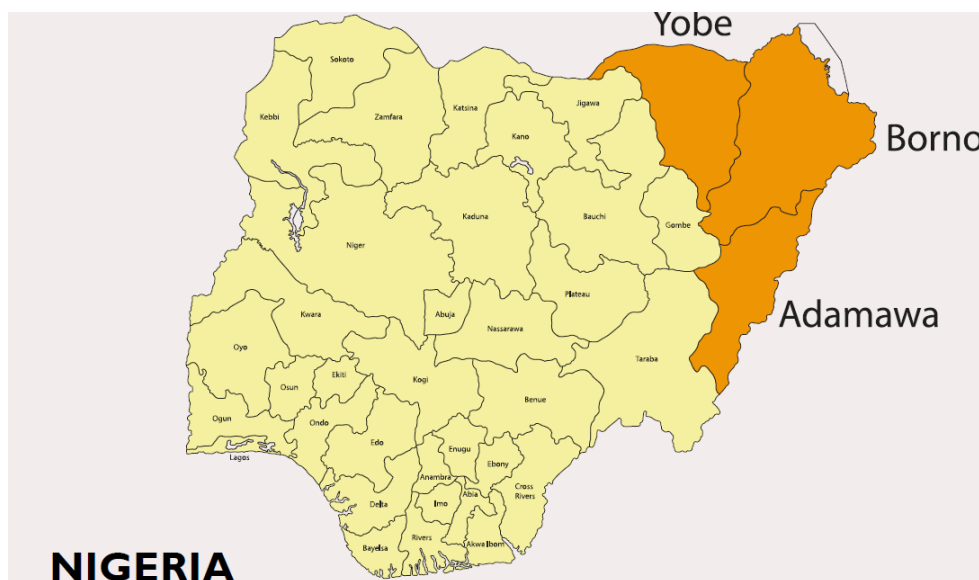
1. In your view, what are some of the specific challenges CAN encounters while providing humanitarian aid in Boko Haram insurgency?
2. How do security concerns of the conflict impact the organisation's ability to deliver aid to high-risk areas?

3. According to you, in what ways do the religious affiliations of CAN affect its interactions with different communities?
4. How does the organisation address potential religious barriers that often arise in some parts of Nigeria while providing aid to diverse communities in Borno state?
5. Considering the prolonged nature of the Boko Haram insurgency, how does the organisation ensure the sustainability of its humanitarian interventions over time?
6. According to you, what do you feel should be done to ensure that the organisation continue effectively serving the affected communities in Borno state?

Thank you for your cooperation

Appendix C: Description of Conflict Areas

The conflict initiated by the Boko Haram insurgency has persisted in northeastern Nigeria for over a decade. Entire local government regions have been seised, governed as autonomous territories not under Nigerian control, and subsequently reclaimed by the Nigerian government. Communities have been overwhelmed, resulting in tens of thousands of casualties, along with attacks on schools and churches, as well as numerous kidnappings. This has led to the displacement of millions of people, with internally displaced persons (IDP) camps scattered throughout the conflict-affected areas, primarily in the (Borno, Adamawa, Yobe) states, as indicated on the map. Initially, Christians were particularly singled out as targets during the early stages of the insurgency.



As a result, there has been a increase in the involvement of both foreign and local organisations and entities in providing humanitarian aid and support services. Despite facing numerous challenges, aid workers have managed to reach more than 3 million people with life-saving assistance in the states of Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe since 2020. Over 90 humanitarian organisations have provided aid to 4.5 million individuals, with nearly 2 million receiving monthly food assistance and over 4 million accessing outpatient and medical

health services. Assistance has also encompassed early recovery and livelihood programs to bolster resilience and reconstruction efforts.

In the year 2020, a dedicated workforce of over 800 international and 3,000 national staff has been committed to the humanitarian response, primarily in Borno State. One ongoing priority is to deploy the most qualified and efficient personnel to oversee and expand humanitarian operations, a formidable task given the unmatched nature of current humanitarian crises.

Many collaborative measures have been implemented to enhance the scope and quality of the humanitarian response. These measures include reinforced cooperation at the inter-agency and multi-sectoral levels, improved local area coordination, and joint initiatives aimed at creating self-reliance among affected populations.

Appendix D: Divisions of CAN

